

Petarian Association of North America

By Adnan Qureshi, 8326/Liaquat

The Petarian Association of North America or PANA is the official representative body of Petarians living in North America. PANA stands for creating and promoting brotherhood between Petarians living in North America and joining them under one umbrella so that they can network, communicate, enjoy each other's brotherly love with respect for elders and care for youngsters, and provide and receive assistance whenever needed. PANA also stands to support the Alma Mater, Cadet College Petaro, according to our abilities. PANA also stands to support and provide assistance to any Petarian in need within North America or elsewhere in world according to its abilities and resources.

All Petarians living in North America can become members of PANA without paying any fees or dues. Petarians on student or training visa can also become members. PANATalk Yahoo group (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/panatalk/>) is the official online tool for connecting PANA members. PANA holds its annual reunion on the last Saturday of the month of June each year.

Of the more than 450 Petarians living in North America, so far around 150 have become members of PANA. 04 reunions have successfully been arranged in the beautiful city of Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. Regional reunions are being held in other cities. PANA has also been helping other Petarians through various means and guidance in trying to help them settle in Canada or the USA.

At present Naeem Saroya Bhai (504/L) is the Chief Coordinator of PANA. A mechanical engineer by profession, he was given National Leadership Award, Business Advisory Council, Michigan-2001. Subsequently, he was appointed to the Presidential Business Advisory Council, State of Michigan in 2002 and was awarded "Congressional Medal of Distinction" in December 2006. He has been the Vice-President of ICNA as well. Naeem Bhai lives with his family of 03 in Michigan.

Adnan Qureshi (8326/L) is the General Secretary of PANA. A registered professional engineer in Ontario, he works as senior structural designer in a consulting firm in Canada. Adnan lives with his family of 03 in a suburb of Toronto known as Oakville.

The last reunion held on June 24, 2006 at Niagara Falls, Ontario was memorable. Around 40 Petarians attended along with their families and friends from all over North America and as far away as Pakistan.

The Petarian flag gifted by Mrs. Naeem Saroya was fluttering along with the PANA banner at the pavilion entrance. A registration booth was set up by Mukhtiar Bhai where name tags were given along with PANA T-shirts gifted by Adil Baloch Bhai.

Guests started to arrive and among the first ones were Professor Shamim sahib with his family. Shamim sahib delivered a powerful speech to the audience and said that 'most of the nights in my dreams I find myself back in Petaro, I still love it as I used to do before'. Shamim sahib also led the Zuhr prayers.

The tables were covered by table tops of the CCP colors. The pavilion was filled with colors of different balloons. The weather was at its best, not too hot, and not too cold. Allah be praised for giving us such wonderful weather on that day.

To our great surprise this time, Nasir Uqaili arrived very early. He played a key part in organizing the event and provided free KFC coupons which were later distributed as gifts to the winning teams in the various competitions. Syed Sajid Hashmi gave the kids a treat by providing free Vegetable and Cheese Pizza to everyone.

The formal function started with *Tilawat* by Shabieh Zaidi Bhai. Shortly afterwards clowns showed up and the kids got busy with them. This also gave our bhabis more time to concentrate on the day's activities and also to find out what their hubbies were up to!

Professor Shamim sahib was given a certificate for his valuable presence on that day and so was Shahbaz Malik Bhai, the President of TPA, who came all the way from Pakistan to attend the reunion. Naeem Bhai was given a hat with a Liaquat house plume on it. Later on he took command and uttered the famous daily pre-meal phrase uttered at the college mess '*Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem*', upon which everyone started the lunch.

Group photos were taken while everyone was wearing the Petarian T-shirts. It was a memorable moment which will long be remembered.

Later on it was time for fun activities for the adults. Ishrat Bhai put a lot of effort in coming up with a Petarian Puzzle. He also arranged a game for collecting items which Naeem Saroya Bhai and his team won. Zia bhai was next to arrange his game, the competition involved finding clues, leading to the final correct answer. Five teams competed; the winning team was led by Rafi Khan Bhai. Gifts donated by Rifaquat Cheema were given to everyone through a raffle draw.

Finally Rifaquat Bhai gave the annual report. It was also unanimously decided that Rifaquat Bhai will continue as the Chief PANA Coordinator for the coming year. Shahbaz Bhai, President of TPA announced the endorsement of PANA by TPA. Gul accepted the responsibility to become the coordinator for future gatherings for the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Petarians.

The crowd eventually started to disperse around 6 pm. Some friends still hung around and left the venue only when it became dark at around 9 pm. Those who came really enjoyed the show. And those who couldn't make it missed a great event.

We plan to meet again this year (2007) Insha Allah to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Petaro in North America.