

Al-Hilal



Summer Issue



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A Magazine for Children

2018-1

QUARTERLY AL-HILĀL

A magazine for children, by children, that provides them with a creative opportunity to learn about the world around them, and how to apply the teachings of Islām and Aḥmadiyyat to their daily lives.

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In This Issue

My Summer Vacation

Aleeza Noor Ahmad ..28
Amal J Ahmad..... 14
Areeba Ali,..... 13
Aroosa Zafar 22
Dania Amjad8
Elham Mahmood.....30
Faatimah Onihale..... 10
Fahad Amir 26
Fareeha Ahmad 16
Hamda Saleem 33, 34
Iza Anwar17
Khadija Chaudhry 6
Komal Khan 18
Laaibah Tayyeb 12
Maaha Rehman20

Maham Luqman..... 32
Maheen Rizwan..... 25
Malaika Awan..... 25
Maryam Luqman..... 6
Meher Rehman 19
Rehan Mahmood Khan
..... 24
Sajeela Ahmad..... 3
Samreen Shahzadi..... 9
Seher Ambar Khan ... 23
Yasmeen Kahloon
Ahmad 27
Zara Ahmad,..... 22
Zara Laiq 7



**Summer
day at a
beach**

Sajeela Ahmad

—age 6—

SVA

Dear Reader,

As-Salāmu ‘Alaikum Wa Raḥmatullāh.

In New York City, winter is here and just a few days ago we had snow. Many are dreaming about summer fun, from Jalsas to family trips with longer days full of sunshine and enjoying Ramadan and Eids. In this issue of Al Hilal, our writers are sharing their memories of summer and how they spent those warm weather months. Enjoy!

Was-Salām,

Aliya Latif, Al Hilal Editorial Team

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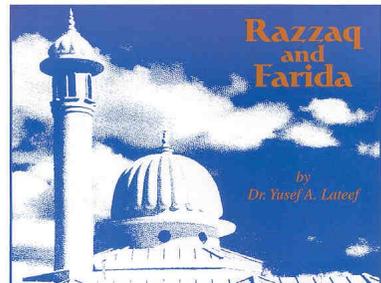
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Signs of Allah

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاجْتِذَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
وَ الْفُلِكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ
اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَ
بَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَ تَصْرِيفِ الرِّيحِ وَالسَّحَابِ
الْمُسْحَرِّ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day, and in the ships which sail in the sea with that which profits men, and in the water which Allah sends down from the sky and quickens therewith the earth after its death and scatters therein all kinds of beasts, and in the change of the winds, and the clouds pressed into service between the heaven and the earth—are indeed Signs for the people who understand. (2:165)



Maryam Luqman, Age 10, Portland

Over the summer, my mother, two sisters and I went to Holland to see our grandparents. It took ten hours by plane to get to Holland.

We stayed in a town called Zoetermeer. We had lots of fun. We rode on the backs of our uncles' on their bikes, went to the beach, and visited a petting farm close to our grandparents' house. One day we went to a theme park. We also went to Volendam. Volendam is a traditional Dutch harbor town. Near the end of our trip we went to Amsterdam to see the Anne Frank House. It was very interesting. A day before we had to leave to the U.S.A., it was Eid-ul-Aḍḥā. For Eid prayers we went to the Mubarak mosque in The Hague. This mosque was the very first mosque in Holland, built in 1955. The next day we left for Portland, OR. We had a great time in Holland.

What I Did This Summer
Khadija Chaudhry, Central Virginia, Age: 13

This summer I spent a lot of time with my family and friends. We had many family gatherings, where we ate delicious food, talked with each other, and played games. This summer we also went to the US Jalsa, in Pennsylvania. At Jalsa we offered Ṣalāt, listened to many speeches, and talked with people. Towards the end of summer my extended family from Pakistan and Seattle came to visit. We had a lot of fun with them and they even stayed to celebrate Eid with us. This summer was very well spent with my family and friends.

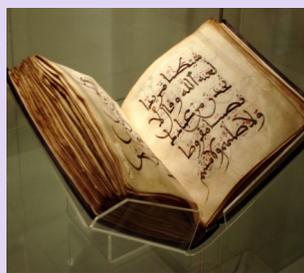


My Summer Vacation

Zara Laiq, Age 8, Central Virginia 8 years

When I had summer vacation, my family and I went to the Jalsa Sālāna USA. Every year I look forward to attending Jalsa since it is so much fun. Not only do we get a chance to hear so many good things but we also meet our friends and family. At Jalsa we sat on the children's side. Because it's a little noisy on the children's side, my mother always looks for a good spot on the chairs so that we can hear the Jalsa better. After all of the speeches were finished, it was lunch time. There was just so much festivity during the break. I saw so many friends from Virginia. My cousins were also attending from different states. There were different kinds of food like pizza, ice cream, kabobs—other than the regular Jalsa food. I was starving so I got two slices of pizza. I was still hungry so I got one more slice of pizza then I ate candy.

After I finished my food, my mother asked us to visit the bookstall. We saw so many good books and works of art at the bookstall. There were different sizes of Holy Quran available for sale there too. My mother purchased a book and we left the bookstall. There were people from all over the country. My mother saw a Lajna member visiting Jalsa from Africa with her family and she started talking to her and soon they became friends. This was all the blessings of Jalsa Sālāna. Lunch break was over soon and after the second half of Jalsa we ate dinner then it was time to go so we went outside waiting for our car and our car came so we went back to the hotel and fell asleep.





My Summer Break

Dania Amjad, Age 11, Chicago East

My summer break went mainly the usual way it always does, but with Eid celebration. I performed Salat every day, read Quran, played at the park, and played with my siblings. So when summer break started we were getting ready for Eid-ul-Fitr (since it was a week away). We went to Devon Avenue to get clothes for my little sister and I. And then the next day or two we went to get my little brother's clothes at JC Penney (a clothing store). Then I and my cousins went to our older cousin's house to decorate our hands with Henna on the day before Eid. It was Eid the next morning. We went to the big masjid Bait-ul-Jāmi'. We had a lot of fun there and we also learned a lot. And the food was really good. At around 3 PM, we went to my aunt's house where we all talked and played. So if we go back to where my summer break was actually taking place was that I mainly didn't go anywhere fun, I just stayed home, sometimes went to the park. I didn't go to any Jalsa, but I wish I did.



My all-time favorite vacation would be to go to China because that's where I was born and I want to see how much it has changed. That was my summer break.



My Summer Break: 2017
Samreen Shahzadi—Age 14—Chicago East

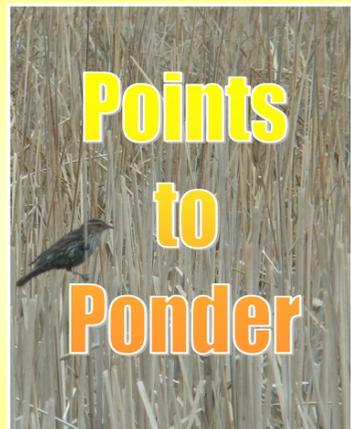
This summer I didn't do much. I didn't go out of the country. There was Jalsa in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; I wasn't able to go but I watched the Jalsa on the MTA channel. I stayed home most of the time and visited family relatives that lived nearby. I went to many programs at Al-Sadiq mosque, also celebrated Eid at Bait-ul-Jāmi mosque. I had fun and I caught up with many other people there. For Eid-ul-Adha I went to Al-Sadiq Mosque which was new and but interesting and also fun. Overall, the most fun part about my summer break was Ramadan. I was able to fast a few times this Ramadan and I had fun going to the mosque every week for Iftar. I was excited that I would soon be in eighth grade and after that finally to high school. I was nervous about whether I would be accepted into the high schools of my choice but I am not so nervous anymore with the guidance I am getting at school and home.

Points to Ponder

A collection of stories told by
Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II,
may Allāh be pleased with him.

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HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER BREAK: Faatimah Onihale 8 years, Chicago East

My summer break was fun. Anytime my mom has to go to work I lock the garage gate. Why? Because, it was broken. After that I always run to my mom's room to sleep with my baby sister. And then she wakes up! And then goes back to sleep again. After some hours, we all woke up.

My dad does stuff on his phone, while my sister played with me and my brother watched T.V. and we say good morning to our grandma while she brushed her teeth.



My dad's friend and his family (two boys and his wife) came from Nigeria for vacation and stayed with us for two weeks. I enjoyed them a lot because every day my dad would take us to different parks to play. We went to Millennium Park and walked a lot and took pictures. But the boys played too hard for me so I don't really play with them much.

We also went to Brookfield Zoo, there I had so much fun because we ate and played on the swings after looking at the animals. I saw monkeys, lions, zebras, rats, gorillas, tigers,



elephants, crocodiles and seagulls. There were lots of animals there. My legs were so tired and painful because of too much walking and standing but I enjoyed myself.

We also went to Jalsa at Harrisburg. My dad drove our car and we stopped to rest many times before we got there. I did not like our hotel because it was not like what we used to have. I love to go to Jalsa because I make new friends and everyone is nice and happy which makes me happy too. I look forward to another Summer Break!



**We Want to Hear
from You!!!**

Children are encouraged to send their original writing for publication. Please include your full name, age, city, state and contact number when submitting an article as we may follow-up with the author for clarification.

If you would like to send a picture or artwork, please send the original. If you would like the original returned, please include your full name and return address/postage along with this request.

The Children's Magazine Committee, under the supervision of the Amīr, Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya, U.S.A., will review and approve all submissions before publication.

E-mail Submissions to: al-hilal@ahmadiyya.us



How I spent my Summer

Laaibah Tayyeb, Age 13, Central Virginia

This summer I have done a lot of fun things. One of the most memorable experiences I had this summer was watching the solar eclipse. On August 21, 2017, the sky darkened and the entire U.S. was able to see the first total solar eclipse in years. It was such an amazing sight, especially with the solar eclipse glasses. We went to the mosque and we offered Eclipse Nawāfil. Murabbi Sahib gave us a small Dars about how it was the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah upon him) to offer Nawāfil during the time of an eclipse. This was also the first time I learned how to perform Eclipse Prayer (Ṣalāt-il-Kusūf).

A huge event in my summer was moving houses. It was a lot of hard work to move boxes and it was also very sad to leave the house that I grew up in. However, it has been very exciting to invite guests and entertain at our new home.

Another event this summer was Eid-ul-Adha. Eid was very fun because we were able to celebrate it at our new house. Observing Prayers, eating delicious food, and hanging out with my friends was extremely enjoyable.

Overall, I had an amazing summer. I spent my summer doing some very exciting and fun things and I can't wait until next year!



HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER

Areeba Ali, CVA Jama'at, Age 10

I was so excited when school ended. My summer was finally here. I loved how I spent my summer this year. My family and I always look forward to when Jalsa comes around the corner. The speeches are very educational, emotional and rewarding. I also love when Eid comes and I get a lot of



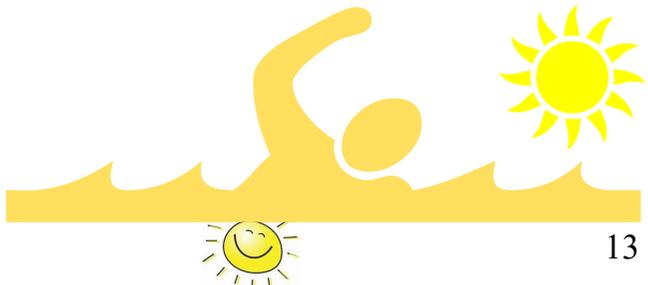
blessings and I feel proud when I fast sometimes and Eid rewards me with satisfaction that I can do anything. Every year for Eid I and my family go to the mosque and have a barbeque afterwards. This summer we toured two waterparks, one in New Jersey and an indoors one in Niagara Falls, Ontario. At last some other

things I did this summer, staying home and helping my mom with the house chores. I went biking and hiking with my friends. I went to the pool and had a lot for swimming lessons. We had family visit us and we took them to the Pentagon and D.C. area for a tour.



My expectations for summer are always very high but sometimes what I want is not what I get. Most of the time I get what I want and I am thankful every time and I don't tell anyone, I have the parents who do everything for me.

My summer is always great no matter what!



HOW DID I SPEND MY SUMMER?

Amal J Ahmad, CVA, Age 14

My 2017 summer was filled with all kinds of emotions. For one, I was moving to a new house, and leaving my favorite one yet. Aside from moving, my summer was relaxing. I really enjoyed last summer and can't wait till the next one.

Moving invokes plenty of emotion. People feel sad to leave their beloved house, excited to move into their new one, and curious about their new surroundings. I for one felt all of those, especially as a teenager. Moving wasn't abnormal to me, as I had done it many times, but those times I was young and didn't really fully understand what was happening. This time, though, I had plenty of fun mixed with a feeling of sadness while helping my family box everything up.

It satisfied my sense of tidiness watching my house become empty. The hardest part of my whole experience was saying goodbye to my room, the one I spent five years living in, sleeping in, crying in, studying in, etc. I even stopped in the middle of everything and just laid

on the floor. Before saying goodbye for real, I stopped and thanked Allah, the Almighty, for the absolutely wonderful time he blessed me with in this house. Moving into my new house was exciting, as it had everything I wanted; a big basement, a good kitchen, open area, walk-in closet, etc., and it was also a place for us to improve in our spiritual health. Before settling in, we had to clean up the place, and when I say clean, I mean CLEAN. This was by far the dirtiest house I had step foot in, but it was fun calling up my cousins to help clean and watching their reaction to the dirtiness. I love my family, and this summer I got to see a lot of them, which brightened me up, and made me forget my sadness. Allah, the Almighty, helped and guided us through this entire process and made it really easy for us to buy a new house. Without the help of Allah, we would still be sitting at my old house, looking through houses, and being very close to giving up.

After moving, my family and I finally got to relax. By the grace of Allah, my summer was full of blessings, fun, and probably one of my most favorite summers.





How I Spent My Summer

Fareeha Ahmad—Central VA

The summer of 2017, Mā Shā Allāh, went very well.

First of all, Ramadan started in the middle of school, and we fasted. We also went to our Sunday classes in masjid, which is a good way to improve our general knowledge every weekend. We went and joined in Tarāwīḥs and Iftārīs at masjid. Fasting is sometimes really fun but tiring.

Second, school ended, in which I felt a huge exhaustion (big sigh of relief).

And we had Jalsa. Jalsa is super fun. I met so many new friends and got to meet my old ones. Jalsa is always a new and best way to meet new people and get to know each other.

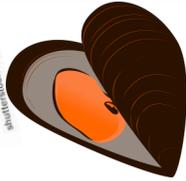
My favorite part of summer is Eid! I love dressing up and going out for Eid. We all get ready in the morning and take fancy pictures. During Eid, we get money and gifts!

After our holiday, I hung out with some of my friends! It was really exciting to meet some of my friends and I can't wait to see them next year.

Summer is my favorite time of the year. It brings so much happiness, fun, and memories.

HOW DID YOU SPEND YOUR SUMMER?

Iza Anwar, Age 12, CVA



In my 2017 summer vacation I went to Myrtle Beach and Florida. My family and I went to Myrtle Beach for three days. We went to the Believe It Or Not museum, Upside down house, and we went ziplining. We stayed at a hotel that was close to the beach and if we woke up on time we would be able to see the sunrise. The colors were beautiful they were pink, orange, and yellow. Myrtle Beach was a fun small summer vacation.

In my 2017 summer vacation we also went to Florida. In Florida we went to Epcot Center, Hollywood Studio, and Blizzard Beach water park. My favorite one was Epcot Center. I had a blast there. It was like you went to different countries and you saw different cultures. My favorite was France.

In Hollywood Studios, my favorite ride was the Tower of Terror. It was so scary but really fun. The ride would make us keep dropping. At one point it dropped us 10 feet down. Then in the middle of the ride a window would open and you would see outside and you would think that you are about to fall outside but then the floor opened and that is when you drop 10 feet. That got me to scream loud. So my 2017 summer vacation was awesome.



My Summer Break

Komal Khan, age 14, CVA

I did many things during my summer break this year.

One of the things I did was to go to Jalsa in Pennsylvania. My family and I go there every year and it is always just as exciting and helpful as the last Jalsa. Usually, I have duty at the tea stand with my aunt. I think having duty is part of the whole experience of Jalsa. Not only do you get blessings from Allah, but you also get to help everyone else enjoy their Jalsa. One of my favorite things to do there is watch MTA's coverage of it. It's just so interesting to see all the diverse groups of people who come together for Jalsa.



Another thing I did in summer break was get ready for school. This year, I started as a freshman at Battlefield High school. Although I was nervous, I managed not to get lost on the first day.



My ideal summer break would never end, and I'm sure most kids my age would agree with me. I enjoyed my summer break a lot, and I can't wait for the next one.



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My Fun Road Trip to West Coast Regional Ijtima Meher Rehman, Age 6, LA EAST

My summer vacation was really exciting. My Mama told me to pack up because we were headed to Ijtima! Most of the time we don't go very far for Ijtima, but she said this was a special one. It was in San Jose which is a city in the middle of California. I live in southern CA. I ran upstairs and got my Hello Kitty suitcase and my dupatta and was all set.



We drove to the masjid and saw a lot of really big vans! There were so many people. My Mama told me that we were all going to travel together and I was super excited. It was a really, really long drive and I waited a long time. We played different games in the van and had lots of fun. It was nighttime and we finally made it. We stayed with a really wonderful family who took very good care of us.

The next day, Ijtima started and it was amazing. I loved seeing all the kids, and the banner parade for the Nasirat was awesome. I loved to sing nazms (poems) with all my friends. I even made some new friends who are so special to me. This trip was one of the best parts of my summer vacation! I had such a good time and cannot wait to go again next year!

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Our Summer Trip to Lake Tahoe CA Maaha Rehman, Age 13, LA East

Allah's beauty is truly all around us and this summer I got a first-hand glimpse of such wonder and beauty on our family trip to Lake Tahoe, CA. We began this 10-hour journey from our tiny little city on the outskirts of Los Angeles. We didn't feel alone in this drive, however, for the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range accompanied us for most of our journey. My mother kept reminding us about how such majestic mountains have been mentioned in the Holy Quran. As I was looking out the window, I could see the sun hiding behind the clouds and it formed such beauty that no artist could ever recreate it. There were many animals and livestock along the drive and we took frequent stops to try and capture all this beauty. The golden meadows were breathtaking and I observed many small water sources all along this massive mountain range which had to have been about 400 miles long!

Once we arrived, we couldn't wait to explore the surroundings. My family chose to stay in a cabin, so we could experience the beautiful forests and really feel like we lived in the mountains! This was really fun. I saw Bear Boxes for keeping our trash secure and we were told not to keep any food in our van.



The lake was absolutely spectacular. I've never seen such clear water. I don't even think Crayola has the colors to describe the hues of the water. It was a strange mixture of blue, green, and clear at the same time. The lake itself is massive! Just to drive around the lake was over 70 miles long.

Along with the lake we saw other types of water sources such as waterfalls and rushing rivers that followed the curves of the mountains. Lake Tahoe is 11 miles wide, 22 miles long and has about 72 miles of shoreline. It's quite high and is situated on a 6,225 feet elevation.

We took the Gondola ride to the top of Heavenly Mountain to get a better view. Now, we were at 10,000 feet elevation! As we were riding up, I turned around and was blown away by just how far up we were and how big the lake really was. It felt like looking at the ocean. What was even more amazing was that I was gazing upon two states at once: California and Nevada. Even though they are great on their own, there is something pretty special about what they share.

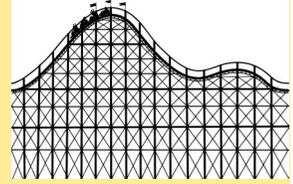
Once we got to the top, the adventure really began. My family and I went on a Treetop Ropes Course complete with tight rope walking, different obstacles to cross while 30 feet up in the air with only a rope and a harness keeping us up! It was super fun and extremely terrifying. I couldn't stop shaking, but I kept pushing myself.

This trip got me thinking about just how wonderful Allah really is and how blessed we are as human beings to experience all the beauty this world has to offer. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to go.



Aroosa Zafar, 11 years old, South Virginia

Over this year's summer, I had a really nice time. My summer started with my birthday, which was good and I turned 11. Then Eid came; it was really nice and fun. After a few weeks, we went to Jalsa.



During Jalsa, I had a great time especially for my Aameen. The experience was great. I really liked it and think I did a stupendously great job with it. Also, I learned a lot from the speeches at Jalsa. As a reward of completing the Quran, my dad took our family to Hershey Park after Jalsa! It was great and my family had a great time. A few weeks later, our dad surprised us again with going to King Dominion! We had an amazing time. That was how my summer 2017 break went. It was super well and exiting, I had a great time!

How did you spend your summer?

Zara Ahmad, Virginia South, Age 10



I did a lot in my summer break. I went to Canada to pick up my brother from Jami'a (Missionary Training School) for his summer break. I also attended Canada Jalsa. I listened to many emotional speeches. The speeches affected me very much and took my faith to a higher level. I attended US

Jalsa like always. I spent time with my friends and I volunteered by cleaning the lunch area. I helped my mom raise money by selling fidget spinners for our future mosque. I felt very proud and blessed by doing all that.

My ideal summer vacation is to go to Hawaii, adopt a dog for security and live in a luxurious house. I want to visit London to meet Huzoor (may Allah be his helper). I even wish to see my beloved Huzoor (may Allah be his helper) in my dreams. In Shā' Allāh, I will someday!

Seher Ambar Khan, Age 14, LA East

Summer Vacation

This summer stood out from all the rest of my summer vacations. This was the summer right before starting high school. My parents, younger brothers and I all traveled to the US Jalsa in Pennsylvania. There, I participated in the Abdus-Salam Science Fair and won first place in the Nasirat division by the Grace of God. After the Jalsa, we went to the Hershey's Factory with our cousins. We then spent the night at their house in Maryland and left the next morning to drive all the way down to North Carolina to visit our other cousins. We had a very fun time with them



and went out to eat at a lot of different food places. During our stay there, we had brought my science fair project with us, and it had M&Ms on it as decoration because my experiment had to do with natural and artificial dyes. In the middle of our stay, their dog ate through my science fair project to get to the M&Ms! We brought the science fair project home with the hole in it in memory of Buddy, their dog.



After we returned home, my brothers and I played video games, played basketball outside, offered all of our Şalāts, read Quran, and got ready for the school year to start. I also attended the Nasirat Regional Ijtima in San Jose, California during the beginning of the school year and won third place in Tilawat. This summer was awesome because I got to spend it with my family.



Rehan Mahmood Khan, Age 12, LA East

This summer had many exciting moments, and I enjoyed it very much. First, summer started with Ramadan and Eid which was exciting. Although I'm too young to keep all my fasts, I did half-day fasts and went to the mosque for Salat on most nights.

Later in the summer my family and I attended the USA Jalsa Sālāna in Pennsylvania. There, I had the privilege of doing badge scanning with my younger brother at the security entrance and it was a lot of fun. I also participated in my first Abdus-Salam Science Fair and won first place and received a cool drone, Al-Hamdu Lillāh.

From there, we went to the Hershey's factory. Then my family and I drove down to North Carolina to visit our cousins and their dog. We had a lot of fun spending time with them. We spent the rest of the summer playing video games, doing summer homework, offering our Salat, reading Quran, and relaxing.

I hope to attend Jalsa next year which will be exciting because Chicago is a fun city and my parents used to live there. I also pray that we have the chance to go the UK Jalsa, In Shā' Allāh.

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How I spent my summer this year...

Malaika Awan/Age: 8/Middletown NY

I had a busy and fun summer this year. I was blessed with a baby sister at the end of June which was a joyful event for the whole family. Then I went to Germany to visit my grandparents where I got the opportunity to attend Jalsa Sālāna Germany. I had a really good time preparing for Jalsa and listened to the speeches quietly with my cousins. At Jalsa Sālāna, I saw beloved Huzoor on the stage. I was very blessed to see him closely and wave. I went to an amusement park with so many rides. I went with my cousins and aunts and uncles. I also had my Aameen ceremony in Germany. I got so many presents from my friends and family. There were so many people at my Aameen. I was sad to come back but happy at the same time to be back to school.



My summer vacation

Maheen Rizwan/Age 13/Chicago Northwest

This summer I went to London for a cousin's wedding. It was so much fun! We played games with my family at night and went out in the day. I also went to UK Jalsa and it couldn't have been any better! I had a meeting with Huzoor for a second time now and I got a pen! I met him when I visited Fazl Mosque and Huzoor announced my cousin's Nikah as well. It was so nice to finally meet him again and have my family there beside me as well.



What I did over my summer

Fahad Amir/Las Vegas, Nevada/Age 11



I will tell you about what amazing things I did over the summer of 2017.

First of all, I went to visit my uncle in London during the end of June to the beginning of July and was able to visit our beloved Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper). Huzoor was a gem, truly caring, and the meeting was lovely. I even was able to offer Friday Prayers behind Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper) in Bait-ul-Futuh.

Also, I enjoyed playing with my cousin. With my uncle's family, we drove to a nice restaurant to eat fish and chips. Later on, we went to a park and flew kites and played basketball and soccer/football.

In addition, I had the opportunity to fly to the Harrisburg Jalsa Sālāna 2017. This experience was amazing. I loved the speeches, the Nazms (poems), and the company of Ahmadi fellows/elders. During this experience, I was able to eat wonderful food, including Kulfi. I also bought an Ahmadiyya Muslim Community polo shirt.

In conclusion, I had a delightful summer vacation that included the best things ever!



How I Spent My Summer Vacation

Yasmeen Kahloon
Ahmad/8 Years old/
Central New Jersey



I had an exciting summer. I learned and explored a lot of new things.

I enjoy soccer and attended a one-week soccer camp.

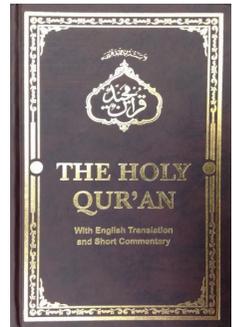
I went to weekly Jum'a prayers and listened to Huzoor's Friday sermon, may Allah be his helper.

I also tried to offer all of my Prayers on time.

We enjoyed Eid ul Fitr and Eid ul Adha this summer, which we spent with our grandparents. After Eid prayers, we enjoyed delicious food. My favorite was Haleem with Naan.

I also visited Bait-ul-Islam Mosque in Canada (in Peace Village). While there, we also visited the sick and helped our neighbors with moving and carrying groceries.

The greatest highlight of my summer was completing my first reading of the Holy Qur'an. I am so grateful to God and blessed that I was able to accomplish this. I have started a second reading of the Qur'an and I recite it every day. I can't wait to finish it again. I cannot thank Allah enough for this blessing.



How I Spent My Summer Vacation

Aleeza Noor Ahmad/Age 13/Kentucky

Over summer break I went to Jalsa Sālāna (Annual Convention) with my family. I was fortunate to learn many things. I ate lots of foods and listened to almost all the speeches. We also went to Hershey Park and the Crayola Factory. While at Jalsa I got to see and stay with my family too.

During the Jalsa, I heard many speeches, including one delivered by one of my friends, Amanda. It was about her journey to becoming an Ahmadi Muslim. She talked about her perception about Ahmadi Muslims before converting, and how her faith changed. She explained that before converting she always viewed us as “just as bad as the rest” of Muslims. But after reflecting she felt bad that she harbored these thoughts. She had felt unsatisfied about her faith and once she realized the truth of Islam, she became an Ahmadi Muslim. She explained how her family had shunned her, but she put religion over family. She felt better than ever, because she felt like she was going in the right direction for the first time.

My aunt is helping her through her journey. Amanda treats me like her own daughter. Her story has taught me that acceptance is everything for some people, and that I should accept people as, and for who, they are. I still learn from her to this day, and her story moves me and even brought me to tears. I enjoyed my overall Jalsa experience.

During Jalsa I got to see my family. It was refreshing to see all my cousins, aunts, uncles, and the rest of my relatives. I stayed in a hotel with them and played with my younger cousins and conversed with my grandparents, aunts, and



uncles. I had spent time with my aunts, and we went out and ate food together. It was nice to see them after a long time as I miss them very much. I can't wait to see them again.

Last but not least, I and my family went to see Hershey Park and the Crayola Factory after the Jalsa ended. At



Hershey Park we saw how chocolate is made and we got to eat a lot of it. We learned how

to properly taste the chocolate and how to differentiate the types of chocolate.

At the Crayola Factory we made crayons with our names on them. We made things like crayon rings, and crayon cars too. We even made our own family crayon. We had so much fun at these two places and I hope we can go again sometime soon.



I thank Allah for letting me experience going to Jalsa and going to the Hershey Factory along with the Crayola Factory, and seeing my family. I physically and spiritually felt the importance of Jalsa. I hope and pray that Allah can continue to bless me, my family and the Jama'at. I look forward to participating in Jalsa yearly, In Sha' Allah.



My Summer Vacation

Elham Mahmood/12 years old/South Virginia

My summer vacation was relaxing with a lot of spiritual benefits. I went to Jalsa Sālāna in Pennsylvania. The Jalsa was a nice experience for me. I listened to all the programs and I went to the Waqf-e-Nau class and worked in the food (Ziafat/Diyafat) team with Regional Sadr Sahiba. The Jalsa overall was very beneficial for me as an Ahmadi Muslim and a Waqif-e-Nau.

In the Waqf-e-Nau class I learned more about what it means to be in Waqf-e-Nau, which is to help others understand the cause of our faith in Islam and to spread Islam's true meaning to others. I enjoyed the Aameen ceremony on the final day of the Jalsa Sālāna. During this year's Jalsa I understood that no matter what happens we should always remember Almighty Allah who guides us through good times and bad times.

I also attended Waqf e Nau camp at Bait-ur-Rahman in Maryland. We woke up regularly for Tahajjud prayers in the early morning and offered all of our daily Prayers. The camp fostered a lot of sisterhood and was amazing.



Another spiritual exercise we did this summer is participate in a fundraiser for the South Virginia mosque acquisition. It will hopefully be completed soon.



I also enjoyed participating in a faith outreach booth called “Coffee, Cake and True Islam.” I handed out flyers to visitors and educated them about Islam. I was happy to spend my summer in so many spiritual ways.



Masjid Bait-ur-Rahman



South VA Mosque





A trip to the zoo

By: Hamda Saleem-Age 9-Chicago, Illinois

School is almost over!

Summer is nearly here !

What will I do, I ponder?

There is a zoo near!

Let's go, mommy!

Let's go!

We will pack a lunch

So we can munch

I wonder what we will see?

I was excited with glee!

We took a train

Thank God, it did not rain

Do you want to know what we saw?

We saw giraffes as tall as the sky!

We saw birds that fly!

We saw many gorillas.

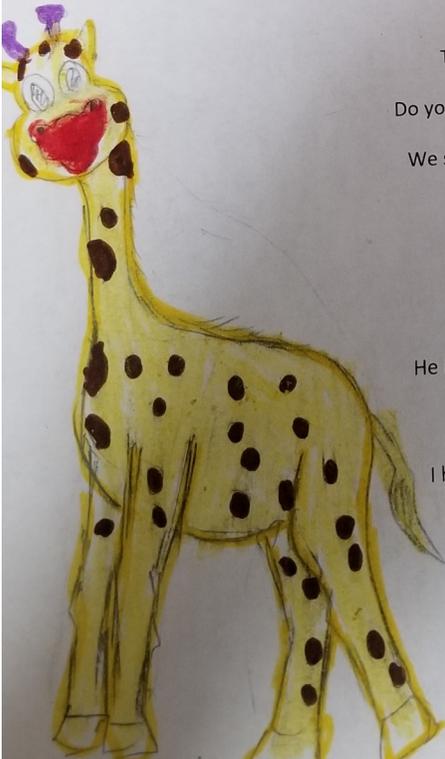
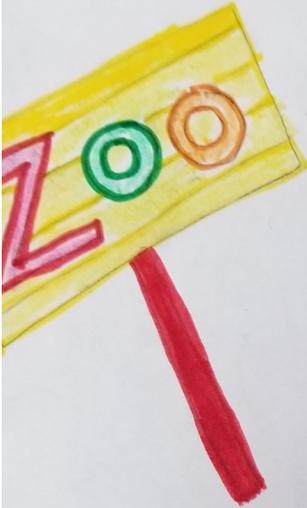
One was a smart fella,

He knew how to use a computer!

We also saw chicks

I hope they did not have ticks!

And we saw a lion!



He was sleeping

He was a yawn

We saw a camel

It was a large mammal

We also saw a zebra

He is not as fast as a cheetah

We saw many fishes

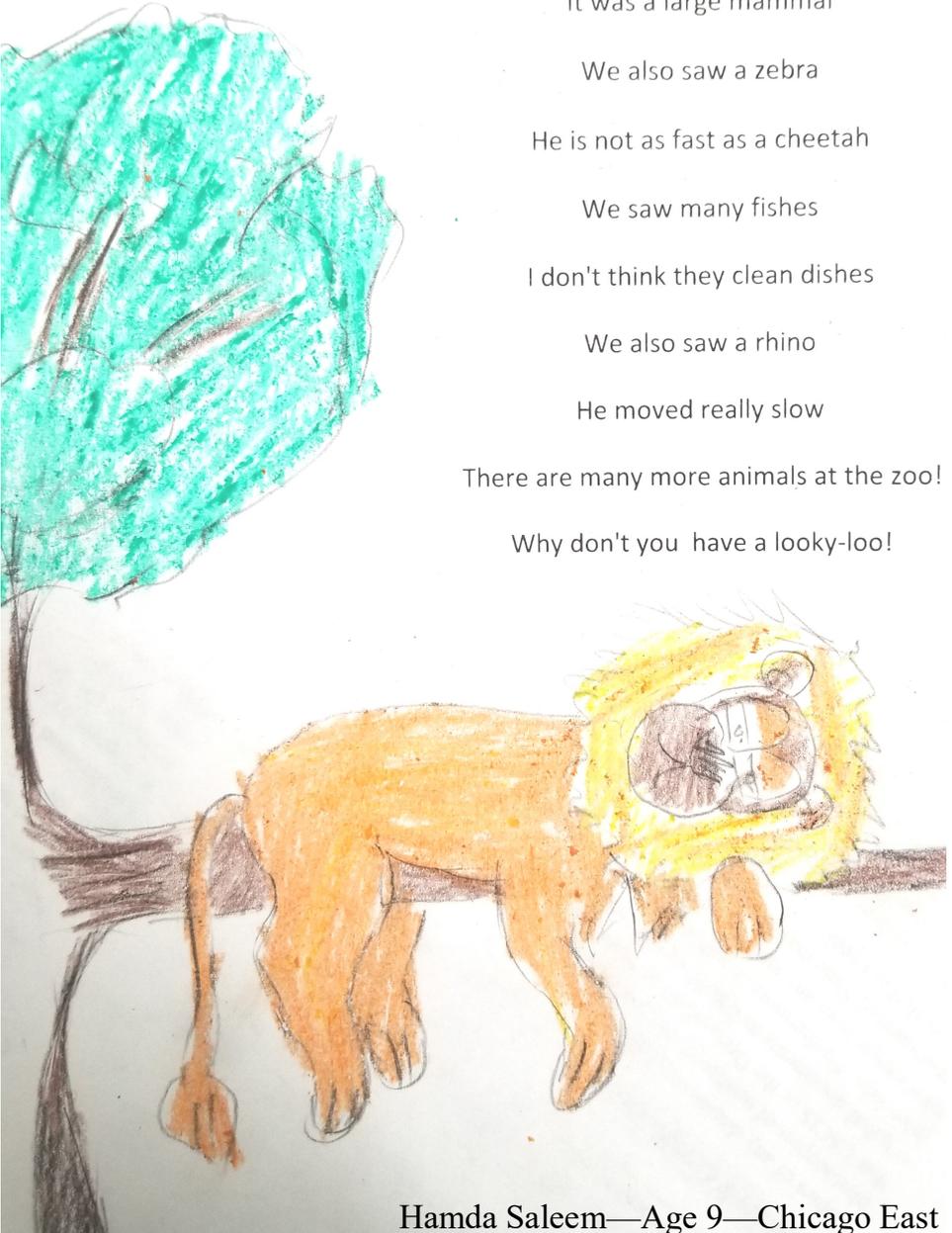
I don't think they clean dishes

We also saw a rhino

He moved really slow

There are many more animals at the zoo!

Why don't you have a looky-loo!



Hamda Saleem—Age 9—Chicago East



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Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din
Mahmud Ahmad, the Promised
Reformer

(may Allah be pleased with him)

Hadhrat Safiyyah

(May Allah be pleased with her)

Hazrat Nuh (peace be on him) and
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**Travel in the earth,
and see how He
originated the creation**

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ
ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Say, 'Travel in the earth, and see how He originated the creation. Then will Allah provide the latter creation.' Surely, Allah has power over all things.

(Holy Qur'an, 29 [ʿAnkabūt] : 21)

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