

Local

# US paraplegic athlete Radetic visits 312 Cafe

## Racer took part in Aquabike World Championship's Kuwait Grand Prix



KUWAIT: Anthony Radetic poses with staff and management of 312 Cafe. —Photos Ben Garcia



US Embassy Cultural Attache Katherine Garry welcomes Anthony Radetic as he arrives at 312 Cafe.

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: 312 Cafe welcomed on Monday US athlete Anthony Radetic, a former US Army Black Hawk pilot and paraplegic athlete, at Dalal Complex in Salmiya. He represented his country at the Aquabike World Championship's Kuwait Grand Prix, which was held in Kuwait for the second time. 312 Cafe is a superstore that recruits staff with special needs. Radetic was welcomed at 312 Cafe by US Embassy Cultural Attache Katherine Garry and the 312 Cafe founders George El Khoury and Tareq Abdeen.

"Having you with us today is a privilege, and we thank you and the US Embassy for choosing our restaurant. We are very proud of Radetic as he is an inspiration to the people and our staff," Khoury said as he welcomed Radetic and introduced him to the staff. Radetic thanked the embassy for introducing him to 312 Cafe and its staff. "It's tough and very challenging for them, but by giving special needs people the opportunity to work as normal human beings is very commendable," he said.

Radetic was injured in a motor vehicle accident

in 2004. "I was 25 years old, and the doctors told me that I would never walk again, which reverberates in my mind even now," he said. "I was in the military, doing my routine work every day, flying a Black Hawk helicopter, jumping and engaging myself in sports. I have been to war zones, but getting this news from doctors that I would never walk again was a nightmare. It changed everything. All regular activities I was enjoying every day were shattered and my life changed entirely. The things that I loved could no longer be performed again, like brushing my teeth. It was a huge challenge and it took me years to accept and figure out what to do next," he said.

"I had to face reality and went on to discover various sports that could be played by people in a wheelchair. I tried the aquabike (jet ski) and felt that it was great, because I knew the sport and could

race and compete with normal guys. So I concentrated in aquabike sports: it empowered me, as if I was a normal person. We all want to be recognized as normal beings," he pointed out.

Radetic was asked about his experience in Kuwait in participating in the jet ski competition. "It was an amazing experience to compete here in Kuwait. People here are very hospitable, generous, positive, gracious and kind. The Aquabike Grand Prix in which I participated was one of the best. The races were all well planned and professionally handled. Although this was my first race in Kuwait, I liked the experience very

much," he added.

Katherine Garry took pride in Radetic and his accomplishments and recognition as a paraplegic athlete. "He is not just a great aquabike racing champion, but also an inspiration to everyone.

Sports diplomacy is a part of the US State Department's activities throughout the world. He came here in his capacity as a US athlete and competitor. We are grateful for meeting him and introducing him to the local community," she said.

Garry noted that last month, US Ambassador to Kuwait Alina L. Romanowski hosted a disability rights roundtable at the US Embassy with Khoury and Abdeen, the founders of the 312 Cafe. "312 Cafe employs people with disabilities by giving them hope, opportunity and a new life. We invited Anthony to meet the people behind this cafe and the people employed in the cafe. Kuwait is almost back to normal now and we are seeing a lot of outdoor activities and events, but we are also very much aware of the COVID-19 protocols. Our cultural calendar has been piling up with many events. In the near future, we hope to meet new celebrities from other countries too," she concluded.

The name 312 Cafe was derived from the soul of people with disabilities, as the International Day of Disabled Persons is observed annually on Dec 3 (3/12), based on a proclamation that was signed in 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly.

“ Aquabike sports have empowered me ”



## Kuwait's mobile elderly care: Above, beyond call of duty during pandemic

KUWAIT: The department of mobile services for the elderly, part of the Ministry of Social Affairs, went above and beyond the call of duty especially during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, providing necessary care for those in need. During full and partial lockdowns, the elderly care units not only attended to the needs of the elderly, but they also continued to follow up with them to ensure their safety and wellbeing both physically and psychologically. In this regard, undersecretary for the



social care sector at the Ministry of Social Affairs Musallam Al-Subaie revealed that the mobile elderly care unit served 3,263 individuals. He noted that the mobile units usually provide more than medical care, extending its services to include social services and moral support.

During the pandemic, phone hotlines were established to enable the elderly to release and ease their psychological pressure by speaking to operators throughout the difficult times, said Subaie. He pointed out that with the gradual return of normalcy, mobile elderly services will be resuming operations in a higher pace to attend to the needs of the elderly as quick and efficient as possible. From medical staff to professional social workers, the mobile elderly service units are all "revved up and ready to go", he affirmed. Meanwhile, the official touched on other services provided to the elderly, saying that there were some 26,204 individuals benefiting from the Awlawiya (priority) card, which enabled the elderly to finalize their documents and



papers at various state and private institutes. Those benefiting from parking spots dedicated to the elderly reached 1,959, he said. — KUNA

## KRCS official: Kuwait embodies honorable image of tolerance

DUBAI: Kuwait Red Crescent Society official said yesterday that State of Kuwait has embodied an honorable image of tolerance and coexistence under the rule of law and the principles of justice and equality. This came in a lecture delivered by Abdulrahman Al-Furaih, head of the KRCS delegation participating in Expo 2020 Dubai at Kuwait's pavilion, about 'tolerance and promoting it in societies', on the International Day for Tolerance.

Kuwait played a prominent role in perpetuating tolerance and renouncing violence through its belief in human rights for peaceful coexistence, as asserted in its constitution, stated Furaih. He pointed out that the Kuwaiti experience in tolerance and coexistence has become a distinguished model to be followed on both Arab and regional fronts. Furaih explained that the rulers of Kuwait have established and preserved this model in the context of consolidating national unity and spreading a culture of moderation and coexistence.

KRCS provided a lot of humanitarian and medical aid to those in need and building medical and

educational projects, added Furaih. The projects included many countries that were exposed to natural disasters or humanitarian crises, in addition to providing aid to families in need in Kuwait throughout the year. He stressed the importance of spreading the values of tolerance and taking all positive measures necessary to strengthen it, considering it a necessity for peace and economic and social progress. Furaih mentioned that the UN General Assembly urged member states to celebrate the International Day for Tolerance on November 16th each year since 1996. — KUNA



DUBAI: Members of the KRCS delegation participating in Expo 2020 Dubai. —KUNA



KUWAIT: The Umm Al Hayman wastewater expansion project. — KUNA

## Minister underlines importance of wastewater project

KUWAIT: Umm Al Hayman wastewater expansion project is the most vital venture in the Ministry's development plan, Minister of Public Works and State for Municipal Affairs Dr Rana Al-Fares said yesterday. In a statement, Fares said this project is being executed in coordination by Kuwait's Authority for Partnership Projects, the public and the private sectors. Moreover, it envisages treating sewage water in southern areas in Kuwait. Its treatment capacity of 500,000 m3/d can be expanded in the future and ultimately reach 700,000 m3/d. The Ministry of Public Works won the best project award on sewage water treatment for the Umm Al-Hayman project (PFI AWARDS 2020), presented by Infrastructure Journal. — KUNA

### News in brief

#### MP proposes less, more flexible working hours

KUWAIT: MP Mohammad Al-Huwaila yesterday proposed reducing working hours for public sector employees and giving workers the option to have more flexible working hours or choose to work part-time. The lawmaker said that there are studies which support the argument that reducing working hours could improve services and workers' productivity, arguing that the current system forces workers to focus mainly on working hours instead of productivity because attendance remains the main standard for performance assessment.

#### Labor allowance paid during military service

KUWAIT: The Civil Service Council has approved a Public Authority for Manpower request to continue paying labor allowance to Kuwaitis working in the private sector during their military service period. The proposal came as part of efforts to support citizens working in the private sector and encourage them to seek jobs outside of the public sector, the authority's deputy director general Abdullah Al-Mutawtah said in a press statement yesterday.

#### Kuwait slams Houthis attack

KUWAIT: The Foreign Ministry condemned and denounced, in the strongest terms, the continued attempts by the terrorist Houthi militia in threatening the security of Saudi Arabia by targeting the city of Khamis Mushait with a drone. In a statement, the ministry added that the continuation of these aggressive acts and escalation, including the targeting of civilians, trade, and naval traffic represent a flagrant violation of international law and humanitarian law and requires, and forces the international community to act quickly and decisively to deter these threats and hold the perpetrators accountable. The ministry reiterated Kuwait' full support to the Kingdom and stand with all the measures it takes to preserve its security, stability and sovereignty.

#### Kuwait condemns Liverpool blast

KUWAIT: The Foreign Ministry on Monday expressed Kuwait's condemnation and denunciation of the terrorist bombing act that took place in Britain's Liverpool on Sunday. In a statement, the ministry affirmed Kuwait's solidarity with the United Kingdom, and support to all measures it takes to maintain security and stability. The statement stressed Kuwait's supportive stance rejecting all forms of terrorism and violence.