



HDF-THANKS SCHOLARSHIP
31
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Dedicated by Bashir and Tesneem Chaudhary of Augusta, GA

BASHIR AND NAZIR SCHOLARSHIP

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS OF DENNY'S HIGH SCHOOL

THIS SCHOLARSHIP IS A TRIBUTE TO OUR DEDICATED TEACHERS AND WONDERFUL FRIENDS AT THE HISTORIC DENNY'S HIGH SCHOOL. ESTABLISHED IN 1881 BY CONTROLLER OF MILITARY ACCOUNTS, COL. DENNY, AND WELL-OFF HINDU AND MUSLIM FAMILIES, DENNY'S IS THE SECOND OLDEST SCHOOL IN RAWAL PINDI. BASHIR SPENT 6TH TO 8TH GRADE AT DENNY'S, FROM 1958 TO 1961. HIS YOUNGER BROTHER M. NAZIR SHAMS ATTENDED FROM 1960-1961 AS A 6TH CLASS STUDENT. THEIR FATHER WAS SERVING IN THE 48TH FIELD AMBULANCE UNIT OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS.

BASHIR WANTS TO SHARE HIS MEMORIES FROM HIS HAPPY MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS.



1958-59 WITH OUR FATHER, ABDUL REHMAN
(L-R: RASHID KHAWAR, ABBA JEE, BASHIR AHMAD, AND NAZIR SHAMS)

Bashir remembers:

Recently, I found my diary from 1960, which helped restore many of the happy memories that follow. I got a rigorous education and sports training and made lifelong friends at Denny's. The school frequently gave us unexpected holidays when students won educational awards at the Punjab level or our sports teams won various championships. We got a day off once to be part of the crowd welcoming President Ayub home from a successful visit to Iran.

One particularly happy occasion for a surprise holiday was in 1960 when Pakistan won the Olympic Gold Medal in Hockey after facing India in the finals. Two Denny's alumni were on the team, and one of them, Nasir Bunda, scored the winning goal. Everybody in the school felt proud. We all received a copy of that day's newspaper, which was full of photos of and references to Denny's.

Our teachers worked hard to build character and give us a solid education. Our parents emphasized maximum respect for our teachers, and were always somewhat apprehensive that we might disappoint or annoy the teachers. A couple of times, some teachers were let go from the school. On Nov. 1, 1960, we found that almost all of our teachers had new assignments. Mr. Bhatti replaced our English teacher Mr. Ghauri, Mr. Ashraf replaced the Science teacher Mr. Riaz, and Mr. Riaz was to take the position of Islamiyat teacher, Mr. Naseem. We students did not precisely understand the reasons. I have nothing but respect and affection for all of my teachers, who provided us with an outstanding education.

Our Arts (drawings) teacher was Mr. Aslam Jaan, a young and handsome man who was caring and amicable towards all of his students. Often he would greet us in the mornings and was the first to say As-salamu Alaikum. He even came to our home once to check when I was sick. He was also our Scout Master and taught us survival skills. I have fond memories of our scouting trips that included pitching tents, tending campfires, and preparing our food. We collected pieces of wood for the tent pegs and to make fire. One year the International Scouts Jamboree took place in Karachi, but our group could not go for some reason. We did go to welcome the scouts arriving from many countries at the railway station.

Mr. Aslam had a unique way of making everything about scouting interesting. We would compete for various badges, appointments, and different scouting skills. As part of the Fox patrol, I got Leadership and Swimming badges in 7th grade and displayed them with added confidence on my scouting shirt. In May of 1960, when we were still in the 7th grade, I was selected to be the Eagles patrol leader with Zahid Anis as the assistant. Patrol members included Javid Barlas, Abdul Ghaffar, Masud ul Zafar, Ghulam Abbas, Islam, Gul, Manzoor, Tariq, Hamid Naseer Ahmad. During the final competition between all scout troops, we were elated to win the Best Patrol and the Best Scout awards. *Thank you*, Mr. Aslam, for building our confidence and making us enthusiastic about learning.



EAGLE PATROL

During one of our many scouting trips to Topi Rakh Park (then renamed Ayub National Park), we encountered film idols Sabiha and Santosh Kumar just before their marriage. At the time, I thought that Sabiha was the most beautiful lady I had seen, and the feeling has changed only slightly since. We were all spellbound watching the beautiful couple as Santosh took Sabiha for a boat ride.

During seventh and eighth grades, I was the class monitor, a great honor for a student. In the 7th grade, one of my duties as class monitor was to check math homework and report to our teacher about students with deficiencies.

One Sunday, we played a cricket match. I came home late and did not get a chance to finish my math homework for the first time. I was nervous but hoping and praying that my teacher, Mr. Halim, would not ask me to show him my assignment. He frequently used to skip checking my work. I do not know why my prayer went unanswered, or probably my face told the story, but he asked me to show him my homework that Monday. I was awarded 12 canes on my hands and a suspension from my monitoring duty for a month. I never missed homework assignments after that. One morning in the seventh grade, I came to the school late and missed the first period. I was greeted with a slap even before I could tell that there was a very genuine reason for my delay, and I had an excuse letter from my father.

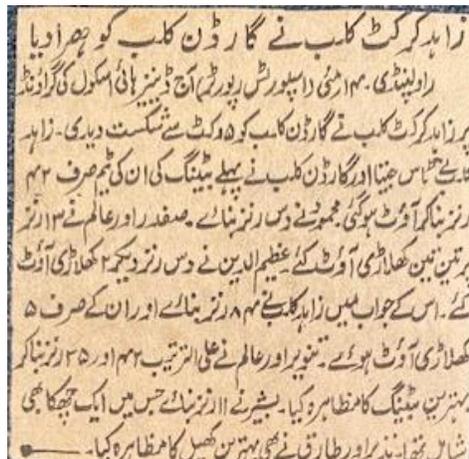
A few months into the 8th grade, my diary had a line- “So far, I have not had any punishment in this grade.” Soon after, another record broke this record. One day I forgot my school bag in the M.I. Room, with all homework inside, when I needed a bandage on my foot. I received punishment from three different teachers in a single day for not bringing my home work!

I also had cane punishment in the 8th grade. In a verbal spelling test by our English teacher Mr. Ghauri, I misspelled the word “official,” earning me four canes. I received six canes for a mistake made in recalling the past tenses of “swim.” Also, I got a slap for misspelling “persevere” from our other English teacher, Mr. Bhatti.

I had my share of “thapars” (slaps) and “beed” or “dandas” (canes). My total number of reprimands was luckily less than ten, a low number compared to some of my classmates. There was no resentment about such punishments then or now. We accepted these and believed that we did deserve these. Maybe, I learned better because of the fear of punishments. I don’t believe in corporal punishment. My father (may he be blessed with the best in the hereafter) never used this mode of reprimand. As an educator, I don’t recall a single time that I was angry at any of my students during more than 45 years of my career. Now, anytime my computer tries to correct my spelling mistakes, I fondly recall my middle school English teachers.

My diary is full of descriptions of my love for sports. Our heroes were cricketers Mohammad Hanif, the batsman, and Fazal Mahmood, the bowler. We formed sports teams both at the school and at our homes. We would play cricket, hockey, or football at school almost daily during our midday breaks. Matches between various teams were frequent. Most of the time, we would complete the games after school hours.

The primary activity during the holidays used to be playing cricket or sometimes field hockey. My bowling became fairly good, and when I went for my ninth grade to Government High School in Abbottabad, I got selected in the school team after bowling only one over. Often, the results of our matches were published in the newspapers, and we used to feel elated.



There was no sport that I did not like. Playing field hockey ranked just a little below playing cricket. In eighth grade, my class won the interclass championship 2-1, and I still recall the high adrenaline after scoring the winning goal.

Friendships were an essential part of our lives. We classmates frequently surveyed each other to rank our best friends. Mohammad Amin (now a businessman in San Antonio, Texas), Zahid Anis (retired as Air Marshal in 2000 and then served as Secretary of Defense till 2005, a few months before his death), Javaid, and Saeed were my best friends. Amin was my closest friend, and a sincere, caring, and diligent person. After school, he would go to his family's bookstore and help with the business. It was a blessing for me to have these and many other good friends (Fredrick, Safdar, Samuel, Barlas, Ghulam Ahmad, Shoaib, Sami ul Haq, and many more) who made my life so much enjoyable. Many of my and my two brothers' friends were at our home every 1-2 days. My mom (may she be blessed with the best in the hereafter) welcomed our friends with food and treated them just like her own children.



AMIN



ZAHID



JAVOID

Amin's family operated the Amin Book Store in the main bazaar near our school, and that's where I borrowed hundreds of books to read. Amin's parents (may Allah bless them with the best in the hereafter) were very loving to me and all of his friends. In fifth grade, my father had initiated my love of reading by introducing me to the books of Shafiq ur Rehman (who had recently been promoted to colonel) and Nasim Hijazi. I read 2-3 books every week, including almost all of Ibne Safi's crime mysteries.

My father never objected to me reading extracurricular books or playing various sports because I was usually at the top (1st position in 6th, 2nd in 7th, and 1st in 8th-grade annual school exams) or among the top three students in my class. The top results usually went to Zahid, Muqtada, and me, and we were genuinely happy about each other's achievements. However my 8th-grade board exam result was less than I had hoped. I penned a detailed description of the Panipat war with galloping horses in clouds of dust and the loudly-clanging swords of heavily

armored foot soldiers. The vivid images of war were fresh in my head as I had just read a book by Nasim Hijazi. There was one major problem. There were three famous Panipat wars, and the war in question happened to be a different one!

At the beginning of the 8th grade, Zahid told me that he was planning to take the qualifying exam for the Pakistan Air Force school in Sargodha, and wanted me to do the same. When I discussed it with my parents, my request was denied. My mom told me that she did not like to send her son so far away from her, a reason which I readily accepted. Now, when I look back, I think probably the real basis for not sending me there was financial.

This scholarship will annually recognize the top three students in each of the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. I have written the story of my time at Denny's High to emphasize the importance of studying hard and appreciating the teachers who are earnestly trying to make their students succeed in life. Also, value the friendships you develop as they are very likely to last your entire life.

**THANK YOU, MY SCHOOL, MY BELOVED AND
RESPECTED TEACHERS, AND ALL THE
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE WHO MADE THAT PERIOD
A MAGICAL ONE.**



L TO R. BASHIR AHMAD CHAUDHARY, RETIRED AS EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE FROM THE MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA, AND M. NAZIR SHAMS, RETIRED FROM AIR DEFENSE AS A BRIGADIER.

شکوہِ ظلمتِ شب سے تو کہیں بہتر تھا
اپنے حصے کی کوئی شمع جلاتے جاتے

