



Reflections on Gratefulness Sarah Syed

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ!

All praise and thanks are due to Allah that we are both able to read this sentence!

Ustadh Usama Canon came to speak at the ACA festival and made a very profound statement: "Our biggest challenge... is to be grateful to Allah." Oftentimes, living in the midst of so much comfort I fail to even recognize what a luxury I have. I have become blasé to the references made about people living in unimaginable conditions around the world. We all cry and say ameen to the prayers made for them during conferences— but our daily **attitude** towards our blessings betrays that we do not truly even realize or appreciate the value of what we have, let alone thank Allah for it. This is how some of us are tested through poverty and others are tested through wealth.

I must ask myself whether I truly appreciate the blessing I

have in coming to a school like this— particularly considering the vast majority of people on earth unable to even imagine what I was given here. That is my test.

Finally, the one that does not thank the people does not thank Allah— I would like to thank the rest of the Editorial Board for their work in this newsletter!

All comments are welcome at:
acaedboard
@azacademy.org

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Major Events of Second Quarter

ACA Elementary Intl. Day:

ACA's Montessori & 1st thru 7th Grade delivered cultural presentations and dressed up in traditional clothing from places around the world! Diversity was beautifully visible.



Science Fair:

On Nov. 1st, elementary school held a science fair! Excited 3rd graders showed off posters, exploding volcanoes and beautiful models of the solar system amongst other projects!



weeks of December! Insha'Allah everyone did well and studied for the sake true knowledge and benefit in the hereafter.

Spelling Bee:

Always a competitive, exciting competition, the annual spelling bee this year on Dec. 1st, was won by 7th Grader **Farhan Rahman**, and runners-up were **Afra Nawar** and **Kinza Ahmad**.

Seccocon Poster Competition:

Seccocon held a poster competition that ACA students participated and won awards in! There were 3 categories: 5-8 yrs – winners **Fathimah Zahra** and **Aisha Hasan**, Gr. 3, 9-12 yrs **Umer Hasan**, Gr. 9, and 13-18 yrs was a non-ACA student. This was fundraising for the floods in Pakistan.

High School Guest Speaker:

9-12th grade were treated to a guest speaker in Islamic Studies class on Dec. 8th!



NHS Pancake Day

NHS held a pancake breakfast with the help of volunteers!



Botany Club

Elementary school got together to dig in the grounds outside the masjid and had a great time masha'Allah!



Contact the

Editorial Board

acaedboard@azacademy.org!

azacademy.org

Midterm Exams

7th thru 12th Grade had midterm exams in the middle



Students dressed in traditional clothing made a beautiful display on Intl. Day!

"The one thing I know ACA has taught me is to be proud of who you are and where you came from..."

- ACA Senior
Jasmine Afridi, 2010



Jasmine Afridi, ACA Senior

Club Updates

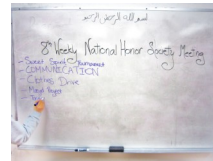
Student Council:

- High-school can drive in progress
- Snack cart approved – details on snacks and initiation will be posted soon
- Student Council Suggestion box
- Free Dress – Students must earn their free dress day, details are posted around school
- Field Trips – in progress
- Movie Night – in progress



NHS:

- NHS Masjid Project: Charted paperwork to begin in Quarter 3.
- Sweet Spirit Competition: Projected date; 14th Jan.
- Clothes Drive: Complete!
- Induction Ceremony: Projected last week of January.
- New officer position introduced: Disciplinarian
- Meetings changed to Fridays afterschool.



Editorial:

- Editorial meetings are held in the beginning of each quarter on Mondays or Wednesdays at lunchtime depending on availability and necessity.
- There are several new ideas for Editorial this upcoming quarter that must be discussed with the advisor, including going online and being more internet-based!
- If you would like to help out or offer suggestions with this please let us know at:

acaedboard
@azacademy.org

Senior Corner: Jasmine Afridi

Jasmine Afridi joined ACA this year as a Senior with her two sisters. Her vibrant personality and sweet smile will certainly be missed next year!

What college do you plan to attend?

"I'm planning to attend MCC and then transfer to ASU. "

Do you have any advice for the rest of the students?

"Advice- stay out of drama! High school should be fun, never procrastinate, don't ever miss a memorization day for Quran class, it

bites! Volunteer as much as you can, and choose your friends wisely."



What do you value that you had at ACA that you wouldn't have had anywhere else?

"The one thing I know ACA has taught me is not to be afraid to be a Muslim- be proud of who you are and where you came from."

What do you plan to do in life?

"I'm going to major in psychology and hopefully veer off to children with special

needs."

Random interesting fact about yourself?

"I've never been bowling haha!"

Favorite thing/memory/day/class at ACA.

"I think the one thing I'm going to miss about ACA is my class. I've grown to love them and care for them. In the beginning when I first came, I didn't know what to expect but I honestly wouldn't change my class for the world. <3"

Reflections on Ibrahim (عليه السلام) 2010 by Tarteel Al-Imam

How many of us are willing to make a sacrifice for the sake of Allah? Are our hearts so pure and filled with so much love for Him, that we'd be willing to sacrifice anything for His sake? We all know the story of Prophet Ibrahim's sacrifice, when Allah (SWT) showed him a vision in which he was to sacrifice his son, Ismail. We can only imagine what Ibrahim was going through. The Shaytan tried to tempt Ibrahim to disobey Allah's orders, but Ibrahim's faith in Allah allowed him to overcome these obstacles. Not only did Ibrahim (AS) have complete faith in Allah, but Ismail (AS) did as well. When Ibrahim said to Ismail: "O my Son, I see in a vision that I

offer you in sacrifice. Now see what is your view?" (37:102) Ismail replied saying: "O my father! Do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah so wills, patient and constant" (37:102) SubhanAllah. Imagine hearing these words from your parent. What frightening words for a child to hear.

The choice of Ibrahim was sacrifice for the sake of obedience, while Ismail's was self-sacrifice. In other words, martyrdom. Allah (SWT) from the beginning did not need for Ismail (AS) to be slaughtered. The point was not for Ibrahim (AS) to sacrifice his son, the point was rather that Ibrahim (AS)

place his complete trust in Allah and recognize that Allah always knew what was best for him! That is one of the reasons why Allah sent down a sheep in Isma'il (AS)'s place. Man has needs, but God has no needs.

The Ismail of Ibrahim was his son. But you, who is your Ismail? what is it? Your degree? Your reputation? Your position? Your money? Your home? Your car? Your beloved? Your family? Your knowledge? Your title? Your dress? Your fame? Your soul? Your beauty? Your strength? Your career?

May Allah make us among those who are willing to sacrifice this world for the hereafter, and among those who will enter Paradise, Ameen.



"The Ismail of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) was his son. But you, who is your Ismail?..."

"God revealed the Qur'an, and God is perfect..."
Ahmad AbdAllah, ACA Sophomore

Why are you a Muslim? by Ahmad AbdAllah

Some people are Muslim because they were born with a family that follows the religion of Islam. I, personally, was also born into a Muslim family, but that's not necessarily WHY I'm Muslim, it's more of how I BECAME Muslim. If I had the choice to convert without my parents slaughtering me for such an insane decision, I wouldn't convert, because Islam is full of proof that it is the one and only religion to lead you to Paradise. For example, the Harry Potter series is perhaps around 3000 pages, and has been analyzed and LOVED by millions of readers, and then that's the end of the discussion. When it comes to



the Qur'an, it's much shorter than 3000 pages, and is more than 1400 years old, and is STILL being analyzed. Scientists are still proving the Qur'an right as the days pass. The Prophet (SAW) has said so many things, 1400 years ago, that are being scientifically proven to be perfectly correct now— such as eating with your right hand. It has been proven that it aids the digestive system much more, and that the left hand is actually UN-healthy to eat with. Then the Prophet's Sunnah is also to sleep on your right side, and it turns out it was proven that lying on your stomach can cause back

problems, and lying on your left side can cause heart problems because the heart is on your left-side chest. Countless other sayings by the Prophet (SAW) AND God, are still being proven today, 1400 years later. Let's see a man-made book do that to mankind. That is why Islam is the truth, and of course, according to common sense, I would rather follow the truth, than follow a religion that is changed every once in a while. The Qur'an is perfect, because it applies to old times, modern day, and future years, where no other book can ever do that. This is because God revealed the Qur'an, and God is perfect, which means Islam is perfect.





"...Ferrari World is definitely the world's most amazing indoor theme park, sadly however it is located all the way in Abu Dhabi..."



"...Balloons adorned the fence of the soccer field where a petting zoo and rock climbing were set up to the delight of two 5th graders ..."



Vacation Planning- Ferrari World by Syed Umer

Ferrari World is an amusement park, which was opened on November 18, 2010. Ferrari World is the biggest indoor amusement park in the entire world, with over 2,200,000 square feet of area! The Ferrari World is conveniently located in an area with one the highest per capita income in the entire world, and just down the road from the Formula One circuit. The Formula one circuit is a world class race track for cars, by the way. Because of the convenient location, many people who are attending the Formula One races, come to the Ferrari World theme park. To be specific Ferrari World is in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Of course, since this theme park is sponsored by Ferrari; it must obviously house the world's fastest roller coaster. This coaster is called the Formula Rossa. The previous competitor for fastest roller coaster was called Kingda Ka in Six Flags, New Jersey, and

went at a blazing speed of 128 miles per hour. Guess how much this one goes at? A mind blowing 150 miles per hour! Naturally, since not everybody will have the guts or fulfill the physical requirements, there are nineteen other rides, including many for children such as the Junior Gt. Now the Junior GT is actually a unique ride,



because it is actually a training school for children, where they get their own mini Ferraris to ride in. They train the children to drive Ferraris!

If you happen to be one who does not enjoy rides at all, there is the second biggest collection of Fer-

raris at the Ferrari World. I mean, what could be better than seeing 50 years of Ferraris?

Oh, there is actually one better thing. You can simulate driving a Ferrari in a race course. You get to sit in an real Ferrari, but nothing is actually moving, except the screen. And if even that doesn't interest you... go shopping! They house the world's biggest Ferrari shop, and a store selling personalized Ferrari souvenirs. Finally, complimenting the theme park are some world-class Italian restaurants with exquisite cuisine, along with an exquisite price tag. In conclusion, the Ferrari World is definitely the world's most amazing indoor theme park, sadly however is it located all the way in Abu Dhabi. This is definitely a place you want to put on your vacation list for next break!

ACA's Annual Festival 2010

This year's festival was held on Sunday, 26th Dec. 2010! Several hundred people came to ACA campus where the festival was held. It featured two bouncy houses, cotton candy & popcorn, a henna and face painting stall, a free Halo competition, a rock-climbing venture, a barbecue, a petting zoo, and pony rides amongst many other things! The school was decorated brightly with balloons and streamers. Peo-

ple streamed in from 11 AM and stayed till about 5 PM! Most of the youth and parents were drawn to the lecture given by Ustadh Usama Canon from Ta'leef Collective. It was an enlightening, enjoyable lecture that

insha'Allah benefited many.

Finally, it is a blessing that our school was able to host the entire

community for a fun day!

May Allah bless everyone

who worked so diligently in order to make this event a reality. Allah is best able to reward every unseen effort

and He knows best how much work was put into it as well, so we pray that He multiplies the rewards of all the hardworking volunteers!



Islam Does Not Teach Hate by Lena Sarsour

Growing up as a Palestinian-American, I was very aware of the hate Jewish nationalists decreed on my country. Visiting my parents' homeland every other summer shaped my views and who I am today. At an early age, I was exposed to the pain that resulted from Israeli soldiers killing my family and friends. My family was separated— all of us moving to different countries, leaving all of us heartbroken and wondering when we would see each other again. Seeing how the soldiers left my homeland torn up disgusted me. I became very bitter due to all the politics surrounding the whole Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and I thought all Jewish people were against Palestinians and just wanted to make our lives a lot more difficult. I am very thankful that I soon realized that I couldn't paint a whole nation with one color the way sometimes Muslims are also painted in the media.



My perspective changed the day ASU's Students for Justice in Palestine held a silent protest. This was held in memory of all of the silenced Palestinian children that were killed by the IDF

soldiers during Israel's most recent offense on the Gaza Strip. Everyone was given a strip of duct tape to place on their mouths and a paper with the name of a child who was murdered by Israeli soldiers and had it taped to our shirts. As we were preparing ourselves, trying to tape the papers on to our shirts, I overheard that there was a Jewish student from U of A that came all the way from Tucson to stand up for the injustice happening in Palestine. I had had biased views against Jews precisely because of this conflict, but this young Jewish man actually stood up for the oppressed Palestinian people.



Never in my life would I have ever imagined that Jews would stand up for us. In fact, I felt embarrassed. Politics should not affect the way I feel about people who come from a certain country, religion, or society. In fact, I learned that my religion actually prevents me from hating people altogether, I can only dislike actions and never the people.

We come from a religion that stands for "peace." I was very proud of how we all kept it peaceful while still making our point and standing up for the oppressed in Palestine. As the Israeli Defense soldier was talking, all at the same time, we unzipped our sweaters and exposed the names of the silenced children. It could not have been done in a better way. Although there were times I would shiver from the things the IDF soldier was saying, and wanted to rip that duct tape from my mouth and speak up, I didn't because the point of the protest was to stay silent and let people hear the voices of the Palestinian children on their own. Overall, the point was crystal clear and I am sure it changed many perspectives, just as my perspective changed of Jews that day. It goes to show how silence can make such a difference.

To see the video of the silent protest, visit YouTube: ASU SJP Students Protest IDF Soldier (OFFICIAL)



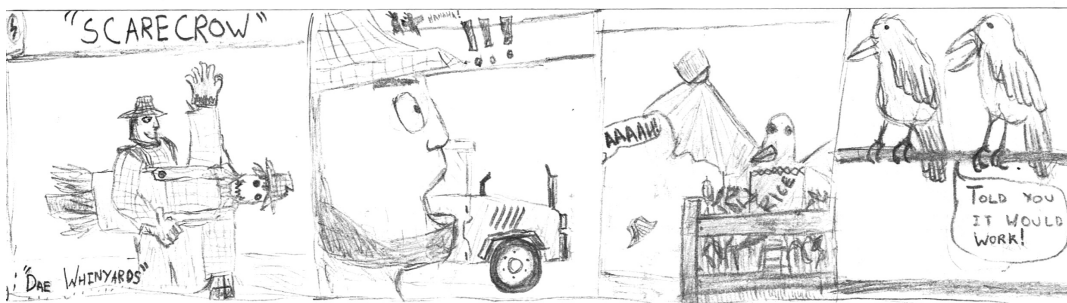
Students formed a line wearing red shirts with red tape over their mouths for a demonstration in ASU.

“...To see the video of the silent protest, visit YouTube: ASU SJP Students Protest IDF Soldier (OFFICIAL) ...”



A comic is one of the most creative ways to provide a message: in the words of Oscar Wilde: “If you want to tell people the truth, make them laugh, otherwise they'll kill you.”

COMIC



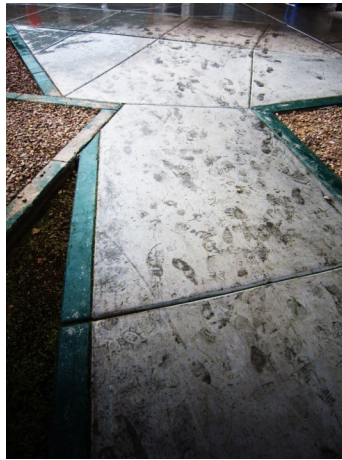
Do It Now!

By a 7th Grader

Nowadays, I think,
As I go to a skating rink,
Why is nobody on the ice?
They're chatting with phones,
Playing a computer game
To reach the high score fame.
They jabber on with no meaning
In to their cell phones
And others have to listen to ring-
tones.
They listen to music all day,
Like it's good fun and play!
In fact, they sit there,
Not moving at all.
They're boring!
Don't they know
It would be more fun to row
Into a lake?
Come off it!
The flame in you has not yet to
be lit
So do it now! Before it's too
late
And you'll grow up to hate
Yourself for it,
After you're old
You'll be told.
So get up now to play,
'cause it's one heck of a sum-
mer day!



Balloons adorn
ACA Campus
on the day of
the festival con-
tributing to the
overall festive
mood



On rainy day Dec. 16th,,
footprints created a work
of art on the footpath in
the ACA courtyard.

Community Event Announcements

Bayyinah Class: Meaningful Prayer

When:

JANUARY 28-30, 2011
FRIDAY: 7PM-10PM
SAT-SUN: 12PM-8PM

Register today! -
[http://bayyinah.com/
studentcenter/](http://bayyinah.com/studentcenter/)

Where:

ISLAMIC CENTER OF THE EAST
VALLEY 425 N Alma School
Rd. CHANDLER, AZ

Cost:
\$85

Shaykh Abdulnasir Jangda,
Bayyinah Instructor

Stuck in the Path

By ACA Sophomore

Looking left and right...I don't know where
to go
Should I follow my desires or should I wor-
ship Allah alone
I wanna fit in and be "cool"..hanging out
with my peers...
But instead of them, it is Allah, and ONLY
Allah whom I should fear

Ohhh, the feeling of this stress is haunting
me
What am I gonna do when I'm in the grave
and I will see-
Munkar & Nakeer..the two angels who will
ask me:
"Who is your Lord? What is your Deen?!" will
I answer correctly?!

I don't know and I will never know until that
day
So I beg Allah everyday, terrified, and say:
"Ya Allah! Guide me on the straight path
And don't make me of the losers who have
Your Wrath
Ya Rabb! Make me of those who are
pious and a believer
'Cause You are the Creator and You are
my Sustainer

I need you cause I'm poor and in need of
Your Mercy
So help me. Oh Allah! So you would be
pleased and I would be happy
I beg you...Oh Allah! Answer my prayers
For indeed it is only YOU who can grant
me paradise and make me of the winners



The ACA gym is packed with attentive
listeners to speaker Usama Canon