

Outdoors 2010: Amazing Carnival attracts scores of visitors to AUB

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Families thronged to the AUB campus on Saturday May 21 and Sunday May 22 to take part in the vibrant circus and carnival at this year's Outdoors festivities.

Food, games, concerts, parades, and an assortment of carnival shows made the AUB campus the place to be this weekend. Rich in variety, food choices ranged from Chinese noodles, to Saudi kabseh, to the usual carnival treats like popcorn, hotdogs, and cotton candy. Food sponsorship was by seafood distributor Siblou, but other eateries were also present: Crepaway, Costa Coffee, Dunkin' Donuts, and Baskin Robbins.



One of the food booths that stood out was the one hosted by MMKN, a new nongovernmental organization that is part of the Civic Welfare League and promotes rural woman development. Manning the booth was Ghada Feghali who explained: "Women from rural villages bake these cookies at home, and we sell them at Outdoors under the supervision of the Nutrition Department."

The stand also featured hand-stitched towels and embroidered items, also worked at home by the rural women, and bearing the banner, "From Our Hands."

Meanwhile, a number of AUB student clubs hosted carnival-style games at the Outdoors fair. These included paintball, car races, arcade games, pinball, t-shirt painting, fortune telling, water-dunking, rock-climbing, and much more. At one of the stands decked out with colorful flags, the Saudi Club was hosting a Playstation 3 World Cup tournament. Biology Sophomore Mishari Al Abdulwahed said, "We brought the World Cup 2010 season early to AUB. Our aim is to foster friendly competition and contribute to the carnival atmosphere."

At the Special Olympics stand, carnival-goers could play games with people with special needs. "This stand is a symbol of integration; people can come and play with our special needs members and know that [they] are essentially no different than they are. We are all here and we are all equal," said Joy Jamal Eddine, an Education Sophomore.

"Ye Olde Tales" was an improvisation game featured at the Toastmaster's International stand. "At Toastmasters, we specialize in practicing communication and leadership skills. This fun game with five-question categories allows the carnival-goers to practice their on-the-spot thinking.

It's an introduction to the sorts of activities we practice at Toastmaster's to make us better speakers," said Mohamad El Chami, a Master's student in Physiology.

President Peter Dorman and his wife, Kathy, were among the carnival-goers this year. "I think Outdoors is wonderful not only for the students, who are able to practice their organizational

skills and reflect their creativity, but also for the community, because it is an opportunity to bring families onto campus, making AUB an active part of Ras Beirut," said President Dorman.

A motley group of clowns, unicycle riders, and jugglers roamed the Outdoors grounds. Abed Salam, a third year Electrical and Computer Engineering major, was dressed in full clown regalia while he went about his job as safety officer.

"We want to make sure Outdoors goes off without a hitch, so we dress up as clowns to blend in while we take care of safety," he said.

As usual, a medley of bands wowed the crowds at Outdoors this year. Some of the featured bands included Pulse, The AUB House Band, Extorted, Bringing it Back, Payphone Rendezvous, Tim Hassal and the August Company, Neverland, Fawzi and the Band, and many more. "I really liked the band turn-out this year," said English Literature Junior Lama El-Kallassi. "I think it's great that AUB is helping to encourage young artists in Lebanon."

Outdoors 2010 featured a series of carnival-style shows, including puppet shows and magic and clown shows in the Kid's Area, as well as juggling shows, devil sticks shows, acrobat shows, unicycle shows, and parades in the West Hall area. One of the jugglers, Mohamad Aziz, had come with the circus group Cirquna Falasteen. "We are a Palestinian circus team that came into being to help bring smiles to the children in Palestinian refugee camps all over Lebanon," he said. "Today, we're at AUB to spread that same sort of joy to the children here at Outdoors," he said.