

Islamic Center — VOICE —

Spring 2009 Edition | In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Assalamu Alaikum,

As spring fast approaches, Al-Humdulillah, we are planning several activities and events you should be aware of. ICCR members were mailed a letter and Nomination Form for the upcoming Mosque Assembly meeting scheduled for April 19th. We hope that instructions were followed carefully and nominations were submitted for who you believe will be good leaders for our community. As many of you were reminded, it was important to have paid your dues by March 19, which was 30 days before the meeting to insure you are able to vote. If you have any questions about the process of elections or the meeting in general, please refer to the Constitution and Bylaws.

The Mosque Assembly meeting is an opportunity to listen to the Chairman and Imam recap last year's activities and talk about what is planned for the upcoming year. It also gives you the opportunity to voice your opinion.

Our membership is being asked to give money to a lot of various causes. Whether it is for Gaza relief, an earthquake in Pakistan, protecting Muslim civil rights in America or giving to the ICCR just to pay the bills, it is becoming more difficult for non-profit institutions to collect enough funds to sustain themselves and do the work they were chartered to do. The ICCR board understands that we have to be creative in how we raise funds to operate and pay for the normal upkeep of our Center.

Therefore, we have decided to have the Middle Eastern Dinner here at the Islamic Center on Sunday, April 26th. We believe that this is a great opportunity to open our Center to the public and promote knowledge and understanding while raising much needed funds to pay toward the operating costs of the Center.

This is also an opportunity for those of you who find it difficult to contribute financially, but would like to help the ICCR in some way. We encourage you to take the opportunity to help cook, clean, set up tables or do anything you can to help make this dinner a success. If you would like to be a volunteer, please call Tima Smejkal at: 393.3600.

Jazakam Allahu Khairan
Hassan Igram

Public Relations Committee Members:

Timothy Hyatt – Chairman
Mohamed Azkalany
Jordan Trcka
Akif Shaikh
Mohamed Soliman

www.crmosque.com
info@crmogque.com

Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids
2999 1st Ave SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

319.362.0857

“Nothing is said to you
(O Muhammad) that
was not said to (all of
God's) messengers
before you.”

The Holy Quran, 41:43

The Sound Heart (Al-Qalb As-Saleem)

Allah (swt) informs us in the Quran through the words of His khaleel Prophet Ibraheem that, on the day of Judgment the whole of mankind will be in loss "except he who brings to Allah a sound heart (Al-Qalb As-Saleem)". This means it is indeed vital for us to know what a saleem (sound) heart is.

Islam considers the human heart to be the most important organ in the body. What appears to be an ordinary organ is actually the seat of human feelings, desires, aspirations, intuitions, and belief. Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, "Surely, in the body there is a small piece of flesh; if it is good, the whole body is good, and if it is corrupted, the whole body is corrupted, and that is surely the heart." [Bukhari]

Human hearts are of four kinds:

1. A heart that is polished as shiny as a radiating lamp.

This is the sound, healthy, and soft heart. It is the heart of the extremely pious believer. A heart that becomes rarer with the passing time. The light that radiates from it is the light of faith. This light shines through as righteous actions of the body.

2. A solid heart with a knot tied around it.

This is the corrupt, dead, and hard heart. It is the heart of a disbeliever. It is a heart that has rejected the truth after it reached him. Such a heart is sealed by Allah in punishment of its rejecting the clear truth. The solid heart is incapable of benefiting from the remembrance of Allah and accepting the call towards His message.

3. The upside down heart.

It is the heart of the hypocrite believer

*Whoever seeks to
purify his heart
let him chose Allah
over his desires.*

who outwardly claims to accept the truth but inwardly denies it for the petty gains of this life. It is also the heart of the Faasiq (the disobedient Muslim) who has not entered Islam completely. He persistently disobeys Allah by following some of His commands while leaving off others to fulfill his hearts' base desires. This heart perceives things inverted; it sees this world as more important than the hereafter. It craves

and strives more for this world than worry and prepare for the hereafter.

4. The wrapped, blackened heart.

This is a diseased heart that is neither fully healthy nor completely dead. This heart has signs of hardness in it. It is the heart of a common Muslim and majority of them. There are several levels of hardness and different types of diseases. Some hearts are severely sick and hard while other are near healthy and soft. When a Muslim commits a sin a black dot is put on his heart. If the Muslim repents sincerely by turning away from that sin and seeking forgiveness, the dot is removed and the heart returns to its previous state. If the heart keeps committing more sins without repenting from them the black spots on the heart increase till they cover the whole heart. This is the 'Raana' (stain) that Allah describes in the Quran, "on their hearts is the stain of the (ill) which they do!"

Medicine of the heart: A human heart needs purification to remove the stains of sins and the hardness due to its neglecting the remembrance of Allah. The hardness of the heart stems from exaggeration in four things: eating, sleeping, talking, and socializing. As when the body becomes sick, eating and

IMAM'S OFFICE HOURS

The Imam's office hours are posted on his office door and will be updated as needed both there and on our website. They are currently:

- Noon to 3:00pm Daily except Thursday and Saturday
- Maghreb to Isha Every Day
- And by appointment

drinking alone cannot cure it; if the heart becomes sick with desires, preaching alone cannot help it. In both cases you need to exercise precaution that you don't do anything to aggravate the disease and make sure to take the prescribed medicine. Whoever seeks to purify his heart let him chose Allah over his desires. Here are some steps that every Muslim must take to rid his heart of disease and hardness in order to acquire Al-qalb As-saleem.

1. Leave off all acts of disobedience immediately
2. Repent to Allah for all previous sins and seek His forgiveness
3. Engage in the Thikr (remembrance) of Allah and it includes:
 - (a) Reciting a portion of the Quran every day while trying to understand and contemplate on it.
 - (b) Saying the athkaar of morning and evening as taught by the Prophet (saw)
 - (c) Making thikr at the start/end of every action as prescribed in the sunnah (e.g. thikr to say when starting and finishing food)
 - (d) Making general athkaar that can be said at any time (e.g. La Ilaaha Illa Allah)
4. Engage in acts of obedience with full sincerity
5. Focus on the hereafter through:
 - (a) Frequent visits to the graveyards and attending funerals to remind about death.
 - (b) Read details about the severity of death, punishment of the grave, description of the Day of Judgment, Heaven and Hell.
 - (c) Contemplate on the creation of Allah (e.g. human being and whatever else surrounds him in the world) as they are from the Signs of Allah.
6. Keep supplicating to Allah with full reliance (tawakkal) on Him that he will cure the disease of your heart and soften it through His Mercy and Kindness.

WEBSITE UPDATES

The ICCR website has recently been updated. Improvements and enhancements will continue in the coming months. Highlights include categories for Community, Programs, Committees, ICCR Policies & Procedures and Informational Links. Please be patient while some of these categories are populated. We hope you'll visit the site often and bookmark it for quick access and reference at www.crmosque.com

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING

If you would like to advertise your local business in the ICCR newsletter or the website, please submit your business info (company name, type of service, address and phone/fax/website/email) which we can insert in a business card size.

Contact Brother Tim through this email with your info and/or questions. A file attachment will be too large and

will be rejected due to the limited size of this mailbox size. Therefore, simply send a message without the attachment to this email and Tim will contact you with his direct email to send the attachment info.

Prices are \$25.00 per newsletter issue (approximately a minimum of 4 seasonal issues per year) and \$100.00 per year for the website.

AMERICAN CLASS TAXI

CALL 363-TAXI (363-8294)

Get a Safe & Clean Taxi Ride with Female Taxi Drivers available for our Sisters!
Low Out of Town Rates

Driver Wanted ... Good Income!



Halal
Midamar
"A TRADITION OF FINE QUALITY"

America's *Favorite* Halal Brand

www.midamarhalal.com
319-362-3711
1105 60th Ave. SW • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404

 

CALENDAR

Regular Monthly:

(Sunday School, Lectures, Halaqa, Tafsir, Tajwid, Quran Program)

Please see our website under the Programs category Upcoming Events, Monthly Events, Sunday School and Weekly Lectures.

- **Sunday School** – Sundays from 10:00am to 2:30pm following Ramadan through May.
- **Short evening Khatira** with the Imam following Isha prayer including Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday Tafseer, Fiqh and Hadeeth lessons following Maghreb prayer
- **Youth lectures** by the Imam Friday's 6:30 to Isha prayer and Ladies lectures (45 minutes) by the Imam following Isha prayer
- **Weekday Quran Program** – Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:35-7:30pm, for children 5 and above. \$50.00 per month per child or \$150.00 max per family. Each child will be placed according to their level. The objective is to strengthen the student's memorization skills. The program will not conflict with Sunday School. Contact Sheikh Imam Nabhan at 362-0857.

Youth Mosque Weekend Clean Up

The last Saturday of every month has been designated **Youth Mosque Weekend Clean Up day**. This takes place from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

The first clean up day on February 28 was a great success and we hope it will continue to be well attended by the youth.

Pizza and beverages follow the activities. This may evolve into a regular Youth Group gathering with more activities for both boys and girls. Special thanks to Sister Ayesha Abdullah, Sister Amina Abdullah and Brother Usama Hodzic!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Annual Spring Dinner, April 26



Serving: 11 am to 2:30 pm and 4 pm to 7 pm. \$10.00 Adults, \$5.00 Children under 10. Carry Out Dinners Available

The Annual Spring Dinner has always been a great success due to our community efforts. Whether you participate in food preparation, selling tickets, monetary donation, or working the day of the dinner, your dedication and cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Safaa Ajram will be responsible for the

distribution and collection of all tickets. If you should have any questions with regard to tickets please call her at (319) 390-8729.

We will prepare the **Fatayer on Saturday, April 4th**. The **Kibbie will be prepared on Saturday, April 18th**. Any dollar amount you can contribute

towards our food cost will be appreciated. The ticket price did not change from 2007 due to the present economic conditions. Please call Tima Smejkal at 373-1491 with any questions regarding food preparation or work schedules for the weekend of the Dinner.

All-State Quran, Competition, April 11

The Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids will again host a state-wide Quran competition on April 11. More information and details will be made available to all Sunday School students and on our website soon.

Mosque Assembly, April 19

The Annual Mosque Assembly meeting will be held Sunday April 19 starting at 10:00am. Your on time attendance will help us begin the session promptly and end it earlier. All community members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Items on the agenda include reports by the Imam, the Board Chairman, ICCR Committee Chairpersons, the new fiscal year's annual budget presentation and election of new Board Members and Board of Trustees members. Paid members will be eligible to vote. Members who have paid for two (2) consecutive years and who have at least a green card are eligible for nomination from the floor if the minimum slate of nominees has not already been reached prior to the due date.

Senior Recognition, Dinner, May 17

Class of 2009 High School Senior Recognition Dinner & Program. Potluck

Dinner at 6:00 PM, Please bring a meat dish and salad to share. Beverages and dessert will be provided.

Senior Recognition Program at 6:30 PM A \$500.00 Scholarship will be awarded

Our Congratulations to our 2009 High School Graduates:

Wissam Amer	Kennedy High School
Rudwan Azmeh	Kennedy High School
Yasine Hegazi	Kennedy High School
Luke Kaegbein	Washington High School
Maurice Zenelji	Kennedy High School

Please contact Tima Smejkal if you have any questions at (319) 373-1491.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Please see the ICCR website for Committee descriptions.

Education Committee

Sunday School News, March 2009: Alhamdulillah, the Sunday School classes are progressing wonderfully. All students are succeeding in Quran, Arabic and Islamic Studies. In Quran class the students are putting forth a strong effort in perfecting their memorization skills as well as getting ready for the Quran competition in April. In Arabic, the students are working hard at all their levels. In Islamic Studies, the students are increasing their knowledge of their deen, while learning how to apply it wherever they are. Activities are a huge hit in our program. Every Sunday the students are pulled out for 20 minutes and are given the opportunity to play a variety of games with their peers.

Here are upcoming events to mark on your calendars:

March 29th	Spring Break NO School
April 11th	All State Quran Competition
April 19th	ICCR General Assembly, No School
April 26th	Spring Dinner No School
May 10th	Final Week of Sunday School
May 17th	Sunday School Graduation

More info to come. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. The Sunday School Staff

Building Committee

The parking lot will be resurfaced and fresh parking spot lines painted as soon as weather permits. Notice our new landscaping around the outside of the building which was donated by an ICCR member last fall. Work will continue indoors with bathrooms being repaired and other important touch ups. Please help keep the ICCR clean and well cared for and encourage your families and children to help be a part of that any time they see the need.

Public Relations

The Public Relations committee is pleased to present this newly formatted newsletter to include as much important and relevant news to our community. We are also pleased to present the much needed improvements to the website – more improvements are still in process. Please offer your feedback, articles or other submittals to us via info@crmosque.com. Thank you.

Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids
Attn: PR & Publicity Committee
2999 1st Ave SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52408