

## OUTPOST KUWAIT NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2017

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### Request for contributions

This newsletter will only be a success if all of us send our contributions, ideas, tips, favourite recipes/restaurants, get-away ideas, thoughts, etc. to [opkuwaitnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:opkuwaitnewsletter@gmail.com) so we can share them and make this newsletter a true source of info. We hope to receive tons of information from you all so that the next newsletter will be bursting with info.

Thanks in advance,  
the Outpost Kuwait Team

Here it is, Outpost Kuwait Newsletter number 5.

The Outpost Kuwait Team has a new Focal Point. After more than 2 years Pamela Hodgson has given the reigns to Sunita Wali. We are all looking forward to working with her. You can find a short introduction of Sunita later on in this issue.

A much smaller change will be that I, Els Leegte, will leave the team. I am sure that in our big community there will be someone motivated and talented enough to take over. Please contact Sunita Wali on [outpostkuwait@shell.com](mailto:outpostkuwait@shell.com) if you want to take up this challenge.

All previous events between end of September and now will be reviewed on pages further on in this issue.

The Outpost Team is looking for new ideas, new initiatives so we can better cater to our diverse community. Please get in touch with us as soon as possible on email [opkuwaitnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:opkuwaitnewsletter@gmail.com) and let's share ideas.

Hope to hear from you soon so we can start planning!

Els Leegte, Outpost Newsletter Coordinator

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## Mark your calendar

### November

29 Brunch – Restaurant Mado

### December

13 X-mas Coffee Gathering 10:00-12:00

### January 2018

?? Visit to Camel Races (date to be confirmed)

23 Coffee Gathering

27 Culture Workshop at TIES

### February 2018

6 Tour Souq Mubarakiya

9 Family visit to Yasmin Farm, Wafra

14 Morning Gathering with career presentation by Mia v/d Heijden

### March 2018

5 Lunch

10 Family Boat Trip

19 Coffee Gathering







### April 2018

?? Visit to Arab Organization Headquarters

**Note: dates and venues can be subject to change.**



## Meet the Outpost Kuwait Team

Focal Point		Sunita Wali
Events Coordinators	 	Karen Beare & Helga Quint
Meet & Greet		Emma Lowe
Newsletter & Website		Els Leegte
Parents Group		Olga Shamanovska
Outpost Kuwait Website		<a href="https://kuwait-city.globaloutpostservices.com/">https://kuwait-city.globaloutpostservices.com/</a>
Email Outpost Kuwait		<a href="mailto:outpostkuwait@shell.com">outpostkuwait@shell.com</a>



### **Introduction new Focal Point Outpost Kuwait –** **Sunita Wali**

Hi, I am Sunita Wali. I am from India. I was born and brought up in Kashmir and spent many years in Bombay, now Mumbai. We lived in Muscat, Oman for about 8 years and then in Bangalore, India and now back to Middle East in Kuwait. I am an Engineer by qualification and specialise in IT project Management. I am interested in learning about different cultures. I conducted Cross Culture training for Expats in India. I am a trained yoga teacher and practice yoga regularly, something that I am proud of.

I worked with Outpost Bangalore as a volunteer. It was a wonderful experience in many ways, it gave me the joy of meeting many new people and I also enjoyed the experience of supporting the Shell expatriate community. Volunteering with Outpost is an effective way to keep one occupied and it helps with continuity on our CV which is important for many spouses. I would like to encourage more spouses to come forward and volunteer with Outpost.

Outpost Kuwait is a very active community that has grown considerably in a short period of time. Pamela Hodgson and the team Els Leegte, Emma Lowe, Helga Quint, Karen Beare and Olga Shamanovska have done incredibly well to reach here. We look forward to seeing increased engagement of the community. We would like to hear from you on what activities you would like us to add or what would you like us to do differently. You can reach me through

email [outpostkuwait@shell.com](mailto:outpostkuwait@shell.com) and

Mobile [+965 9876 5985](tel:+96598765985)

### **Shell Warden System in Kuwait.**

All Shell locations have a method of getting information to everyone working at or visiting that location. At some locations, Shell posts recorded messages where employees and visitors can call in and listen to them. At other locations, Shell has a way to reach out and contact everyone.

Here in Kuwait, we have a Warden System. The country is divided into 9 geographic zones. Each zone has a Primary Warden and an Alternate Warden. Additionally, there is a Chief Warden. Information flows from the Shell Country Chair through the Chief Warden to the Wardens and then to the everyone in-country.

Contact information for all Shell residents, dependents, business visitors, and personal visitors is kept in a SharePoint site called the Persons on Board database (the POB). All non-residents who are in-country must have a host who is a resident and is in-country during the visit. It is the host's responsibility to enter their dependents and visitors into the POB, and to keep the data up to date.

There is an annual test of the Warden system. During the test, the Chief Warden contacts each Warden and instructs them to contact everyone in their zone, to record statistics on who could / could not be reached, the number of tries required, etc. The data is used to check the efficiency of the Warden System, and to help improve the system.

We all hope we never need to use the Warden System for a real emergency. But, it is good to have it in place and the information up to date just in case.

Please stay safe.

### **Education visit week 22nd October 2017 by Henk van Hout**

In the week of the 22<sup>nd</sup> October I was visiting Kuwait with the clear objective to come to a more relaxed situation in terms of admitting children of Shell staff into the International, American and British schools in Kuwait City, and to understand the concerns of international staff around the education of their children.

On the first day of my visit I was meeting with international staff and their spouses to hear from them what their experience is, so far, regarding the education of their children. Some of them were clearly disappointed about the attitude of some of the schools around admissions, about the quality of education and education facilities, the information that was provided before they were relocating to Kuwait and HSSE issues in some of the schools. Hamad Al Qenaei was taking minutes during the session and I promised parents to discuss some of the issues with the schools directly. A few international colleagues had also sent me information, of a confidential nature, about the experience of their children in Kuwait schools already before my visit.

After listening to international staff, I made use of the situation to present the changes in the education policy which you can find at the bottom of this article. These changes will take effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and are currently published on the education website (Shell homepage A-Z –Education Services).

The following days I was visiting, a few times accompanied by HR colleague Ahmed Maher, the following schools; The French School, The British School, Kuwait English Speaking School, The English School, American International School and the American United School. The issues that were brought to the table by international staff were discussed with the senior leaders of these schools. We were also investigating avenues to improve the admissions process for newly arriving families with children, and discussed collaboration models to improve the quality of education and HSSE.

In general, the schools were very responsive to the issues that had been brought to the table. In a few individual cases, the schools have taken immediate action. I am expecting to see a more positive attitude in the future from some of the schools about the admission of children of Shell staff. Also on HSSE I expect to see more improvement in some of the schools.

In the future I am expecting to see a more responsive attitude from the schools when it comes to admissions and teaching and learning for children of Shell staff.

In case staff you are having any queries, feel free to contact me directly: [Henk.VanHout@shell.com](mailto:Henk.VanHout@shell.com)

## What will change from January 2018?

As a result of an extensive review, a number of policy changes will take effect from 1st January 2018 as follows:

Current Education Policy	New Education Policy Effective 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2018	Transition Arrangements Effective 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2018
LTIA Secondary Repatriation education budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One secondary repatriation budget of 30,000 EUROS and within this allocation, the option to draw 5000 EUROS cash once during 2-year time period (tax for employee's own account).</li> <li>A 2-year limit beginning the first day on payroll</li> <li>Budget can be used for admission fee, standard school costs and boarding costs.</li> <li>Child must be 11 years old at the point of repatriation and in receipt of education costs for a minimum of 2 years.</li> <li>Claims must be made within 6 months.</li> <li>Employees must request a repatriation budget via HR Services.</li> </ul>	<p>Employees repatriated before 1 January 2018 and who are in receipt of Education Repatriation Option 1 or Option 2 support will remain on the current scheme and will have until 1 January 2021 to draw from the budget. For those repatriation budgets that are still not entirely used on the 1st January 2021 an exception request can be filed and based on the historical evidence (school invoices) the remaining balance can be cashed out to the employee.</p> <p>Employee's repatriated after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 are subject to new policy.</p>
Base country language support/ compulsory subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation of the current policy with a fixed rate of 4500 EUROS per annum.</li> </ul>	The new rate will be effective for claims starting 1 January 2018.
Travel passages for unaccompanied children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two economy class tickets for non-accompanying children under 22 years.</li> </ul>	<p>Non-accompanying children under 22 years (regardless of educational status), policy will provide 2 economy class return tickets between base country (or third country) to host country.</p> <p>This policy area will take effect from the beginning of each individual's service year from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.</p>
A single Education Budget Norm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shell will continue to support primary education in the host country with a maximum of 30,000 EUROS per year.</li> <li>Shell will continue to support secondary education, tuition in the host country or tuition and boarding costs in the base or third country up to a maximum of 37,000 EUROS per year.</li> </ul>	<p>The new policy will apply at the beginning of the next academic year depending on the employee's current schooling situation as follows:</p> <p>Children attending school in the Southern Hemisphere = new norm applies from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018</p> <p>Children attending school in Northern hemisphere = new norm applies from August 2018.</p>
Where applicable, repatriation budget for LTIA transitioning to LNN.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LNN budgets will be discontinued from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.</li> <li>Employees eligible for repatriation assistance may use this for LNN assignments.</li> </ul>	For those who have LNN budgets that are still not entirely used by the 1st January 2021, an exception request can be filed and based on an individual assessment which will include historical evidence (school invoices) and school enrolment, the remaining balance may be cashed out to the employee.



**Based on current market practice, we are no longer providing the following provisions effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018:**

<b>Boarding school management and placement trips</b>	Shell will discontinue the annual education management trip and the boarding placement trip for the employee or the spouse.
<b>Foundational courses provision</b>	Policy claims for foundational courses will be discontinued.
<b>Summer school provision</b>	Policy claims for summer schooling will be discontinued.
<b>Living in Parental Home/Living in Private Home provision</b>	Policy claims for living in parental/private home will be discontinued
<b>Exeat Days allowance</b>	Policy claims for exeat days will be discontinued.



### **Coffee Morning and Oro Gold Skin Care Demonstration, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017**

A fun get together with Sara from Oro Gold Skincare. Sara, a bubbly young lady, who gave us some tips on how to keep the skin young and glowing. She also got some healthy food for all. Frankly it was more of a laughter session than anything else...But at the end everyone went back with free face mask from Oro Gold and some lucky ones got very generous gifts from Oro Gold /Lionesse in the raffle draw.



### **Coffee Morning, October 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 at PQ Marina Crescent**

On a beautiful morning we met at 10.00 am at Le Pain Quotidien where we could sit outside and enjoy the view. Coffee and tea were served with croissants, pain au chocolat and bread with butter and jam. All the food was really delicious. Ladies were mingling and connecting with each other. There's always a lot to talk about, exchange addresses or to ask any questions. By 12.00 pm everyone was heading home looking back on a nice morning.





### Family Event at Beit Al Othman, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017

We had an enjoyable morning at Beit Al Othman, (despite Google maps!). Our guides were very friendly, hospitable and informative. The museum is very large and varied. It has a little bit of everything for all tastes: a Kuwaiti house, police station, Kuwaiti Souk, a media section, not to mention the tanks in the car park! There is also a hotel which is decorated in old Kuwaiti style but with mod cons, due to open in the New Year. We would strongly recommend a visit to this museum whilst in Kuwait.



### Brunch at Assaha, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017

A group of ladies enjoyed a very tasty brunch at Assaha on October 30<sup>th</sup>. The selection of food from the buffet was both extensive and delicious. Eggs were brought to the table, in various forms, and it was all washed down with plenty of tea, coffee and juice. If you enjoy Lebanese food, then an Assaha brunch is a must!





### **Family Event at Beit Al Arab, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

We enjoyed a tour of Bait Al Arab with a group of adults and children on a beautiful Saturday morning. Bait al Arab, the Kuwait State Stud Farm, has been established in 1980 to preserve and continue the Arabian horse breed in Kuwait.

At the start of the tour we had the possibility to pet a few Arabian Horses while chatting with other attendees. Klaus, consultant of Bait al Arab, conducted the tour and he told us about the program for this morning. We saw a short movie on Bait al Arab and a photo exhibition at the Gallery. From there we went to the diwaniya and the Gleannloch library. The library houses a unique collection of books and trophies bought at an auction in 2013. Researchers regularly come to study the books. From there we went to the showing area where we were served tea, Arabic coffee and some savoury rolls and bites. While the horses ran around in the showing area Klaus told us their name and where they originated from. We even saw two foals: one of four and one of six weeks old. It was interesting to hear that Bait al Arab hosts shows but doesn't compete itself. They also do the registry of all Arabian horses in Kuwait. At the stables we had the opportunity to feed the horses. Especially the children were keen to do that. While lots of pictures were taken Klaus was answering some questions. We concluded the visit with a group picture. I think everyone enjoyed the outing to Bait al Arab.



## Reflections on Beit al Arab trip

### Sneha Ballabh, age 12 years reflections on Bait Al Arab.

I went to the Bait Al Arab with my parents on Saturday, 11th November. It is an Arabian horse centre and breeding farm. At the meeting plaza, there were three horses: Maha, Luluwa, and May. I petted them, and they were white and soft to touch! After our guide arrived, we headed to the photography gallery, where it showed different photographs of marvellous horses. The gallery showed some other pictures along with the top ten, and I could tell all the photographers were very talented!

We visited the library next. It was filled with books and trophies. The guide told us about Mr. Douglas and his wife, who were avid horse lovers and how the library was named after Mr. Douglas. The guide also told us about how people from all over the world come here to get their research from the library's books. After that, we went to the "stadium", where the staff showed some of the horses. The horses love to showcase their talent! We were also offered refreshments.

Then came the fun part: We got to feed carrots to the horses! I fed the carrots to the first couple of horses in the second stable. Miriam the horse ate the whole carrot in one bite! After that, we all headed back to the meeting plaza. We thanked the guide and told him we would come back again. It was an amazing experience for our family.



It was very nice of shell company to organize a family outing at Bait Al Arab. The people working there gave us a wonderful tour round. We had a look at the 'Glenn Loch Library', and the photographs of some beautiful horses taken for a photography contest. The Horse Show was the most exciting of all; there were many horses that were showing off! I learnt a few nice facts about horses. However, the best part was when we petted the horses, and fed them with carrots. The people were very hospitable, constantly serving us with delicious sandwiches and (Qahwa) Arab Coffee. I thoroughly enjoyed that experience.

Safa Khadija Abubacker  
Year 5  
New English School (NES)





### **coffee Morning and Jewelry demonstration, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

On Wednesday morning 15<sup>th</sup> November, 17 ladies enjoyed a cup coffee or tea while chatting with each other on all kind of subjects at Helga Quint's home. We saw a few new faces as well: welcome ladies to Outpost Kuwait. There was time to ask questions and to share experiences while others just admired the view from the 26<sup>th</sup> floor.

Helga served some Dutch delicacies, like "kruidnootjes"(ginger nuts) and "gevulde speculaas"(gingerbread filled with almond paste), Sunita brought some Indian savoury crackers and Natasha added a healthy bowl of grapes to the small buffet.

We invited Nafisa, a jewelry designer from Nafisa Designs to the coffee gathering. Everyone had a look at the Birthstone and Arabesque collection. Nafisa told us that her designs are for everyday use and that all designs can be made in silver or 18 carat gold. Each month has a different gem stone. Nafisa designs pieces on request as well. Please see the website [www.nafisadesign.com](http://www.nafisadesign.com) for her designs.

Around 12.00 pm most of us headed home after, what was said, a lovely gathering.





Visit House of Mirrors, November 21st, 2017

Pictures speak for themselves.





## Shell BBQ





## Check this out!



**Better Books and Cafe** is located in the heart of Salmiya, Kuwait. A used books store that offers you store credit on returned purchases and complimentary tea/coffee. Its spacious interior of endless shelves filled with books of all genres, conveniently placed chairs and plush rugs strewn over the floor tempt avid readers of all ages to browse in leisurely comfort. CONTACT FOR MAP: 66637351



Petzone has opened branches in Mahboula and Egailia. Please check their website: <http://www.kuwait.petzone.com/find-us/>

**Zumba at Zida's:**



**For health and wellness, check out:**

<http://planetatein.com/2017/08/25/whats-your-voice/>

## Check this out!

- **Parents & Tots Group**

The group is planning to meet every two weeks from 10am to 12:30pm at varying locations.

If you are interested in joining please contact Olga Shamanovska on [opkuwaitmumandtots@gmail.com](mailto:opkuwaitmumandtots@gmail.com)

- **BLS (British Ladies Society) Walk the Talk**

There is a weekly Thursday walk from Starbucks at the Marina Crescent starting at 06:45am for now. Time will change after weather cools down.

- **Arabic courses and regular outings:**

<http://aware.com.kw/>

<https://www.tiescenter.net/>

- **Interesting websites:**

<http://248am.com/>

<http://www.theblskuwait.com/>

<http://new.kuwaittimes.net/website/>

<https://www.e.gov.kw/sites/kgoEnglish/Pages/Homepage.aspx>

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/kuwait>

<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/kuwait>

<http://aware.com.kw/>

<https://www.tiescenter.net/>

- **Vigonovo has closed but will soon be available via Carriage; for catering call 55520134; follow on Instagram [vigonovo\\_kw](#)**

- **K's Path Animal Shelter is closing; check their website for free adoption of dogs and cats: <http://kspath.org/en/>**

## DID YOU KNOW?

- **Al Shaheed Park phase two now open**  
<https://248am.com/mark/information/al-Shaheed-park-phase-2-now-open>
- **How to renew your driving license in Kuwait**  
<https://248am.com/mark/information/how-to-renew-your-driving-license/>
- **Ophthalmologist (recommended by Lidy de Loe)**  
Dr Hoda Alaa Amin – International Clinic
- **Ophthalmologist (recommended by Evgenia)**  
Dr Ghassan Zein – Beverly Hills Clinic  
<http://www.beverlyhillskuwait.com/dr-ghassan-zein/>
- **Art shops**  
Jarir Bookstore (various branches)  
Barakat Trading Company (Salmiya)  
Mogahwi Stationery & Office Equipment (Salmiya)
- **Gynaecologist (recommended by Rachel Clark)**  
Dr Alia – Al Seef Hospital

### Outpost Kuwait Info

Focal Point	Sunita Wali
Events Coordinators	Karen Beare & Helga Quint
Meet & Greet	Emma Lowe
Newsletter & Website	Els Leegte
Parents Group	Olga Shamanovska
Outpost Kuwait Website	<a href="https://kuwait-city.globaloutpostservices.com/">https://kuwait-city.globaloutpostservices.com/</a>
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