

April 2007 -Safar/Rabi Thani 1428

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Chairman's Note

Assalamu alaikum, brothers and sisters in Islam,

Spring is rapidly approaching and so are a number of important events and activities.

Our annual general assembly meeting is set for Sunday, April 22nd (it seems like the last one was yesterday), the youth are planning an all day event on April 7th featuring outstanding guest speakers and an informative agenda and the Annual Middle Eastern Dinner is tentatively set for April 29th. Plus, somewhere in between there will be a spring clean up day to help get our center in shape.

So, what have we accomplished since our last general assembly meeting? Well, although we are still searching for a permanent Imam, we believe we are making progress toward hiring someone. We plan to interview more candidates in the next few weeks. To our surprise, there has been a lot of interest in from potential Imams in our community. Thanks to all of our community members who have sat with visiting Imams in group discussions and at the potluck lectures. We can't accomplish our goals without your participation.

The Annual Middle Eastern Dinner was rejuvenated not just to raise sorely needed funds for our Center, but more importantly as a public relations event for our friends and neighbors in the Cedar Rapids area. Citizens of Cedar Rapids look forward to this event every year. This fact was noted in a Cedar Rapids Gazette poll conducted last year of the top 100 local area events. With the negative publicity of Islam in our country and the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is important that we continue to show an accurate picture of Islam and Muslims. The dinner is one small way of doing that. Nevertheless, the dinner is a lot of work and it takes full

community involvement, women, men and youth. Please do your part in helping us work as a team to reach our goals of selling tickets, preparing food and serving our guests. Contact Tima Smejkal or any board member if you would like to volunteer.

The fundraising dollars from last Ramadan are being applied as promised. The roof is 90% complete. We are planning to do some minor construction in the masjid by adding insulation and remodeling the mihrab. We still need to install new HVAC units, one by one as needed and insulate the ceiling in the prayer room.

Another bit of news is the addition of new basketball hoops in the gymnasium and volleyball equipment. The playground equipment arrived as well and will be set up as soon as weather permits. Our youth have been using the gym more frequently now. Stop by and check out the gym. All we need now is a sport floor, but we are short of funds to purchase and install it. A sport floor will be much safer to play on and will add to the look and utility of the gym and allow us to use it for other purposes. If you are interested in donating or learning more about the sport floor, please contact me and I will be happy to give you more details.

Finally, I want to encourage all of you to attend the General Assembly meeting on April 22nd. Learn what your board has done and what is planned for the future. Express your concerns or thoughts and most importantly, vote in the board election. Again, your participation is a critical part of the success of our Center.

Sincerely,
Hassan Igram

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This newsletter is compiled by the Public Relations Committee (PRC) members include Muhammad Hayat, Tim Hyatt, Ridwan Rashid, Sarah Tawil, Jordan Trcka and Mohamed Soliman.

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**In the name of Allah,
The Compassionate, The Merciful**

[62] And it is He Who made the Night and the Day to follow each other: for such as have the will to celebrate His praises or to show their gratitude.
[63] And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!"
[64] Those who spend the night in adoration of their Lord prostrate and standing; [65] Those who say: "Our Lord! avert from us the Wrath of Hell, for its Wrath is indeed an affliction grievous,

At-Furqan-25

Education Committee Report

The Sunday school is doing very well and thriving with 116 students alhamdulillah.

Remember that the school assembly starts every Sunday at 9:45 AM in the lecture room, and the classes start at 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM, so please bring your children on time to get the maximum benefit from the school program. This winter we lost four precious

Sundays due to inclement weather, therefore we decided not to close the school on 3/18 as originally planned, instead we had a regular school day on that date. On Sunday 3/25, we will be having a conference meeting from Noon to 1:30 PM where the parents will be able to talk to the teachers and discuss the progress of their children.

The Quran competition is sched-

uled in the month of April, so please make sure that your children are practicing their suras in preparation for that event. We are also looking forward to the Olympics event in the month of May, prior to the graduation day.

Thanks to all the teachers and volunteers that make the Sunday school program a success.



Sunday, April 29th.

Please contact the following members for information regarding the following:

Safaa Agram - 390-8729 - Tickets

Hala Azmeh - 378-4356 - Donations for expenses

Bushra Igram - 294-1543 - Food preparation

Tima Smejkal - 373-1491 - General information

TICKETS / \$10.00/Adults - \$5.00/children

M E N U - Green Beans/Rice - Fatayer Kibbie - Salad Bread/Hummus - Baklawa Beverage

The Fatayer will be prepared on Saturday, April 14th beginning at 8:00 am. We will prepare the Kibbie on Wednesday, April 18th beginning at 8:00 am. We are counting on the entire community to help with this event.

Our Spring Dinner has been so successful in the past because of your commitment, and generosity.

Imam Search Committee Report

The Imam search committee had interviewed nine candidate Imams so far by telephone, four of which were invited to our Islamic Center to meet the community at large.

The committee is continuing the interview process, and is expecting to invite another prospective Imam shortly to deliver the Juma'a

Khutba and other lectures during the weekend.

Thanks to all of you who gave their feedback after attending the previous Imams' potluck dinners and lectures; your comments are valuable and will help the Search Committee make its final decision and recommendation to the board of directors.

APRIL 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:45 am Sunday School	2	3	4	5	6 01:15 pm Jumma Prayer	7 Youth Conference with Guest Speakers
8 9:45 am Sunday School	9	10	11	12	13 01:15 pm Jumma Prayer	14 8:00 am Fatayer Preparation 9:00 am Spring clean up day
15 9:45 am Sunday School	16	17	18 8:00 am Kibbie Preparation	19	20 01:15 pm Jumma Prayer	21
22 10:00 am General Assembly Meeting	23	24	25	26	27 01:15 pm Jumma Prayer	28
29 Annual Middle Eastern Spring Dinner	30					



Women's Role in Religious Activities

Islam is not a passive, private world of ascetics, but a religion that prides itself on its active community practices. And community activities in Islam are not exclusively male-oriented.

There is a long tradition of Muslim women teaching the Koran, transmitting hadith and even making Islamic law as jurists. The first women Scholars were our Beloved Mothers, the wives of the Prophet PBUH. A recent biographical compilation by the Oxford Center for Islamic Studies in Britain lists 8,000 of them, dating back 1,400 years in 40 volumes.

The dictionary's diverse entries include a 10th-century Baghdad-born jurist who traveled through Syria and Egypt, teach-

ing other women; a female scholar or muhaddithat in 12th-century Egypt whose male students marveled at her mastery of a "camel load" of texts; and a 15th-century woman who taught hadith at the Prophet's grave in Medina. One seventh-century Medina female jurist issued key fatwas on hajj rituals and commerce; another female jurist living in medieval Aleppo not only issued fatwas but also advised her far more famous husband on how to issue his. As a young woman, Umm al-Darda a prominent jurist in seventh-century Damascus, used to sit with male scholars in the mosque, talking shop. "I've tried to worship Allah in every way," she wrote, "but I've never found a better one than sitting around, debating other scholars." It's after the 16th century that citations of women scholars dwindle. Some historians venture that this is because Islamic education grew more formal, excluding

women as it became increasingly oriented toward establishing careers in the courts and mosques. Strangely enough, this kind of exclusion also helped women become better scholars. Because they didn't hold official posts, they had little reason to invent or embellish prophetic traditions.

The erosion of women's religious education in recent times, due to a reliance on Western education techniques, reflects a decline in every aspect of Islam. Flabby leadership and a focus on politics rather than scholarship has left Muslims ignorant of their own history.

Islam's current cultural insecurity has been bad for both its scholarship and its women, Our traditions have grown weak, and when people are weak, they grow cautious. When they're cautious, they give up their freedoms.