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It's a long way from the glamour of Venice, but India’s most famous slum Dharavi is hosting a biennale this week, aiming to use art as a tool to raise awareness about health and sanitation.

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The Mumbai neighbourhood made famous by the film Slumdog Millionaire is set to host its first “biennale”, aiming to promote health through creativity, although it will be very different to some of the world’s grander art fairs.

The three-week festival, opening today, will showcase works created by residents of Dharavi, the densely populated settlement in the heart of India’s financial capital that is known as one of Asia’s biggest slums.

From hand-painted pots arranged to show how sexually transmitted diseases spread, to a quilted map marking known locations of domestic violence, the Dharavi Biennale is designed to raise awareness without being “preachy”, say the organisers.

But they also want to celebrate the neighbourhood itself, home to an estimated 750,000 people from all over India, which has been held up over the years as a symbol of both grimy destitution and flourishing industry.

“What we see is that Dharavi is sitting on a lot of wealth and a lot of talent and art that gets missed out when you want to show squalor and slum,” said festival co-director Nayreen Daruwalla.

Britain’s Prince Charles in 2010 cited Dharavi as a role model for sustainable living, praising its habit of recycling waste and the “order and harmony” of the community, in contrast to Western countries’ “fragmented” housing estates.
Guided tours around Dharavi’s mini-factories — producing all manner of goods from clothes to pottery — are now a popular tourist attraction, while initiatives such as the SlumGods, a group of hip-hop street dancers, have challenged outsiders’ negative perceptions.

But the difficulties facing the community remain stark, and “there is a danger of going to the other side and romanticising”, said Daruwalla, pointing out the cramped conditions, poor ventilation and lack of toilets.

With such issues in mind, the Society for Nutrition, Education and Health Action (SNEHA) held an exhibition in Dharavi two years ago called “Dekha Undekha” (“Seen Unseen”), aiming to foster discussion, through art, about themes such as sanitation and maternal health.

Its success led SNEHA to develop the biennale, a more ambitious project funded by the British charity Wellcome Trust, which culminates in the exhibitions and events this month at various locations across Dharavi’s maze of alleyways.

Different spirit

Aside from being held every other year, the festival has little in common with some of the world’s better known art fairs, said co-director David Osrin, who in a presentation this month described the name as “slightly a joke, and slightly ideological”.

“The spirit and the way that our biennale is structured is very, very different,” he said.

While other festivals simply ask artists to submit works, the focus in Mumbai has been on participation with Dharavi residents, particularly through workshops led by “mentor” artists.

The results include the “Immunity Wall”, a depiction of the body’s immune system using recycled materials and everyday items: red hair bobbles for red cells, scouring pads for B cells and flexi bracelets as antibodies.

Another exhibit uses traditional block-prints on cloth to illustrate the various levels of depression, a problem thought to be widespread but under-diagnosed in Mumbai’s slums.

Thousands are expected to attend the exhibitions over the coming weeks, but social scientists will be conducting surveys to try and assess the festival’s qualitative impact as well as footfall.

“It’s quite an ambitious thing to try to develop artworks that speak to a health agenda without being preachy, and we think we’ve achieved it, but it would be very interesting to know what people actually think about that synthesis,” Osrin said.

A festival on this scale has proved a logistical challenge, be it finding space to display art amid the crowded dwellings or financing projects in the cash-based informal economy.

Sticking to sustainable, pro-health agendas while creating the exhibits also proved tough, said urban gardener Adrienne Thadani, who worked on the project “Growing Fresh Air in Dharavi” promoting the use of plants indoors to stay healthy.

“By using locally crafted clay pots to create easily replicable home gardens, we were working with kilns fired with synthetic scraps and used oil rags, which was polluting the area further,” she said.

However much it raises health awareness, the biennale appears to be boosting morale among Dharavi’s residents, such as student Saraswati Bhandare, 21, who helped to create giant puppets for the opening show about tuberculosis.

“People think this is just a slum area where we aren’t educated, but the truth is that it’s a place where so many talents come together. We’re proud to be from Dharavi,” she said.
Birla Fest 2015 draws to a close

The annual cultural competition of Birla Public School, Birla Fest 2015, came to a close with a colourful spectacle at the Basant Kumar Birla Auditorium. The students who won prizes for various on-stage and off-stage events were honoured during the closing ceremony.

Kalpana, a teacher, welcomed the gathering. The winners of art and literary competitions in the sub-junior and junior category were awarded certificates and prizes.

Antony Biju of Grade IV-Ai was conferred the ‘Kalaprathibha’ title. He secured a grand total of 46 points from both on-stage and off-stage events. Smrithi Haridasan of Grade IV H was adjudged the ‘Best Performer’. Pranai Naryan Venktesan of Grade III P, Rachna Susan Alex of III K and Elwin Sebastian of Grade III M were awarded the ‘Best Artist’ prize in the sub-junior category.

The winners were honoured by A K Shrivastava, Principal, Shriy Rappai, Senior Vice Principal, George Edison, Vice Principal and Sindhu Manoj, HM – Activities. Students presented dances and songs as part of a cultural programme after the prize distribution.

IIS class XII farewell

Ideal Indian School (IIS) bid farewell to the outgoing students of class XII recently. The outgoing students recounted their days in the school and thanked their alma mater for moulding them into responsible human beings. Speaking on the occasion, Principal Syed Shoukath Ali wished the outgoing students good luck and reminded them of their responsibilities as students and future citizens of the world.

On this occasion, the names of the students are honoured with special awards for their outstanding performance in curricular and extracurricular activities were announced. Principal gave away the awards to the winning students.

Girls’ Section
Best Girl – Science: Sana Abullaise
Best Girl – Commerce: Sana Shanavas Shaikh
Best Girls in Conduct - Science: Simone Alvares
Best Girls in Conduct - Commerce: Shaikha Khadeja
Best Girls in Service - Science: Aqsa Mohd Iqbal
Best Girls in Service - Commerce: Niharika Patnaik
Best Girl in Sports: Nilfath Ibrahim
Best Girl Prefects: Zunaira Fatima & Sanchia Fernandez
Best Talent: Vanditha Pillai
Special Jury Award: Fathima Fahda

Boys’ Section
Best Boys – Science: Juma Rashid & Aakash Gireesh
Best Boy – Commerce: Mathew Varghees
Best Boy in Conduct - Science: Dylan D’Issaua
Best Boy in Conduct - Commerce: Rahul
Best Boy in Service - Science: Sooraj Mari
Best Boy in Service - Commerce: Edwin Raju
Best Boys in Sports - Science: Lindsey and Faheem Faisal
Best Boy in Sports-Commerce: Sahal Siraj
Best Boy Prefects: Jeswin and Anirudh Mondal
Best Talents: Faiyaz and Vignesh Hari
Special Jury Award - Academics: Imran Khan
Special Jury Award - Sports: Asim Shah

The school presented each of the outgoing student with a Graduation Souvenir. Padma Ramaswamy, Vice Principal, Girls’ Section, S Vidyashankar, Vice Principal, Boys’ Section, Nazimabi, Headmistress and Azam Khan, Headmaster attended the function.
Jungle Zone honours first batch of Taekwondo students

Nineteen students were honored with graduation certificates from Qatar Taekwondo Federation at Jungle Zone. The ceremony was organized for the students who completed 3-month training at Taekwondo programme and received the ‘Yellow belt’.

“Qatar National Sport Day highlights the importance of a healthy lifestyle, especially through physical activities. Jungle Zone’s children-focused initiatives like Taekwondo training will encourage young generation to stay physically active and will equip them with techniques for self defense,” said Feroz Moideen, General Manager of Hyatt Plaza Shopping Mall and Jungle Zone Theme Park.

The children were trained by International Taekwondo coach Belal Batu, who is a 6th Dan Black Belt coach. “The kids have worked really hard throughout the past three months and passed our yellow belt test. So, they deserved to be honored,” he said. The training programme takes place every Sunday and Tuesday in two batches (4pm to 5:15pm and 5:15pm to 6:30pm) and enrollment is open to all kids above 4-year of age.

Honoured children with the coach.
Rio Carnival kicks off at The Marriott Marquis City Center

As spring kicks in, The Marriott Marquis City Center Doha Hotel’s restaurants are introducing special offerings to entice guests.

Rio ‘Carnaval’ will be taking over Ipanema from February 13 – 17 complete with a marching band parade, mocktails, live music and party packs.

Rio ‘Carnaval’ (the traditional Portuguese spelling) is a world famous festival held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, every year and is considered to be the biggest carnival in the world with two million people attending Copacabana Palace and beach each day.

Ipanema, the Brazilian churrascaria in Doha, is known for its wide selection of sizzling meats on skewers, carved at your table by Passadores. The hotel will be taking Ipanema to new heights with five full days of ‘Carnaval’ celebrations. Ipanema’s live band, Brazuca, will be showcasing their own samba flair, bringing a swinging pace to their authentic Brazilian outfits.

The restaurant reflects the colors of Brazil through its exterior and interior design. Located on the second floor, Ipanema is open daily from 6.30pm to 11.30pm. The price starts from QR320.

Blue Salon unveils Mon Parfum Gold

Blue Salon launched Parfums M. Micallef’s latest edition to the Mon Parfum collection, Mon Parfum Gold recently.

The M. Micallef Company gives priority to high quality and natural ingredients in its fragrances and magnifies each bottle in its art atelier. For 2014, Martine Micallef is honouring the mysteries of the Orient.

The fragrance is inspired by Micallef’s multi-facted personality, and offers a sweet and whimsical sensuality in the most personal manner. It reveals a fruity fragrance, enhanced by warm notes of vanilla and musk but all its character lies in the mystery surrounding it. Its sparkling bottle, delicately hand decorated with Swarovski stones, is the most precious of keepers.

The Peninsula

Monish Gujaral (fourth left), Chairman and Managing Director of Moti Mahal, Alastair Mackenzie, Executive Admin Manager of Princess Catering Company, Biju Sebastian, Operation Manager of Princess Catering Company, and other officials during the opening of Moti Mahal restaurant in the Barwa Tower 3 at Al Sadd.

Total employees show appreciation of Qatari culture

Total’s traditional themed welcome party called ‘Marhaba day’ was recently celebrated in Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club (QREC). The annual event is organized by the Qatari committee of Total to welcome those employees new to the company and to Qatar. All employees and contractors of Total and their families were invited, and were welcomed with a taste of Qatari hospitality and traditional Qatari music by a local live band.

Guillaume Chalmin, Managing Director of Total E&P Qatar and Group Representative, then delivered the opening speech, and commenmorated the winners of the various competitions held during Qatar National Week 2014 celebrations in Total.

The venue included a large array of activities such as horse riding, a traditional Qatari corner with arts, crafts, costumes, henna and calligraphy; falconing – a sport widely practiced in Qatar, a Qatari live food station, and a section dedicated to children with inflatable, face painting and other games.

Fatiha Al Sharshani who was one of the organizers of the event said: “Our goal is to help our colleagues understand and embrace our culture, and this event indeed enabled them to learn more about our traditions through a transforming and enjoyable experience”.

During his speech, Guillaume Chalmin mentioned: “It is very important to appreciate the traditions of our host country Qatar as we live and work here. It was a remarkable day for us as we come from over 40 different countries, and we were all able to embrace Qatar as our second home.”
Booming SUV market gets new entries

By Dee-Ann Durbin

Sport utility vehicles are unstoppable — and automakers hope to cash in on the boom with some updated models coming to this year’s Chicago Auto Show. One out of every three new vehicles Americans bought last year was an SUV, according to Kelley Blue Book. SUV sales rose 12 percent to more than 5.5 million. That was double the pace of the industry as a whole.

Strong demand is likely to continue this year, says Jesse Toprak, president of Toprak Consulting Group. SUV sales may not see double-digit growth, since overall sales are expected to slow as the US market nears a peak of 17 million vehicles. But SUVs should still outpace sales of cars, Toprak says.

Small SUVs like the Honda CR-V have been the fastest growing segment in the market for the last three years. They appeal to both young families and aging Baby Boomers. Low interest rates, easing credit standards and new versions of popular models like the Jeep Cherokee and Subaru Outback have also fueled demand.

More recently, low petrol prices helped boost sales of bigger SUVs like the Chevrolet Tahoe and Lincoln Navigator. Last June, when petrol prices peaked at $3.76 per gallon, SUV sales made up 33 percent of new vehicle sales, while small cars made up 20 percent, according to Ward’s AutoInfoBank.

By December, when petrol prices had fallen to $2.63, SUV market share rose to 35 percent, while small cars fell to 16 percent.

Here are some of the SUVs debuting at the Chicago show:

— CHEVROLET EQUINOX

General Motors Co is unveiling a refreshed Chevrolet Equinox small SUV. It’s the first update to the Equinox since it went on sale in 2010, and it shows how the popular SUV compete with newer rivals until it gets an expected redesign in late 2017.

The 2016 Equinox will have a larger, handsomer, chrome-accented grille and upgraded projector-beam headlamps; on higher trim levels, the headlamps are LEDs. A rear-view camera will be standard on all models. Blind spot detection and cross-traffic alert are new options. Inside, there’s a new standard seven-inch screen and an updated instrument panel. The Equinox has been a consistently strong seller despite its advancing age. Last year, Equinox sales rose 2 percent to 242,242, making it the fourth best seller in the crowded small SUV market behind the Honda CR-V, Ford Escape and Toyota RAV4. The 2016 Equinox goes on sale this fall.

— HONDA PILOT

Honda has ditched the boxy styling of the outgoing Pilot for a more aerodynamic look that mimics its smaller sibling, the popular CR-V. The 2016 Honda Pilot — which goes on sale this summer — has a larger, eight-inch display screen, an improved navigation system and up to five USB ports to power the family’s devices.

Honda has ditched the boxy styling of the outgoing Pilot for a more aerodynamic look that mimics its smaller sibling, the popular CR-V. The 2016 Honda Pilot — which goes on sale this summer — has a larger, eight-inch display screen, an improved navigation system and up to five USB ports to power the family’s devices.

Honda’s design team says this is a “near-future” look at an off-road version of its Soul wagon. It has a fully retractable canvas roof and integrated roof rack fittings with aluminum cross rails. The front is more sculpted, with a three-dimensional grille and Acura’s signature jeweled headlights. Horsepower is up, from 273 to 279, thanks to a new 3.5-liter V6 engine. The engine’s cylinder deactivation system, which can power the SUV on four cylinders in light driving, improves fuel economy by 1 mpg, for up to 29 mpg on the highway.

The front is more sculpted, with a three-dimensional grille and Acura’s signature jeweled headlights. There’s a host of new safety features, including lane departure warning, adaptive cruise control and a system that uses radar and a camera to detect road hazards, including pedestrians.

The updates should help the RDX compete in a hot market for small luxury SUVs. Acura sold a record 44,865 last year, but sales were flat versus the previous year. By comparison, sales of the BMW X5 jumped 18 percent to more than 47,000.
Aguilera named daughter Summer Rain

Singer Christina Aguilera, who gave birth to daughter on August 16, 2015, says naming her Golden Globe winner has been something she’s wanted to do for a while. She says the name “Summer Rain” means her daughter “lived the most beautiful and happy moment of her mother’s life on the day she was born. The day that she brought light and love into this world. The day that she gave her mother her first breath, her first moment of bliss in a way.”

Spice Girls to reunite at Halliwell’s wedding

Penny ‘Scary Spice’ Halliwell, Mel B, Geri ‘Ginger Spice’, Emma ‘Baby Spice’ Bunton and Victoria ‘Posh Spice’ Beckham have jetted into Britain to join Geri Halliwell at her wedding. Geri’s fiancé, film producer Matt Rutler, said: “I wanted her name to be filled with inspiration, love and joy. And something from the place that she feels most complete and comfortable.”

Jaden Smith owns just a pair of shoes

Jaden Smith owns just a pair of shoes and a limited selection of items that he has decided to keep. The younger brother of Willow Smith has kept a pair of shoes, a pair of sweaters, a limited selection of items and a pair of slippers. He has also decided to keep a pair of slippers, a pair of sweaters and a limited selection of items. Despite this, Jaden Smith has kept a limited selection of items that he has decided to keep, as well as a pair of shoes, a pair of slippers and a pair of sweaters. However, he has decided to keep a pair of sweaters, a limited selection of items and a pair of slippers. Despite this, Jaden Smith has kept a limited selection of items that he has decided to keep, as well as a pair of shoes, a pair of slippers and a limited selection of items.

The ‘Secret Service’ opens in Britain

T he hit American film, which opens in Britain this week, stars Colin Firth as the leader of a British intelligence agency and Taron Egerton as Eggsy, the agency’s most junior agent. The film is directed by Matthew Vaughn and produced by his production company, Vaughan Pictures. It is based on the comic book series Kingsman by Mark Millar and Darick Robertson. The film tells the story of a group of spies who are sent to save the world from a threat posed by the villainous Red Bull. The film is a critical and commercial success, grossing over $100 million in its first weekend.

Kabir Singh: A modern-day Romeo

Kabir Singh is a modern-day Romeo who is passionate and passionate about his love for Arjun. The film, directed by Sandeep Shukla, is a love story that explores the complexities of modern relationships. It stars Shahid Kapoor and Kiara Advani in the lead roles. The film has been met with mixed reviews, with some critics praising its performances and others criticizing its storyline. Despite this, Kabir Singh has become a commercial success, grossing over $100 million in its first weekend.
Malcolm X: Firebrand U.S. civil rights leader remembered

Malcolm X, the controversial Muslim minister and human rights activist shot dead 50 years ago, was seen by his admirers as a courageous advocate for the rights of blacks, but by his detractors as a preacher of racism and violence.

- **1925, May 19:** Malcolm X born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, fourth of seven children. Baptist minister father Earl and mother Louise are followers of Marcus Garvey.
- **1928:** Home in mostly white area of Lansing, Michigan burns to ground. No fire truck is dispatched.
- **1931:** Earl Little killed in streetcar accident – Malcolm later claims Ku Klux Klan responsible.
- **1938:** Louise Little declared mentally ill and institutionalised.
- **1939:** Malcolm sent to juvenile home. Does well at school, earning straight As.
- **1940:** Moves in with half-sister Ella Collins in Boston, where he works number of menial jobs.
- **1941:** Moves in with half-sister Ella Collins in Boston, where he works number of menial jobs.
- **1943:** Responds to army draft by saying he wants to fight for Japan and kill whites. Found mentally unfit for military service.
- **1946:** Convicted of grand larceny, breaking and entering, and firearms possession. Jailed for 8-10 years.
- **1948:** Siblings introduce him to writings of Nation of Islam (NOI) leader, Elijah Muhammad (above), also in prison. They begin to correspond.
- **1952:** Paroled from prison, Malcolm moves to Detroit and joins NOI. Rejects surname “Little” as slave name, and becomes known as Malcolm X. Begins recruitment drive to raise NOI membership.
- **1953:** Triples membership of Detroit’s Temple No. 1 in one year. Appointed assistant minister, and later first minister of Boston’s Temple No. 11.
- **1954:** Appointed chief minister of Harlem’s Temple No. 7 in New York City. Over next five years he boosts NOI membership to 40,000 (supporting 49 temples).
- **1956:** Marries Betty Sanders, who becomes Betty X.
- **1957:** Apr: Malcolm sues New York City for police brutality after savage beating of Temple member and wins largest settlement in city’s history, propelling him to national attention. FBI consider him “key figure” meriting significant surveillance.
- **1958:** Jul: TV documentary profiles NOI and “rise of black racism”, alarming white community and nascent civil rights movement.
- **1960:** Malcolm establishes newspaper Muhammad Speaks.
- **1961:** Elijah Muhammad appoints Malcolm national representative of NOI. Malcolm increasingly asked to lecture at colleges and participate in media debates.
- **1962:** Apr: Malcolm urges action after police kill unarmed secretary of Los Angeles Temple, but Elijah Muhammad resists calls for aggression.
- **1963:** Malcolm appalled to learn Elijah Muhammad has had three children with at least three of his young secretaries – their relationship cools.
- **1965:** Jan: Malcolm meets with two NOI secretaries filing paternity suits against Elijah Muhammad.
- **1965, Jan:** Malcolm says assassination of President John F. Kennedy is “case of chickens coming home to roost,” citing foul play by U.S. around world. Elijah Muhammad forbids Malcolm from teaching or talking to press for 90 days.
- **1966:** Jan: Malcolm removed as NOI national representative and minister of Harlem Temple No. 7.
- **1967:** Feb: Malcolm assassinated in New York City. Over next five years, NOI membership triples, while it triples. Malcolm appalled to learn Elijah Muhammad has had three children with at least three of his young secretaries – their relationship cools.
- **1965:** Jan: Malcolm meets with two NOI secretaries filing paternity suits against Elijah Muhammad.
- **1965:** Jan: Malcolm appalled to learn Elijah Muhammad has had three children with at least three of his young secretaries – their relationship cools.
- **1968:** Mar: Malcolm assassinated in New York City.
- **1969:** Mar 26: Malcolm’s mother released from Michigan mental hospital.
- **1971:** Feb 14: Malcolm’s home in Queens firebombed. He says it is “upon the orders of Elijah Muhammad”.
- **1971:** Feb: Malcolm’s home in Queens firebombed. He says it is “upon the orders of Elijah Muhammad”.
- **1971:** Feb 21: Malcolm X assassinated 50 years ago.

Sources: PBS, The Estate of Malcolm X Pictures; Associated Press. © GRAPHIC NEWS
Kettlebells may improve aerobic fitness

By Madeline Kennedy

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winging heavy kettlebells may offer an aerobic workout in addition to strength improvements, a small study suggests.

Female soccer players who trained with kettlebells for one month significantly increased their aerobic capacity, while traditional circuit weight training did not have the same effect, California researchers found.

Theirs is one of the first studies to find the effects of kettlebell training over time, said study leader J. Asher Falatic, of the Kinesiology department at San Jose State University.

Kettlebells are circular weights with handles at the top. They’ve been used for centuries but have gained popularity recently, according to Alexander Koch, program coordinator for exercise science at Lenoir-Rhyne University in North Carolina.

“Because of its shape, it differs from a traditional dumbbell and can be used to help train multiple parts of the body,” Falatic said in an email.

He and his colleagues measured the effect of kettlebell exercise on aerobic capacity, which is the ability of the heart and lungs to consume oxygen and deliver it to the muscles.

“Aerobic capacity, also known as fitness, is an important predictor of health and longevity,” said Lars Andersen, a professor of musculoskeletal disorders at The National Research Centre for the Working Environment in Denmark, who was not involved in the study.

Seventeen female NCAA Division I college soccer players participated in the study. Nine were placed in the kettlebell group and eight in a comparison group that did circuit training instead.

The groups were not randomly assigned. Women were included in the kettlebell group only if they showed proper technique for the “snatch” exercise—swinging the weight down between the legs and then lifting it up over the head, alternating between arms. The researchers write in the Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research that this was done to prevent injury.

Both groups trained for 20 minutes, three days a week, in addition to their usual off-season training.

The circuit training involved multiple free-weight and body-weight exercises including squats, sit-ups and sprints. The kettlebell group did the snatch exercise.

After four weeks, aerobic capacity in the kettlebell group rose by 6 percent but didn’t change significantly in the circuit training group.

The authors say the results might only apply to athletes or people with some kettlebell experience. Earlier studies in relatively inactive people did not show significant improvement.

Still, Koch said, kettlebells can be used at any fitness level. A popular recommendation is a starting weight of 8kg (about 18 pounds) for women and 12kg (about 26 lbs) for women of “average fitness level.”

He warns, however, “Kettlebells are not a magic bullet, they are simply one viable option people have to exercise with to increase their aerobic capacity.”

Kettlebells are an alternative to traditional aerobic fitness such as running. Finding exercise modes one enjoys is the key to building a lifelong habit of movement and optimal health.


Vitamin D deficiency in kids ups heart disease risk

Low levels of vitamin D in childhood increases the risk of heart disease later, a study has suggested.

Low levels of vitamin D in childhood were associated with subclinical atherosclerosis over 25 years later in adulthood, the findings showed. Atherosclerosis correlates with cardiovascular risk factors, and predicts cardiovascular events.

“Our results showed an association between low vitamin D levels in childhood and increased occurrence of subclinical atherosclerosis in adulthood,” said one of the authors Markus Juonala from University of Turku Finland.

The association was independent of conventional cardiovascular risk factors including serum lipids, blood pressure, smoking, diet, physical activity, obesity indices and socioeconomic status,” Juonala added.

The study examined the relationship between low childhood vitamin D levels and adult increased carotid intima–thickness (IMT), a marker of structural atherosclerosis.

The researchers analysed 2,148 participants aged three-18 years at baseline. They were re-examined at age 30-45 years. Participants with low levels of vitamin D in childhood had a significantly higher prevalence of high-risk IMT as adults, the findings showed.

The study was published in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism.

Smoking shrinks your brain: Study

Long-term smoking could cause thinning of a vital brain part in which critical cognitive functions such as memory, language and perception take place, a new study has warned.

Smoking appears to accelerate the thinning of the brain’s cortex, the outer layer of the brain. A thinned brain cortex is associated with adult cognitive decline.

“Smokers should be informed that cigarettes could hasten the thinning of the brain’s cortex, which could lead to cognitive deterioration,” said the study’s lead author Sherif Karama, assistant professor of psychiatry at the McGill University in Canada.

Stopping smoking helps to restore at least part of the cortex’s thickness, the findings showed.

The study involved 244 male and 280 female participants with average age of 73. All the participants were examined as children in 1947 as part of the Scottish Mental Survey.

“We found that current and ex-smokers had, at age 73, many areas of thinner brain cortex than those that never smoked. Subjects who stopped smoking seem to partially recover their cortical thickness for each year without smoking,” Karama pointed out.

The apparent recovery process is slow, however, and incomplete.

Heavy ex-smokers in the study who had given up smoking for more than 25 years still had a thinner cortex, the study, published in the journal Molecular Psychiatry, added.

Agencies
Apple is working on creating a car, WSJ

By Abhirup Roy & Alexei Oreskovic

Apple Inc has a secret lab working on the creation of an Apple-branded electric car, the Wall Street Journal reported on Friday, citing people familiar with the matter.

The project has designed a vehicle that looks like a minivan, the newspaper quoted one person as saying. It would take years to finish the project, and it is not certain if Apple will eventually build a car, the Journal said.

The news signals that Apple is sharpening its ambitions for automotive technology, which has become a prime area of interest for Silicon Valley companies ranging from Google Inc to ride-sharing firm Uber to electric car-maker Tesla Motors Inc.

Along with HomeKit and HealthKit, the idea is to extend Apple's software dominance into industries including home devices, healthcare, and automobiles.

There is no better illustration of smartphone addiction than this app

By Caitlin Dewey

Wrapping up: this is what we've come to: We now need to control our app use. Pocket Points, a recent-ish invention by students at California's Chico State, shot up Apple's trending chart as millions of college students anointed it the hot new thing. The app's premise is pretty simple: Just show up to class, lock your phone, and earn points redeemable at local businesses. Because if a lifetime of crushing student loan debt wasn't reason enough to pay attention in class, Pocket Points provides another incentive: free snacks!

"You guys rock!!" tweeted one student at Penn State, where the app launched two weeks ago. (Current in-state tuition: $34,000/year.) "Couldn't imagine going to class without this app.

Pocket Points, which started at Chico State in September, has since expanded butizer the company's Twitter account, to the Universities of Michigan, Arizona and Colorado—Boulder, San Diego, and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

While it's unclear exactly how many students use the app, it already had 3,000 users at Chico State within weeks of launch. In fact, Twitter is now crowded with the cries of deprived students, begging the app to come to their campus next: What about Austin! What about high school? What incentives do we have to pay attention in class?!

In all seriousness, though, this type of "productivity" app — Silicon Valley speak for apps that address app addiction — is really a booming field. Moment will track how much time you spend on your phone every day, even enforcing screen-free periods like a "family dinner time." Pause invites users to "compete" over who can keep airplane mode on the longest. ChecKy logs how many times you unlock your phone, and then (oddly!) encourages you to tweet it.

An app specifically for college classrooms — where, by all accounts, smartphones have become a scourge — is only the next logical step.

"I find it ridiculous that it takes an app to get students paying attention in class," wrote one college editorialist soon after the app launched. "(But) 'Pocket Points' is actually a really good idea and has the potential to be successful. You heard it here first, you guys. Big in 2015: technology that makes you use technology less.

WP-Bloomberg

Mattel, Google unveil new toy

By Todd C Frankel

After plenty of hype, Mattel and Google announced on Friday what they’ve been working on: a new View-Master that relies on Google’s virtual-reality Cardboard platform.

The new device allows children — the target market — to experience augmented or virtual reality with an immersive 3-D display for books or television shows. The updated View-Master resembles a pair of ski goggles and is powered by an Android smartphone.

The toy, which will go on sale this year at $29.99, works with a Mattel app and any Google Cardboard-compatible app. There are also View-Master reels with themes that enhance the experience.

Friday’s product unveiling followed days of heavy speculation about what Mattel and Google were cooking up. Some hoped Mattel, battered by a string of bad news including a stock price that has fallen 30 percent in a year, would introduce a game-changing toy — rattling the toy industry in the way the tech industry did with smartphones.

But the immediate reaction was disappointment.

"Meh," said toy industry analyst Sean McGowan with Needham & Co. "It’s what I thought — a licensed Google Cardboard," he wrote in an email. "It gives consumers affordable access to a VR-ish experience. But don’t they have that already?" Viewers that use Google Cardboard — which allows for an immersive experience with a smartphone — are made by several companies. Now, Mattel offers one.

"Absolutely not a game-changer," wrote Steph Wissink, a senior research analyst with Piper Jaffray. One hurdle Mattel faces with this product, Wissink said, will be convincing parents to hand over their smartphones for their children to play with — or buy another one.

Mattel will also need to create content for the View-Master app. "This will be new for them," Wissink wrote.

Friday’s announcement represents a rebirth for the View-Master — a toy that has been around since 1939. Generations of children used the toy’s cardboard photo wheels for stereoscopic viewing. But in recent years, the View-Master has languished. Mattel even stopped making it in-house, licensing it out to The Bridge Direct, a company that specializes in making the forgotten toys of yore, such as the Lite Brite and Fisher-Price’s classic record player.

WP-Bloomberg
LEARN ARABIC

With the Grocer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oureedou niśf keeloo mina alījoubz</td>
<td>I want half a kilo of bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoubda</td>
<td>Butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hal çindaka zoubda</td>
<td>Do you have butter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardeen</td>
<td>Sardine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tona</td>
<td>Ton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gram</td>
<td>Gram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Çasal</td>
<td>Honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Čaşeer</td>
<td>Juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Açţinee owqiyatou ğoubna</td>
<td>Give me 200 grams of cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haleeb</td>
<td>Milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milih</td>
<td>Salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saboon</td>
<td>Soap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayda</td>
<td>Egg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ç = 'a' in 'ag

Baby Blues                       by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman

Blondie                                         by Dennis Young and Denis Lebrun

Sherman’s Lagoon  by Jim Toomey

Today in History

February 15, 2002

A second set of gold medals was awarded in the pairs skating at the Salt Lake City Olympics following allegations that the competition had been fixed

1965: U.S. singer and jazz pianist Nat King Cole died
1965: Canada’s new national flag, featuring the iconic red maple leaf, was officially inaugurated
1990: Britain and Argentina restored full diplomatic ties after the war in the Falkland Islands in 1982
1992: Two Spaniards completed the first east-west balloon flight across the Atlantic when they arrived in Venezuela from Spain

Picture: Associated Press © GRAPHIC NEWS

ALL IN THE MIND
Can you find the hidden words? They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards or backwards.

Baby Blues                       by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman

Blondie                                         by Dennis Young and Denis Lebrun

Sherman’s Lagoon  by Jim Toomey

A VIEW TO A KILL, DIE ANOTHER DAY, DR NO, GEORGE LAZENBY, GOLDENEYE, GOLDFINGER, HONEY RYDER, JAMES BOND, JAWS, LIVE AND LET DIE, MAGDA, MONEYPENNY, MOONRAKER, NAOMI, NICKNACK, ODDBOBBLE, PIERCE BRODSMAN, ROGER MOORE, SEAN CONNERY, TEEHEE, THUNDERBALL, TIFFANY CASE, VARGAS, WHISPER.
How to play Hyper Sudoku:
A Hyper Sudoku Puzzle is solved by filling the numbers from 1 to 9 into the blank cells. A Hyper Sudoku has unlike Sudoku 13 regions (four regions overlap with the nine standard regions). In all regions the numbers from 1 to 9 can appear only once. Otherwise, a Hyper Sudoku is solved like a normal Sudoku.

How to play Kakuro:
The kakuro grid, unlike in sudoku, can be of any size. It has rows and columns, and dark cells like in a crossword. And, just like in a crossword, some of the dark cells will contain numbers. Some cells will contain two numbers. However, in a crossword the numbers reference clues. In a kakuro, the numbers are all you get! They denote the total of the digits in the row or column referenced by the number. Within each collection of cells - called a run - any of the numbers 1 to 9 may be used but, like sudoku, each number may only be used once.

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### CINEMA / TV LISTINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cinema</th>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peninsula</strong></td>
<td><strong>Anegan (2D/Tamil)</strong></td>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>Showing at VILLAGE &amp; CITY CENTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Yennai Arindhaal (2D/Tamil)</strong></td>
<td>17:30</td>
<td>PLUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Roy (2D/Hindi)</strong></td>
<td>19:15</td>
<td>My Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Soul Tahanum (2D/Malayalam)</strong></td>
<td>21:00</td>
<td>Better Off Ted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (2D/Hindi)</strong></td>
<td>22:30</td>
<td>Better Call Saul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The Boy Next Door (2D/Thriller)</strong></td>
<td>15:00</td>
<td>Crime Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Jaguar Accusing (2D/Action)</strong></td>
<td>18:00</td>
<td>Dangerous Encounters</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>American Sniper (2D/Action)</strong></td>
<td>21:00</td>
<td>Encounters Live Fear Or Die</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Yellowbird (2D/Animation)</strong></td>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>4 Ice Crash Investigation</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Picket 43 (2D/Malayalam)</strong></td>
<td>16:30</td>
<td>Live Edens</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sou2 Tafahom (2D/Arabic)</strong></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>101 East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Playing It Cool (2D/Comedy)</strong></td>
<td>21:30</td>
<td>Love &amp; Other Drugs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Yellowbird (2D/Animation)</strong></td>
<td>00:30</td>
<td>The Mindy Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>The Gambler (2D/Drama)</strong></td>
<td>01:00</td>
<td>The Mindy Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Yellowbird (2D/Animation)</strong></td>
<td>02:30</td>
<td>Rollerball</td>
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<td><strong>Son of A Gun (2D/Action)</strong></td>
<td>04:00</td>
<td>Saving Mr. Banks</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>American Sniper (2D/Action)</strong></td>
<td>05:00</td>
<td>The Secret Life of Walter Mitty</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Yellowbird (2D/Animation)</strong></td>
<td>06:00</td>
<td>The Secret Life of Walter Mitty</td>
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**List by Theatre**

### LANDMARK PLAZA

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<thead>
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<th>Cinema</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Royal Plaza</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yennai Arindhaal (2D/Tamil)</strong></td>
<td>17:00</td>
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**List by Theatre**
Oregon city to post signs about attacking owl

MSNBC host Rachel Maddow inspired Oregon’s capital to post new warning signs in a park where four runners reported attacks from an angry owl likely defending its nest against perceived threats.

One jogger, a surgeon, said the owl hit him twice in Bush’s Pasture Park in Salem, and so hard he thought he was having a stroke or an aneurysm. Another said the bird shredded his long-distance running cap and nicked his scalp.

Maddow suggested on air last week that the city should post a vivid yellow warning sign using the iconic pedestrian stick figure bent forward at a run. Above, claws extended, is a raptor.

Salem officials liked the idea.

Mark Becktel, parks and transportation services manager, said the city secured rights to reproduce the sign and is posting 20 of them.

“It’s just making people aware that there’s an owl there that for whatever reason swoops down and goes after people’s hats,” he said.

Officials previously put up handbills with printed warnings that Maddow said weren’t strong enough.

Birders say the assailant is a barred owl, an aggressive bird that’s especially so during the current mating season.

Among her topics were a Republican leader who collcts urine samples for scientific research and allegations that Gov John Kitzhaber’s fiancee used his office to win contracts for her consulting business.

Politically, “Oregon is nuts,” Maddow said.

But what amused her most was the threat “looming over the state of Oregon right now, looming silently and occasionally swooping down and terrifying the state — and sometimes drawing a little blood.”

John Kleeman, Parks Operations Supervisor for Salem, installs signs warning visitors of owl attacks.

Coming in third, at 188 votes, was “Rachel Maddowl.” The MSNBC host suggested the sign design during a 14-minute segment on February 5 about wackiness in Oregon.

Among her topics were a Republican leader who collects urine samples for scientific research and allegations that Gov John Kitzhaber’s fiancee used his office to win contracts for her consulting business.

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AP