

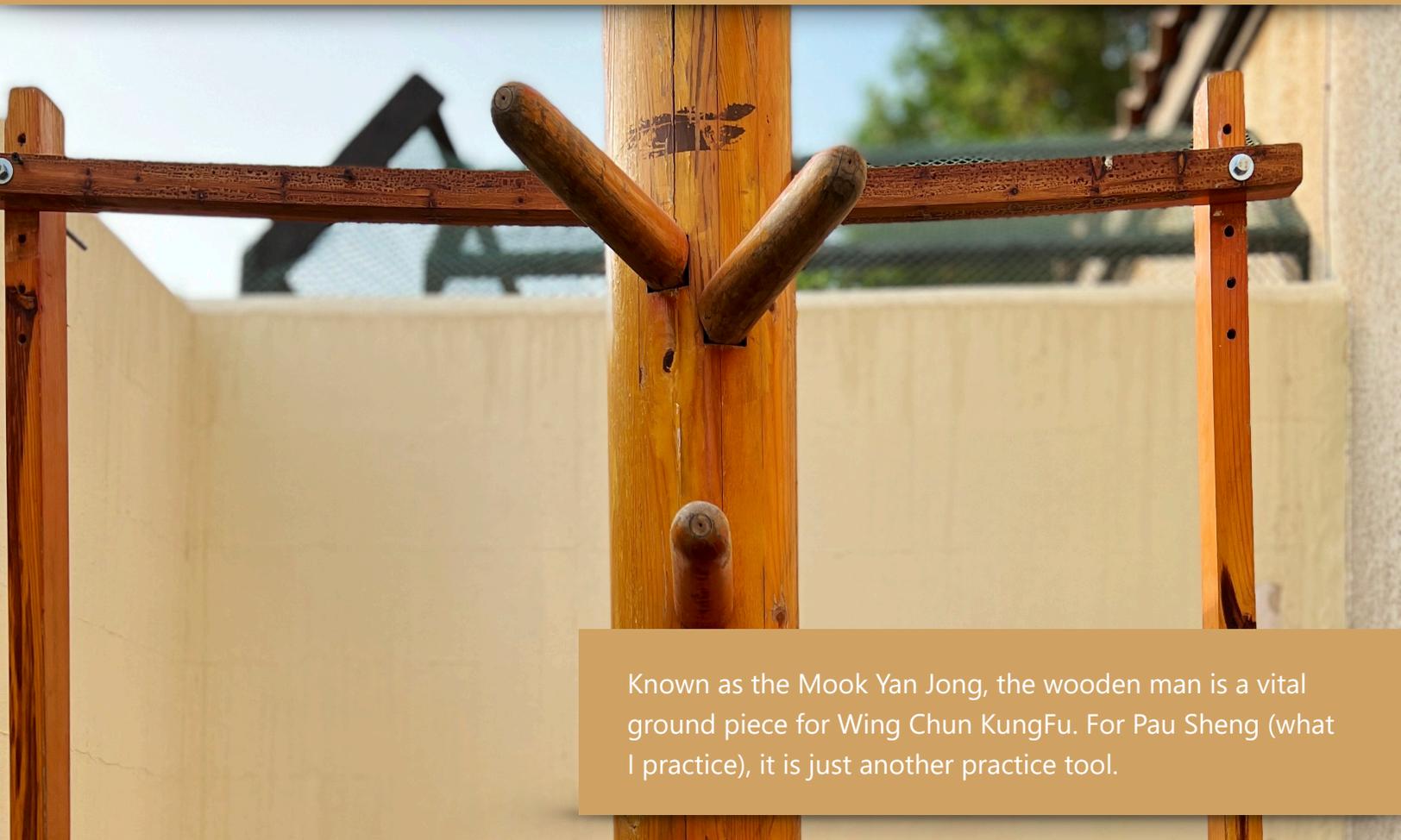


St. Some Times

V259 August

- ✓ The Ritz Bahrain Overnight
- ✓ The Call of the Wooden Man
- ✓ New Teachers
- ✓ A Small Change in My Job

THE WOODEN MAN



Known as the Mook Yan Jong, the wooden man is a vital ground piece for Wing Chun KungFu. For Pau Sheng (what I practice), it is just another practice tool.

THE COMMITMENT TO TRAIN SOLO

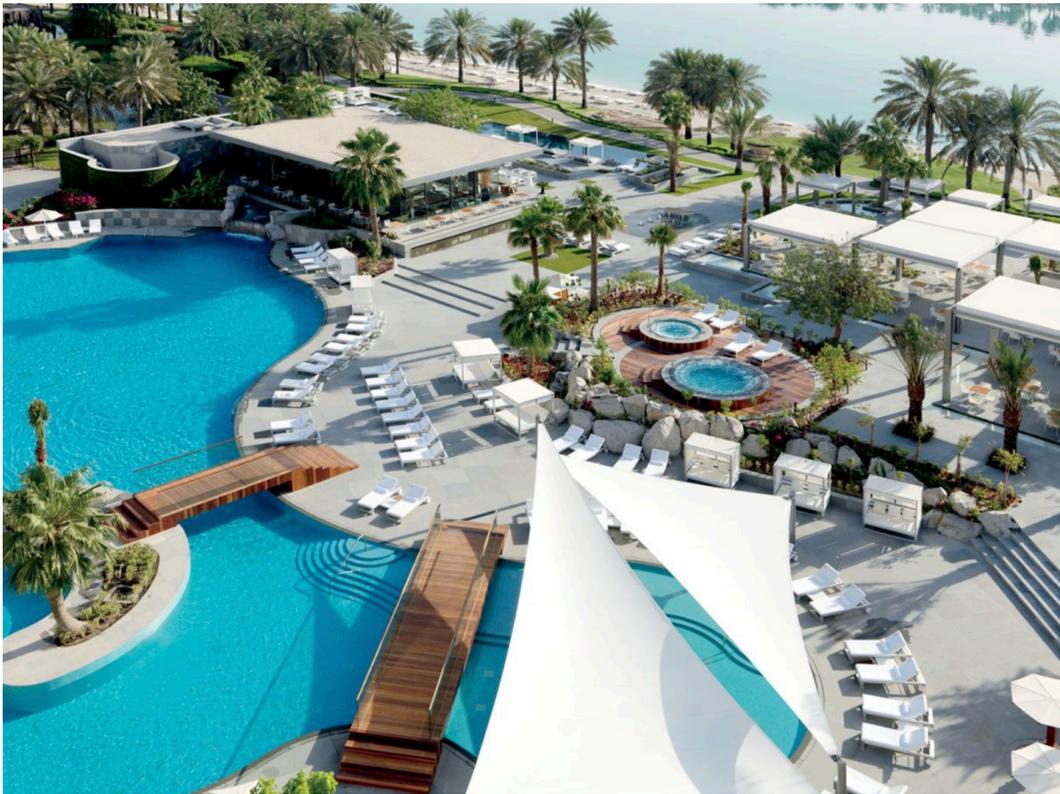
Since my “Sifu” is gone home, there is no one else to push me to train a few times each week, show up for practice, or continue training at all.

I committed to learn Pau Sheng about two years ago. My commitment to my master (Sifu), as is his to his Sifu (my Sigong), is for life. The idea is Pau Sheng is not just a martial art you practice. It is a way of living a balanced, ethical, healthy life. It is a journey of continual learning. The end is just the beginning. The knowledge is passed on from master to student throughout time, as it has been for centuries. Unlike Wing Chun, Tai Kwon Do,

or even Karate, Pau Sheng is not just loosely based on the ancient forms of Kung Fu. Pau Sheng is one of the ancient forms. No belts. No forms. No written texts. Pau Sheng is not like those sport forms of today’s martial arts.

The wooden man stands outside of my door for me to use. Just one of the many training tools I use. But now it’s in my yard. Not Dave’s. It is now part of my training, part of my commitment.

They say it takes a minimum of 10,000 hours to become a master of a skill. No such thing with Pau Sheng. As soon as you reach a “perceived” level, of which there isn’t, you have just begun.



A WEEKEND MISSION

The Ritz is way out of my league for an overnight stay. I am perfectly happy staying at a sleazy hotel, a Motel 6 along the highway, or a tent under some forest trees. A place to sleep. But a trip to Bahrain is not really about sleeping. It's more than that. It's a mission for: relaxation, no worries, pampering, maximum time for the mission, and an option for feasting and drinking merriment.

PUTTIN' ON THE RITZ: A NIGHT LIKE THE OTHER HALF LIVE

Pampering. Our driver dropped us off around 11am. We skipped the front desk, basically, and headed up to the 7th floor. While the concierge "team" got our paperwork situated, we sat around and had a beer/drink while we lounged on the couches in the Club Lounge.

Our rooms weren't ready so we left our bags with the concierge "team" so they could put them in the rooms. The concierge arranged the club car (golf cart) to take us to Bushido's Restaurant for our big Friday Brunch.

Let me stop for a second and explain this is the process that Kent and Carla invest in every six weeks or so. Basically, by design, it is a self care weekend. I followed Kent and Carla without any personal changes. I simply wanted to experience and share in their method of joy. Except pedicure or massage. I don't enjoy those. (cont...pg 6)

CLUB LEVEL ≈ \$400/NIGHT

There are a lot of benefits we take advantage of.

- ✓ Checkin at 3pm, but often earlier
- ✓ If checkin 3pm, you can still go up to the club lounge for food & bebies at noon or they'll hold your baggage
- ✓ noon til 8pm - beer/wine/food/nibbles available in club lounge
- ✓ amazing breakfast 630-11am.
- ✓ Checkout at noon. (or 3pm)

What a snazzy room! I have no need for such luxury! Supposedly, this Ritz is a highly rated Ritz. 5-star all the way! I agree. My stay was 5-star.





GREAT SHOWER, BUT WHAT IS THAT THING NEAR THE CRAPPER?

I love showers with a “raining” showerhead. Just stand directly below it and whoosh. Now, I consider myself pretty worldly, but this is my first bathroom lesson in a long, long time. I’ve seen standing/hover toilets, European cliff-style toilets, Asian tech toilets with a million buttons, American toilet bowls, even French-style Bidets.

Thoughts? Nope. Not a bidet. It’s got a faucet facing down. So, I guess there are three options to wipe: the obvious T.P, the butt hose (it’s attached to the wall next to the toilet) or this special sink. I guess this is for people that come from countries where it is important to only shake or eat with the right hand. This must be a left-hand sink, complete with a left-hand only hand towel.

PAMPERING... CONTINUED

Any appointments they made ahead of time would allow me more time sitting around in the club lounge with a beer.

Back to the brunch. It was amazing. Sushi was everywhere on tables. There was all the usual affair: cooked meats, dessert bar, bottomless rail drinks and beer (if you chose that package), and sushi. This Friday featured a semi-live Latina singer and drummer. I say semi-live because they used backup tracks and loose electronic keyboard accompaniment. Sorry to be a little more critical, but they didn't pay attention to any mixing for sound. We could barely hear the lyrics and the drummer girl whacked so loud it would drown out most of the other parts - plus she didn't play a beat that had anything to do with the song. Kent beat me to the bill so I get next brunch.

We called the concierge and the cart deposited us back in the hotel. I went to my opulent room for nap and Kent went for his pedicure appointment. Karla and I met for a beer in the lounge later and waited for Kent to return. Naturally, once Kent returned, we continued to take up space on the couches while we ate the club lounge light buffet and drank Coors Light bottles from the lounge fridge.

When I got to my room, it was freezing, all lit up, and the bed was made again (yes, with a little mint on the pillow). I fell asleep reading and woke up at midnight shivering. It felt like I was getting sick, but I opted to turn down the thermostat. Problem was, there were four buttons to push in the dark. The first button turned a warning red with an icon of a door and exclamation point! Pushing it again didn't turn it off. Oops. Damn. Emergency? I didn't know if I had alarmed security or emergency services so I immediately called the concierge.

Me: "Hello, I accidentally hit the emergency red button on the air con! No emergency. I just cannot turn it off."

Concierge: "Mr. Lemoine. No worries. It's not connected."

Then I accidentally turned up the thermostat from 17°C up to 24°C. I woke up at 5am in a pool of sweat, turned the thermo back down, and curled back into a semi-coma on the other half of the 100 ft² bed.

Guess what we did until 2:30 pm? Ate, drank, read books, and talked on the club lounge couches. Kent and Carla had another appointment and I came and went to my room, but we never really left our couches.

Opulence and blatant relaxation cost a lot, but I did my best to eat and drink the equivalent of at least half of the \$400 room bill in their lounge. It didn't work. I wasn't feeling one hundred percent for some reason. I have a new goal for next time. Perhaps I'll save enough to go again? That was fun. Maybe in another few months.

The bathroom was off the charts awesome!



A SIDE PASSION

Have you ever set up MS Office as a communication system for a small company? No? Neither have I until the other day. The last time I set up email for a company was Google Suite for my school in Venezuela (2009-2010). Somehow, in 2022, I became the I.T. guy for an emergent company that has a 90 degree upward trajectory growth plan. Simultaneously exciting and scary, I'm in %120.



THE SYMPHONY HAS BEEN WRITTEN

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Office 365





NEW STAFF !

The newbies have arrived. We haven't had a lot of new staff since Covidcation, but this year is a bit closer to "normal" as the training begins. Training in all tech is part of the process. Getting everyone in our building hooked up to corp and school tech is vital. This picture shows an activity I arranged to introduce Future Lab to the new staff. Fun was had by all...except middle school.

MY JOB IS A BIT DIFFERENT THIS YEAR

Last year, we were three teachers in Future Labs that also served technology for the school. This year, the admin hired a new teacher for the labs and moved over fourth grade teacher to our team. Then our team member that focused on the 1,000 school chrome books was moved to the front desk. So, who is going to teach the third lab and who is going to do all the tech for school (including Chromebooks)? "Therein lies the rub", as the bard said. Katherine and I will share. I got kicked out of my lab so we will use Katherine's (last year's) lab to teach every other week. So, every other week, I will be switching from teacher to full time techie (that has to sub for other teachers too). I have already addressed my feelings on this with the boss. Doomed to fail. K and I will make it work, somehow, but it will be far from an ideal teaching environment for the kids.

My Recent Hobby - Tech Support for a New Company



Office 365



Installing and managing the entire Office 365 Suite is a whopping pain, but I love it.

I'm just re-learning as I go, since I last managed MS products over 10 years ago.

Local time:
8:40pm



Dad calls his son. "Greg, how do I view
this video on my phone?"



Local Saudi time:
3:40 **AM**

Greg wakes up thinking
FAMILY EMERGENCY

I can only think of a precious few people on this earth I would
take a tech help call from at 3:40am.

Dad, I dare you to try this with Jason!

