

# The Khaled Hosseini Newsletter

WWW.KHALEDHOSSEINI.COM  ISSUE 2, QUARTER 3, 2009

## The Khaled Hosseini Foundation

### [Afghan Friends Network](#)

#### AFN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM:

In January 2009, four girls from Ghazni were selected to receive scholarships to attend Universities in Kabul. In March 2009, these young ladies began their first year of college.

[\(Read more\)](#)

#### READING LIBRARY OPENS AT KHURASAN LEARNING CENTER:

In the first half of 2009, a library was inaugurated at the Khurasan Learning Center. [\(Read more\)](#)

### [Trust in Education](#)

#### ASCHIANA PROGRAM IN KABUL:

TIE's supporters have joined with TIE to support 40 children in Aschiana's sponsorship program in Kabul. Aschiana is a non-profit organization in Kabul that works to educate street children to a level that will allow them to be integrated into school.

There are an estimated 60,000 children working in the streets of Kabul, begging, selling gum, looking for scrap metal, shining shoes and doing anything they can to survive and support their families. A typical "street child" earns an average of \$2/day or \$60/month. Often, they are the "breadwinners" in their family.

[\(Read more\)](#)

## SPOTLIGHT

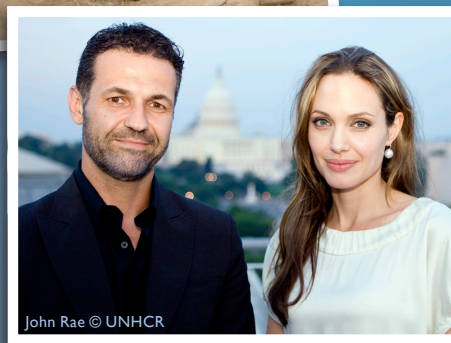
### World Refugee Day: June 20, 2009

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) commemorated World Refugee Day from June 18-20th this year, marking the 9th consecutive year this event has

taken place.

The United Nations General Assembly established World Refugee Day to bring focus to the outstanding contributions refugees have made and continue to make throughout the world. As a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador, I was honored to participate in events with such esteemed guests as Angelina Jolie, Greg Mortensen (author of *Three Cups of Tea* and co-founder and Executive Director of the Central Asia Institute), UNHCR High Commissioner Antonio Guterres and UNHCR Regional Representative Mr. Michel Gabaudan.

[\(Read more\)](#)



### *Readers Give Back*

As a reminder from my first newsletter, I love to hear from you. Your emails and letters are meaningful and serve as a powerful touchpoint. In this vein, I invite you to participate in a contest and share how the themes of the novels have impacted your life in a positive way. [\(Read more\)](#)

### Khaled's Corner

[News](#)

[The question I get second most often](#)

[Books](#)

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# The Khaled Hosseini Newsletter

## WORLD REFUGEE DAY (continued)

This year's events included an impassioned speech from Ambassador Angelina Jolie about her experiences with refugees around the world. Former refugee Rose Mapendo, who received the UNHCR Humanitarian Of The Year Award, spoke very movingly and unforgettably about her hardships in her native Congo. And I had the privilege of sharing the stage with my friend Greg Mortensen and Ann Curry from the *Today Show* for a discussion about the challenges facing Afghan refugees. All in all, it was a most rewarding day, and I hope that the events of the day help raise global awareness and concern about refugees.

- To learn more about World Refugee Day or the incredible work the UNHCR is doing please see [www.unrefugees.org](http://www.unrefugees.org).
- To learn more about Rose Mapendo and her work please see [www.mapendo.org](http://www.mapendo.org).

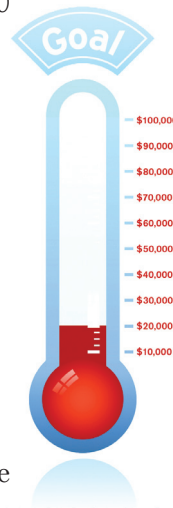
## FUNDRAISING EVENING TO BENEFIT UNHCR:

Well it appears that *The Khaled Hosseini Foundation* is up and running. We had our first public event to raise funds for the Foundation on April 25th. My good friends Michael and Carolyn Bealmear, whom I have known through *Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF)*, arranged a fundraising evening for us at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church.

Roughly 600 people attended the event, which consisted of an onstage discussion of refugee issues with Marc Breslaw, Executive Director of USA for UNHCR. Our conversation focused primarily on the reintegration challenges faced by the millions of Afghan refugees who have returned home, nearly five million of them with assistance with UNHCR.

We spoke at some length about the need for shelters for homeless returnees. As way of background: At the cost of 1,500 dollars per, UNHCR provides returnees with a shelter package, which includes tools, wooden beams, a door, two window frames, and nails to build a two room house where a family can live. Local labor and often the returnees themselves build the shelter. Construction is supervised by UNHCR staff to assure quality standards. UNHCR has provided shelters to more than 1.2 million people, more than 180,000 families since 2002.

For the evening, we raised approximately \$11,000, which my Foundation will match, bringing the total to \$22,000. In total we have raised over \$20,000, bringing the total to over \$40,000 with the Foundation match. A good start indeed. We are



very encouraged. Our ultimate dream, of course, is to make sure that every returning refugee in Afghanistan has a place he or she can call home.

To see the newly redesigned UNHCR refugee site with Shelter information please access the link below:

[http://www.unrefugees.org/site/c.lfIQKSOWFqG/b.4950831/k.64B7/Afghan\\_Refugee\\_Emergency.htm](http://www.unrefugees.org/site/c.lfIQKSOWFqG/b.4950831/k.64B7/Afghan_Refugee_Emergency.htm)

## THE 2009 TIME 100 LIST HONORS SURAYA PAKZAD:

*The 2009 Time 100 List* honors Suraya Pakzad under its Heroes and Icons listing. Suraya walks a very dangerous line every day. She juggles being a wife, a mother and one of Afghanistan's premiere and selfless advocates for women's rights. Suraya founded the *Voice of Women Organization* in 1998 to teach women and girls to read. The organization grew from humble and precarious beginnings to offer social services that few else would dare, namely, providing safe havens for women facing abuse from their families or husbands. The use of the word, "women" doesn't always do the victim justice, as she is often a young girl who has been forced into an arranged marriage to settle a dispute or to entitle her family to receive an often meager dowry for her. I was incredibly honored to be asked to write something about Suraya for the *2009 Time 100 List*. Please find out more about her by reading the [Time article](#). ☞

## READERS GIVE BACK (continued)

I am keenly interested to learn how the novels may have inspired you to help others. Please submit all entries either typed or in legible printing to the address below. The entries should be no more than 1,000 words in length. All entries must be received by September 30, 2009.

A committee will review all entries and select the winners. Five readers will receive a personalized autographed novel as well as their name published in the newsletter as a winner. In addition to providing a personalized autographed novel, we will publish the grand prize winner's entry in the Quarter 1, 2010 edition of the newsletter\*.

## Address for contest:

Faris Management Inc.  
Attn.: Readers Give Back, Q2 2009 ed.  
4848 San Felipe Road #150-221  
San Jose, CA 95135

*\*Submission of entries is implicit authorization to publish the entry should it be selected as the grand prize entry. All other entries are providing authorization that the author's names may be published should the entries be contest winners.*

Please include an address so that we may contact you should you be selected as a winner. Entries without complete names and addresses will not be judged. ☞

### Khaled's Corner: NEWS

❖ The [San Jose Rep](#) finished its successful run with *The Kite Runner*. The play was received very well both by critics and audiences. It sold out almost every night and received standing ovations at every performance. The Rep extended the play's run by one week due to popular demand. Matthew Spangler, the playwright, and David Ira Goldstein, the director, and the entire cast did a fantastic job. I commend and congratulate them all. I took my parents to the show and they were very moved and impressed. The production moves to Arizona this fall. I wish them continued success.

To read reviews of the San Jose Rep's production of *The Kite Runner* please see the links below:

[San Jose Mercury News article](#)

[SF Gate article](#)

❖ I have learned that my Italian publisher, Piemme, will turn *The Kite Runner* into a graphic novel. As a lifelong comic geek, I am very excited and can't wait to see the artwork. Publication is tentatively scheduled for summer/fall 2010, with hopefully the US and other publishers following suit soon after.

❖ I have become addicted to *The Tudors*, Showtime's production about Henry VIII. The show can be racy, yes, but the history is fascinating, the court politics unfailingly engaging, with great performances throughout. I highly recommend it. ☞

### Khaled's Corner:

#### THE QUESTION I GET SECOND MOST OFTEN

I often receive e-mails from budding writers requesting advice on how to get published.

So here goes:

First, write. This sounds self evident, but I receive a lot of emails from people who want to get published but have not written a word of their book. It still lives in their mind. So, first, write. Then make sure your book is really in tip top shape. Make sure it is as good as you can make it. You only get one chance to make a first impression. Next, you should find a literary agent to represent you in negotiations with publishing houses. Without an agent, it will be extremely difficult to get your manuscript read in NY. Most likely it will end up in a slush pile.

Landing an agent, however, can be difficult. An agent has to be convinced that your book is marketable. An excellent resource is found at the reference section of virtually any bookstore called something like 'The Marketplace Guide to Literary Agents.' They are updated yearly -so you want to get the latest one- and they list hundreds of agents and what sort of work they are looking for. Look for those agencies that represent books like yours and follow their instructions closely. This is important. Make sure you read exactly how they want the submissions and follow their guidelines. Usually you will be required to submit a query letter and a synopsis, as well as some sample chapters. The guide books contain sample query letters and usually have advice on how to write a good query letter. Do it right. Again, you make a first impression only once.

And finally, be patient. If you get rejected -and you are certain that your manuscript is in top shape- then continue submitting. I went through some thirty agencies before I found my agent. Being patient paid off. Hopefully it will for you as well. ☞

### Khaled's Corner: BOOKS

Books I am reading currently and enjoying tremendously:

*The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga, a Man Booker Prize winner. A dark and very funny novel about class struggle in modern day India.

*No God but God*, by Reza Aslan. An engaging introduction to the origins of Islam. Aslan is a smart, thoughtful, and articulate voice for moderate Islam.

*Drown*, by Junot Diaz. Shamefully late, I know, the book was published in 1996. Absolutely impossible to put down. The stories move you and never fail to surprise you. Each story is a jewel. Diaz is one of our best contemporary writers.

Also recommended: *The Cellist of Sarajevo* (which I understand will be a movie), *Runaway* by Alice Munro (one of my favorite writers), *The Places in Between*, by Rory Stewart (about his amazing walk across Afghanistan). ☞

### Khaled's Corner: MOVIES

*The Stoning of Soraya M.* This movie is not out as yet, but it will raise quite a few eyebrows. It tells the true story of a young Iranian woman who was framed as an adulterer by her philandering husband and stoned to death by the people in her village. It is a pretty savage indictment of the practice of stoning and raises important questions about the issue of women's rights under Islamic regimes. The ending is almost unbearable to watch.

*Watchmen*: I am a lifelong comic geek and I loved this beautiful and meticulously faithful adaptation of Alan Moore's classic graphic novel. Along with *The Dark Knight*, this is the best comic book film I have yet seen.

*The Assassination of Jesse James by The Coward Robert Ford*. Beautifully filmed, hypnotic in its pacing, and always fascinating. Brad Pitt should have received more acclaim for his portrayal of a brutal and paranoid man.

Also, *Slumdog Millionaire* (of course), *Frost Nixon*, *Central Station* (the ending always kills me), *Offside* (An Iranian film about a group of young women trying to get into a soccer stadium for a big match), *4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 days* (harrowing Romanian film about a young woman trying to get an abortion during the last years of the Ceausescu regime). ☞