

International Musha'era

Orlando, FL September 14, 2014

We had a wonderful time last Sunday and one of the best events of the year so far. I would like to thank all the *Awan-e Urdu* members, ACA members, and other members of the community for making this a memorable occasion. Thank you for appreciating our efforts and despite the minor inconvenience including the climate control hiccups we managed to keep the audience spellbound with our guest poets' kalaam.

This time we set a new record; we started and ended the program right on time. Let's have a big round of applause for this major achievement. I am sure audience was very glad to see this nice improvement. We will keep striving to improve our programs and will continue our efforts to make our programs better; this is the first step towards that goal.

I hope you enjoyed the dishes prepared by *Golden Dynasty*. Asad and his team did a great job. Meat and non-meat items were delicious, satisfying the craving of meat lovers and vegans alike. Let's put our hands together for him, his chefs, and his team.

Let's put our hands together one more time for the volunteers and sponsors who made this program a reality. Special thanks to the donors, Dr. Raza Ali, Dr. Hafiz Qazi, Dr. Imtiaz Ahmad, Dr. Abrar Saleem, and Dr. Sarfraz Habibi (I just awarded him the honorary doctorate) for their generous donations. We are also grateful to Mr. Ejaz Malik for his tireless effort in distributing the flyers, providing the sound system, and managing the food station along with Dr. Mohammed Idrees, Dr. Sarfraz Ahmad, and Sheikh Ijaz Ahmad. Many thanks to the two young volunteers who were playing their assigned roles at this event; Ameer Idrees for his assistance at the food table and cd-station and Ryyan Kassoo for managing the ticket shack. We are also very grateful to Mr. Javed Massey for his assistance with the ticket sales and the collection of funds. He was the treasurer in charge of the revenue department. They did a fine job. Finally, let's thank Dr. Arif Zaheer for conducting the program and for taking charge of guest services. He has been playing the host for the past few days making sure that the guests were staying comfortably at the hotel, being well fed, and enjoying their stay in Orlando.

The program started with a brief introduction by Tanhaa who welcomed the guest poets and the audience to the first major musha'era of the year. Then he handed over the podium to Dr. Zaheer to officially start the program. First the local poets were invited to recite their poetry for the audience who were very kind with their applauses and accolades; Mr. Faisal Dara, Mr. Sarfraz Habibi, Mr. Shahid Khan, Mr. Sheikh Ijaz Ahmad, Dr. Zaheer, and our special guest Mohtarma Fahmida Maqabool presented their kalaam and received the thunderous applauses from the audience. By this time, we were just getting warmed up. Maybe it was this heat which the air conditioner could not handle as the temperature in the room kept rising and we had to roll in the giant fans to cool the room down. We had pedestal fans to keep everyone cool and then we had real fans in the audience who were keeping the room hot with their enthusiasm and energy. With the disco lights rotating in the ceiling and the electrifying performance by the poets, the exothermic reaction was bound to generate the heat. Therefore, we cannot blame the cooling system for not keeping the room cool.

The main event started with janaab Iqbal Ashher who mesmerized the audience with his beautiful kalaam and his trannum, followed by janaab Popular Merathi who kept the audience entertained with his mazahia kalaam, and Janaab Manzar Bhopali who kept the audience in his grip with his ghazals and nazams, and finally Mohtaram Naseer Turabi who masterfully recited his poetry and kept the audience captivated in a state of complete trance. These poets are the master craftsmen of their trade who create masterpieces with the stroke of their pen. Their heart-touching poetry casted a spell on the audience who stayed there until midnight to listen to their beautiful kalaam.

The poetry session ended after Agha saheb's recitation. Not only he impressed the audience, he impressed the guest poets as well. Finally, the awards were distributed; guest poets, Agha sahib, and Mohtarma Maqbool received plaques from *Awan-e Urdu*. By all accounts, the musha'era was highly successful. I wish we had more time to continue the program, but alas that was not possible as it was Sunday and we had to disperse and go home for some rest before the next business day; the dreadful Monday.

We love to offer high quality events in our beautiful town and in a better setting. Our next event will be at a better location inshaAllah as we are always fine tuning our programs and looking for a better venue.

It was a pleasure meeting you all at this event; we had lots of new faces in the crowd including ACA members and our friends from India. We also had visitors from Tampa, Melbourne, and Palm Bay area. We are glad to welcome our new guests in our circle and look forward to meeting them again at future events. We appreciate their support and participation.

Thank you once again for making this event a huge success.

Many thanks and devotedly yours,

Tanhaa

