

Dear students, teachers, senior teachers, supervisors and school administrators,

It gives me great pleasure to present you with the *Youth Observer* at the start of a new academic year. You will already be aware, from previous issues, that *Youth Observer* is an educational newspaper written by students in Omani schools in the Sultanate. The *Youth Observer* aims at improving your command of the English Language through reading and writing articles in English.

We publish eight issues of the *Youth Observer* per year starting from February to May, when we stop for the summer holiday. We resume at the beginning of September and continue until December.

Each issue of the *Youth Observer* has a "theme" and articles are written accordingly. The theme appears on the front page. All of you can write a story, poem, report or puzzle, draw a picture or anything else related to the issue theme. *Youth* editors will take care of the editing and proofreading to ensure that the piece of writing is not copied from the Internet etc to avoid plagiarism.

All articles should be sent to the *Youth Observer* e-mail by the first week of each month where *Youth* editors will then start editing and proofreading all articles to decide upon the appropriate ones to be published. Full name of the sender, his/her school, grade, region and a photograph of the writer must be sent with the article.

Youth Observer articles cover various areas of interest, such as career guidance, special needs, IT, Ministry of Education's latest news and projects, creativity zone, regional reports, art corner, Khala Zaytoonah and others. Never the less, if any of you have any suggestions for improvement, please share them with us because the *Youth Observer* is your newspaper.

I would like to extend my very great appreciation to all the companies who sponsored the previous issues of the *Youth Observer* and call upon others who would like to contribute to a very special educational newspaper that aims at improving Omani students' command of the English language in a modern, interesting and creative way.

We thank all those students who contributed to the previous three issues and ask them to please submit more contributions. The efforts of all those wonderful teachers and supervisors who encouraged their students and schools to contribute are highly appreciated.

I, for my part, will endeavour to ensure that the coming issues are full of interesting articles for all of you to read and share with others. Take care.

— **Thuraya Saif Al Hosni**

Head of Your Observer Team, MoE

Muslim Wisdom

Holy month of Ramadhan

RAMADHAN is one of the holly moths of Allah, it is the (month) in which the Quran was sent down, as a guide to mankind.

Allah said in his holy Quran: "Oh you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may learn piety and righteousness Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain taqwaas." (Q 2:183)

Muslims fast during Ramadhan to get more wages from Allah. Fasting means abstaining drinking and eating from dawn to dusk. It is a time for inner reflection, devotion to God and self-control; it is a very spiritual month.

People in each country have some habits during Ramachan: In Egypt wealthy people make big tents where they put all kinds of food for the poor Muslims to eat their *fetoor*. Egyptians and most Arab people eat sweets during Ramadhan nights, such as *basboosa*, *baqlawa*, custard and *luqaymat*.

In Oman, many people drink laban and eat dates for *fetoor* and go to Magreb prayer. After that the whole family gathers to eat many kinds of food such as: rice, samboosa and soup. And some times they make big meals.

At the middle of Ramadhan most Omani re-

gions celebrates *Qarraqashooh* which is a very old Omani event.

Kids at the day of *Qarraqashooh* dress nicely and carry containers or bags and go to the neighbourhood singing a special song. Parents prepare mixture of sweets, coins and popcorn to give the children at that special night.

In other Gulf countries this event is called *Qarqaoon*. It was meant to help the poor families through their children with some money to prepare for the Eid al Fitr.

Ramadhan is the month of generosity where Muslim people are supposed to help the ones in need as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said in his hadeeth shareef: The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "He who gives food for a fasting person to break his fast, he will receive the same reward as him, except that nothing will be reduced from the fasting persons reward." (Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah, Ibn Hibbaan, Saheeh).

The sighting of the new moon at the end of Ramadhan heralds the celebration of Eid al Fitr.

— **Faisal Fahad Saif**
Grade 7, Assim bin Omar
School, Muscat

Congratulations

DIFFERENT competitions were published in YO that were targeting different age groups of students as well as teachers and senior teachers. Many of YO readers were very creative and unique.

Today YO editors would like to congratulate those who won and thank all who participated. Special thanks must go to Batinah North and Dakhiliyah regions for their active participation in all *Youth Observer* issues and competitions. The results are as follow:

STUDENTS COMPETITIONS

Poetry writing: "The day Oman won":

- 1st - **Hamed Ahmed Al Badri**, Grade 6, Al Kamel School, Batinah North
- 2nd - **Shurooq Salem Al Zawawi**, Grade 7, Al Sahwa School, Muscat
- 3rd - **Nujoood Waleed Al Hashar**, Grade 7 Green, Al Sahwa School, Muscat

Powerpoint Presentation:

- 1) **Qais Saif Al Hashmi**, Grade 8, Al Suwaiq Basic Education School, Batinah North
- 2) **Mohammed Juma Al Hashmi**, Grade 8, Al Suwaiq Basic Education School, Batinah North,
- 3) **Mahmoud Dawod Al Shidi**, Grade 8, Al Suwaiq Basic Education School, Batinah North

Traditional Folk Tales:

- 1st - **The Scary Camel**
Majid Tariq Al Blushi, Grade 8, Ahmed bin Al Nadhr School, Dakhiliyah Region.
- 2nd - **After The Sinistral Comes The Affluence**
Safa Saud Al Qassabi, Grade 9
- 3rd - **A Great Blessing**
Sarah Ali Al Harthy, Grade 10 Um Hani School, Dakhiliyah Region