



Islamic Center Newsletters™

ICNEF, St. John's Bluff Road South, Jacksonville, Florida 32246 • 904-646-3462

CALENDAR

MONTHLY GATHERINGS

April 26, 2008 @ 5:30 P.M.

CORPORATE BOARD MEETINGS

April 27, 2008 @ 2:00 P.M.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

July 4, 2008

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WE ARE BLESSED – INDEED!

By M. Ashraf Shaikh

Many of us were born in far off lands, and have ended up in this beautiful Greater Jacksonville area. We may have thought that we were coming to these United States for better education, or seeking better opportunities. And after our education, we may have stayed for the values this country represented or for some other reason, but the fact is that Allah SWT wanted each of us to be here at this time.

Then there are those of us who were lucky enough to have been born in this country, but had to overcome many challenges before they would receive the Message of Islam. Again, each and everyone of these brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces won't be here if Allah SWT did not plan for them to travel the roads that they did in order to be here at this point in time.

Having reached here, Allah SWT expects all of us to serve Him. What could be a greater service to Him than to participate in building a place where He, The SWT is worshipped, and where our children learn how to lead their lives in accordance with the Guidance provided by The Almighty. We cannot, and must not walk away from this responsibility.

Many of my generation who started construction of the Islamic Center facilities in Jacksonville are no longer here; some having gone back to the Creator, and others having been guided to move on. There can be no doubt about the Promise of Allah SWT, that any good that for ever comes out of the Islamic Center facilities will be recorded in their accounts. Can the same be said, with the same degree of assurance, about anything else on which they may have spent their time or money?

Where Are We?

Allow me to review with you what has been accomplished within the last twelve months; what is currently in-progress, and what is planned for the next twelve months, Insha Allah.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

The site work, the concrete paving, the fence, the lights, and the granite sign recently installed has completely changed the perspective of the Islamic Center Campus. Phenomenal comments have been received not only from the Muslims but also from the community at-large. It is a humbling experience, especially for those of us who have been blessed to be more closely associated with the construction work, to watch hundreds of adults and children enjoy the well lighted safe facilities every evening.

Concrete work on the Entry driveway from the Lost Pine Road has just been completed. Rest Rooms (Men and Women) have been repaired. We have awarded the contract, and by the time you receive this Newsletter, we should have installed a four-inch deep well (610 ft. deep) for irrigation and as a backup for the main water supply to our campus. This well was necessary not only to reduce the cost of city water used for irrigation but also to ensure that we would never be without water for ablution and restroom needs. As I write this report, primary irrigation lines (2-inch pipes) for the entire site, and the sprinkler lines for the areas to be irrigated now are being installed. As soon as this installation is completed, some of the areas on our site will be landscaped to meet the city's requirements and for aesthetic purposes. May Allah SWT accept the hard work being done by dedicated volunteers and others in these areas. Ameen!

Where Are We Going?

In order to undertake construction in the following areas, planning and engineering work is currently in progress. As soon as complete sets of drawings for each of these areas are completed, applications for building permits will be submitted to the City of Jacksonville, and bids sought from contractors. Upon their receipt, these will be submitted to the ICNEF Board of Trustees for approval before actual construction is undertaken. It is expected that work on each of these areas will progress simultaneously, Insha Allah.

1. Relocate Children's Classrooms to Portable Buildings

During the upcoming summer, Insha Allah, appropriate portable buildings will be brought and located in the area just north of the paved parking areas and west of the children's playground. Besides the classrooms, these buildings will have kitchen and lunchroom facilities. Two portable buildings currently on site will be repaired and located to this area as well. Every effort will be made to ensure that our children, attending the Al-Furqan School and the Weekend School, have better facilities for education than they currently have in the Islamic Center building.

2. IC Building Exterior – East Side (Phase-9)

This will include the following work:

- a) **Minaret:** Complete its construction.
- b) **Domes:** Construct two domes: a larger dome on the Main Prayer Hall, and a smaller dome on the Minaret.
- c) **Brick:** Brick veneer the Minaret, Eastern wall of the Main Prayer Hall, and the two towers except the areas on the West side that are to be covered by Atrium Expansion (Phase-10).

Completion of this work (Phase-9) will Insha Allah, provide a finished look of the Islamic Center building from Florida 9-A.

3. IC Building Atrium Expansion (Phase-10)

This Phase will be split in two parts; PART-A, and PART-B.

PART-A: Demolish existing interior walls on the South and North sides of the Atrium on both floors.

PART-B: Construct addition to the Atrium on the South and North sides on both floors. Brick veneer/finish exterior walls on the South and North sides.

(Continued on page 3)

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(Continued from page 2)

An Opportunity For Each of us

No work can be accomplished unless Allah SWT Wills, and each of us make a commitment to sacrifice our other needs in order to participate in the work outlined above. I would like to share two simple thoughts:

1. Al-Hamdu Lillahe, almost everyone in our community has been blessed with an above average home. We do our best to make sure that our homes meet the needs and expectations of our families, and reflect well on our family. As members of this community, each of us must do no less to ensure that the House of Allah SWT meets the needs and expectations of our community, and reflects well on our community. More is expected to whom much is given, but each is expected to participate in proportion to his/her resources and needs.

2. Regardless of the road we have traveled to end up here in Jacksonville, Florida, in this beautiful city where a vast majority of the people are not Muslim; what a blessing it is for each of us to have been given the gift of Islam and offered an opportunity to participate in building something that is not only to benefit us but also to benefit our children, grandchildren, and many generations of Muslims to come. Let us make sure that before we are called back by our Creator, or we are asked to move on, that each of us collects as much of the blessings as possible by participating in this noble work.

Fund Raising Dinner on May 10th

A Fund Raising Dinner, Insha Allah, will be held on Saturday, May 10, 2008 at the Marriott Jacksonville located at 4670 Salisbury Road. The program will start at 5:30 P.M.

A most inspiring lecture by Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Shah, the first Imam of our community, and a sumptuous meal is promised. Tickets are \$50 each. Baby-sitting will be available on site for a cash payment of \$10 per child. Cost of pizza to be served to children is included in the \$10 fee.

Please purchase your tickets as soon as possible so that we can make adequate seating arrangements. Tickets are available in the Atrium after Friday prayers, with members of the ICNEF Board of Trustees, and with other volunteers. Please contact any of them or the ICNEF Administrative Assistant Sister Sara Mojadidi at (904) 646-3462 (E-mail: sara@icnef.org).

The donors will have an option to direct their donations to any of these projects:

1. Children's Classrooms
2. IC Building Exterior-East Side (Phase-9)
3. IC Atrium Expansion (Phase-10)

May Allah SWT guide all of us, and make us worthy of participation in the construction and use of His house Ameen.

THE ISLAMIC WAY

By Maria Ilyas

Our life is based on the Islamic way
We all have to fast and pray,
Pay zakah and do the Hajj
And worship Allah alone
That is the Islamic way

The Islamic way is to believe in all the angels,
all the prophets, all the books
That were sent down from Allah a long time ago
The prophets are many, although there are only
25 that we know by name
The angels are countless;
all they do is to serve Allah
There are five holy books that we believe in
The last one of was the Holy Qur'an
sent to Muhammad (S)
We believe in the day of judgement,
which is to come
Its signs are many some major and minor

Our life is based upon it, our actions are
determined by it
That is the Islamic way

The Islamic way is to feed the poor,
To help the orphan and the widow
To show everyone the deen of Allah
To have the khilafah in the land for justice,
peace and security
Insha'Allah this will all come about one day!
That is the Islamic way

The Islamic way is to believe in the
five pillars of Islam
To agree to the articles of faith
To be kind to our fellow human beings
on this earth
And be good people working for Islam
and the deen
That is the Islamic way!

SMALL STONES CAN MAKE A BIG MOUNTAIN

By Saeedah Qadeer

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful

Allah says in the Holy Qur'aan
Chapter 103 Surah Asr:

*“By (the Token of) Time (through the ages),
Verily Man is in loss,
Except those who have faith and do righteous deeds,
and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth,
and of Patience and Constancy.”*

It's often hard in this world and this time that we live in to keep up with Islamic values and morals; it seems as if its easier to do the wrong thing and harder to stay on the straight path. We often forget in our busy lives that life is short, and every second of our life counts and should be spent like if it's our last. The true reality is that every leaf that blows, every heart beat, every breath we take all testify to the fact that time is slipping away, which is why I started this article with Surah Asr. We should compare our lives like a leaf in the wind. The

second the leaf touches the ground, it's over. Indeed we all need to take steps to implement the sunnah in our lives before its too late, because tomorrow is not promised.

There are many ways in which we can implement it in our lives. This will only take a few minutes to do. For example:

- Saying bismillah before you open the door
- Say subhanallah with every step you take
- Smile often and say assalammu alaykum
- Say surah fatihah because it is a cure for the heart
- Ponder over Allah and his creation
- Read the Holy Qur'aan daily and try to understand its meaning

I wrote this as a reminder to myself first because I am also in need of improvement. Just like our small deeds are small stones, if we persist at building a mountain of stones, Insha Allah, we may be granted Jannah.

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- Hazrat Uthman bin Affan: He was the first Hafiz; the Holy Prophet (S) gave the glad tidings of being an occupant of Paradise thrice and also gave the hand of his two daughters, one after the death of the other, in his marriage.
- Ali ibn Abu Talib: The cousin of the prophet. He was the first young boy to embrace Islam. He is the fourth Caliph of Islam.
- Zaid Bin Harith: Was the only fortunate Sahabi whose name occurs in the Holy Qur'an.
- Sumaiyah bint Khabat: The first one to die for Islam.
- Hadrat Zubair bin Al-Awwam: The first man in Islam who raised sword against infidels.
- Hadrat Bilal: The first Muadhhdhin in Islam.
- Mus'ab bin 'Umar: The companion who resembled with Holy prophet Muhammad (S).
- Mu'awiyya: He organized the first naval fleet in Islam.

Ten fortunate companions (Ashral Mubashrah) were declared, during their life time by the Holy Prophet (S) that they would go to paradise:

SOME GREAT SAHABA

By Ibrahim Islam

Grade: 4, Al-Furqan Academy

A Sahaba or Companion is a person who embraced Islam, saw the Holy prophet Muhammad (S) and kept company with him even for a short time and died as a Muslim. The number of men, women, and children who earned this distinction exceeded 100,000. Here are some notable Sahaba (Companion of Prophet Muhammad):

- Abu Bakr: He was the most distinguished person among the Sahaba. He was the first one among men to accept Islam, the first Caliph and the only one whose four generations were Sahaba.
- Omar bin Khattab: He was the second Caliph of Islam, established the first police department, started the Hijri time Era, created Baitul-Mal and conquered Iran.

1. Abu Bakar As Siddiq (r.a.)
2. Umar Al Khattab (r.a.)
3. Uthman bin Affan (r.a.)
4. Ali bin Abi Talib (r.a.)
5. Talhah bin Ubaidillah (r.a.)
6. Zubair bin Al Awwam (r.a.)
7. Abdul Rahman bin Auf (r.a.)
8. Saad bin Abi Waqas (r.a.)
9. Abu Ubaidah bin Al Jarrah (r.a.)
10. Said bin Zaid (r.a.)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) once said about his companions: "Don't rebuke my companions. If some one of you spend as much gold as the mountain of Uhud, he will not reach the virtue of any one of them, not half of it," (MISKAT). Let us pray to Allah that we may follow the virtues of the Companions/Sahaba.

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QURAN READING COMPLETED CONGRATULATIONS

By the grace of Almighty Allah, our beloved daughter Noor-ul-ain Haseeb Toor has completed her first recitation of the Holy Quran. She started this blessed endeavor in July 2005. Under the able guidance of Mr. Ali Raza, she completed her first recitation of the Holy Quran on March 2008. We are eternally grateful to Mr. Raza for his affectionate and untiring efforts that enabled us to fulfill this very important obligation (Fareeza). Mr. & Mrs. Haseeb.



AL-FURQAN ACADEMY NEWS



AL FURQAN
ACADEMY

The English Spelling Bee Winners for 2007-2008

First Grade

- 1st Place: Manaal Chahed
- 2nd Place: Abdullah Islam
- 3rd Place: Zahra Casado

Second Grade

- 1st Place: Abdurazik Mohamed
- 2nd Place: Kareem Elmelige
- 3rd Place: Sumayyah Mohammad

Third Grade

- 1st Place: Omar Abushaib
- 2nd Place: Maumer Bosnic
- 3rd Place: Beshear Tayarah

Fourth Grade:

- 1st Place: Ibrahim Islam
- 2nd Place: Rayana Zein El-Abdin
- 3rd Place: Benjamin Hergic

Fifth Grade:

- 1st Place: Mohammad Abushaib
- 2nd Place: Abdul-Rahman Tayarah
- 3rd Place: Kamil Nour

The Arabic Spelling Bee Winners for 2007-2008

First Grade

- 1st Place: Abdullah Islam
- 2nd Place: Ahmed Nassar
- 3rd Place: Manaal Chahed

Second Grade

- 1st Place: Ramez Tolaymat
- 2nd Place: Dounya Al-Amad
- 3rd Place: Kareem Elmelige

Third Grade

- 1st Place: Salma Nassar
- 2nd Place: Omar Abushaib
- 3rd Place: Maumer Bosnic

Fourth & Fifth Grade:

- 1st Place: Ibrahim Islam
- 2nd Place: Mohammad Abushaib
- 3rd Place: Rayana Zein El-Abdin

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Will the Next President Make Us Safe and Free?
A Discussion about National Security and Civil Liberties
Wednesday, April 30 • 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm
At The University of North Florida University Center, Bldg. 43



David Cole
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Hina Shamsi
• Staff Attorney at ACLU's National Security Project
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