



# ICCD Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2, Winter 2007

## ISLAMIC CENTER OF CAPITAL DISTRICT

### A Note from the Editor

Azra Haqqie

**A**ssalam alaikum and welcome to the second issue of the ICCD newsletter. Our thanks to everyone who offered feedback and encouragement on the launch of the first issue and to everyone who contributed and advertised in this one too.

Our thanks also to Assem Salama, the young hafiz who so beautifully led us for taraveeh. He is an electrical engineer, having graduated from Binghamton University. He said he started memorizing the Quran in his youth and Alhamdulillah was able to completely memorize it by the time he was 18. He then sought help from Sheikh Mohammad Alraee in Maryland who helped perfect his tajweed. Assem and his wife, Asma, live in Cazenovia near Syracuse.

Also, our thanks to our former imam and director, Brother Ahmed Kobeisy, who led us and served us for three years. He will be missed not only by the Muslim community,

but by the others as well. In this issue, we reproduce with permission an article and a letter to the editor that appeared in the Times Union about him. Brother Ahmed may no longer be in this community physically, but he holds us dear in his heart and willingly obliged us with a column about hajj for this issue.

In this issue, we start what we hope will be a regular column, "Serving the Community." Whether you help locally or globally, whether you help shovel the snow for your elderly neighbor or volunteer at your local fire station or went to New Orleans to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina, we would love to have you write about it. Hiba Ayaz of Clifton Park, a senior at Union College in Schenectady, starts this column for us with her volunteer experience at an eye clinic in India last winter.

Continuing our request to the trustees in turn, we requested Brother Mofeez Murtaza to submit a column from the

treasurer and he readily complied. He has included information about finances that many of us will be keen to know and his article makes for interesting reading.

We are trying to include a reader participation question in each issue. Since we are in search of an imam for the Islamic Center, we ask you in this issue what five qualities you feel the imam should have. Please e-mail answers to [newsletter@iccdny.org](mailto:newsletter@iccdny.org).

Nesrin Morsy is handling the layout for the newsletter this time, for which we are extremely grateful.

Your ICCD Newsletter team: Zohra Ahmed, Azra Haqqie, Nesrin Morsy, Sherif Mohamed, and Maliha Nazeer.



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### Eid al-Adha: After the Day of Hajj

Muslims in general hold two different opinions about the observance of Eid al-Adha: Some believe it should follow local lunar dates, and others believe that it should follow the Hajj in Mecca. The Fiqh Council, after careful study, has reached the conclusion that Eid al-Adha should follow the day of Hajj as announced in Mecca. This is also the conclusion of the European Council of Fatwa and Research. This is a summary of a long paper on this subject; those who are interested may refer to the full text on our website. [Read More](#) go to [www.isna.net](http://www.isna.net)

# HAJJ

By former Imam Ahmad Nezar Kobeisy of ICCD and currently director and scholar in residence, the Islamic Learning Foundation, Islamic Circle of North America, New York



Ibn Jarir and Ibn Katheer, two great imams of Tafseer [Exegesis] of the Qura'n, and Ibn Abi Hatim, a great scholar of Hadith, reported that Ibn Abbas (RA), Mujahid, Ikrimah and others from the early generations of Muslim scholars reported the following:

Allah, The Almighty, instructed Prophet Abraham (PBUH) to proclaim the call for Hajj while he and his family were living in the uninhabited desert of Makkah and were surrounded by only mountains and empty space.

"O' My Lord, how can I proclaim Hajj among people while my voice does not reach them?," Abraham (PBUH) asked His Lord.

Allah, The Almighty, said what translates to: "O' Abraham, you have only the duty of making the call, and I will bear the responsibility of delivering it to all." Abraham (PBUH) then said: "O' Mankind, Your Lord has chosen a house of worship, so visit it with devotion (i.e. perform Hajj in it)." The report continues to say that mountains lowered themselves, the voice traveled throughout the earth and Allah made it heard by all humans and by all those who were destined to perform Hajj until the end of time. This call was reported in Surat Al Hajj (22) verse 27, **Which translates to: "And proclaim the Pilgrimage among men; they will come to thee on foot and (mounted) on every kind of camel, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways."**

With hajj approaching, my heart and the hearts of all Muslims long for the Ka'abah and to be among the two or more millions of Muslims performing Hajj.

For pilgrims, my sincere congratulations and prayers for the acceptance of their Hajj. For those staying behind, my prayers for them to be able to perform Hajj next year and for

their Hajj to be accepted.

For all, there are some lessons we can learn from Hajj. They are:

Hajj represents the call of Allah and His Messenger. Going to Hajj is the answer to Allah's call and the Messenger's call is not limited to Hajj alone. In fact the Quran, states in Surat Al-Anfal that which means: "O' you who have faith: Answer the Call of Allah and His Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life," 8:24. Whether going for Hajj or not, a Muslim must ask himself/herself the question: Have I answered the call of Allah and of His Messenger? What is that that I am doing right, doing wrong and/or ignoring intentionally? What is preventing me from answering it? Sincere self-examination should put us back on track and lead us to answer the call which gives us life.

During this virtuous journey of Hajj, Allah clearly instructs: "no quarreling nor rebellion against Allah" (The Quran 2:197). Using what the scholars of Usul-ul Fiqh call Qiyas-ul-Awla (i.e. the analogy of preference), those who are not making Hajj should be even more cautious against these two. That's because quarrelling among people leads to enmity and wastes time. Rebellion against Allah defeats the purpose of one's own existence which is intended for obedience to and worship of Allah.

Pilgrims are further instructed by the Almighty Allah SWT to maintain their remembrance of Allah after having fulfilled their rites as much as they remember their parents or even more (Quran 2: 200). Both pilgrims and non-pilgrims are required to remain conscious of Allah, our Creator, our Sustainer and the One to whom we belong and to whom we shall return all the time.

A sincere and devout pilgrim is promised expiation and forgiveness of all of his /her sins in the statement of our beloved Prophet Muhammad

(PBUH) which means: "Who so ever performs Hajj without committing disobedience or violation, will return home as pure of sins as the day when he/she was born." In order for this promise to be fulfilled, a person must undergo a complete and sincere tawbah (repentance). A non-pilgrim can do tawbah to remove all his/her sins. The Prophet (PBUH) said that which means: "Repentance erases sins committed previously."

On the Day of Arafah, pilgrims appeal to Allah for mercy and forgiveness. Allah proudly shows off his creation of human beings to the angels and declares that the humans are forgiven. There is no other day in the year where Allah forgives and saves more people than He does on the Day of Arafah. Non-pilgrims who fast the Day of Arafah can have expiation of two years of sins: the past year and one year to follow.

On the Day of Eid, we all, pilgrims and non-pilgrims, remember the attempt of our great Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son Ishmael which was stopped when Allah substituted Ishmael with a ram. This sacrifice should bring to our minds and our hearts the need to sacrifice our worldly desires that are inconsistent with our humanity and with our Lord's pleasure.

Will Hajj or its season change us? Will we see improvement in our actions and practices? Will our relations with family, neighbors and colleagues at work improve? Will our connection with Allah grow stronger? Will our faith and understanding change our life to the better?

And finally, may this Hajj season be a season of piety, forgiveness and salvation for all of us. May the pilgrims return safely with Hajj Mabrou (righteous pilgrimage) and may those who are staying behind be rewarded for the intention to make Hajj and for all the good they do with all the blessings of the season. Amen.

## A time of Faith, A time of change

By Marc Parry

Reprinted with permission from the Times Union

**A** time of faith, a time of change - The leader of region's largest mosque is leaving to start a seminary

by MARC PARRY, staff writer

COLONIE - The end of Ramadan this weekend will be a time of shared gifts and celebration. For the popular leader of the region's largest mosque, it also will be a time to say farewell.

Imam Ahmed Kobeisy is leaving his Colonie mosque at the end of the month to establish an Islamic seminary based in New York. It's an effort to build the infrastructure for educating the next generation of Muslim-American leaders. Right now, the expanding U.S. Muslim population often depends on imams educated abroad. Kobeisy, 50, arrived in the Capital Region from Syracuse three years ago. The Saudi Arabia-born imam has since become the area's most visible Islamic leader, winning admirers for opening the Islamic Center of the Capital District to other faith groups, government officials, activists, teachers and the media. Within his mosque, Kobeisy is a father figure known for a willingness to share his cell phone number and an approach to Islam that is, like his business suits, practical. He teaches Muslims, leads them in prayers, counsels them, marries them, visits them in hospitals and advocates for their rights with employers and teachers.

Some have cried in Kobeisy's office since the imam announced his plans to leave the nearly 500-member mosque on Lansing Road off Central Avenue. One active member, Maliha Nazeer, said that with Kobeisy's outreach "we became more mainstream in society."

"He empowered us to go out there and tell people what Islam is,"

added Nazeer, 43, an East Greenbush homemaker. "All of a sudden we were the faces of Islam, not some leader someplace in some other country."

This career change is something of a gamble for an Islamic leader who has carved out a unique career since coming to the United States at 28.

Kobeisy, who already had earned a degree abroad in Islamic studies, built on that foundation with a master's in counseling and a doctorate in social sciences, both from Syracuse University. He wrote a book about counseling U.S. Muslims. He is a chaplain at Syracuse. He



teaches at Le Moyne College.

His office in Colonie could be a lawyer's, with its broad, glass-topped desk, and its shelves of gold- and silver-embossed books. Except the jurisprudence in those volumes is Islamic. And, in keeping with mosque etiquette, the imam in the gray suit isn't wearing any shoes.

"I love this community, and I'm not leaving them because of looking for another community," Kobeisy said. "No, I'm just looking to do something that is not done, and has not been done - and that must be done."

The need, Kobeisy said, is for a school both steeped in Islamic tradition and American culture; one

that will turn out leaders comfortable with both the Quran and the Constitution. Kobeisy will become director of the Islamic Learning Foundation - a branch of the Islamic Circle of North America - and he hopes to reinvent the foundation to fill that gap.

Its classes will take place mainly at night and on weekends to accommodate working students. The plan is to eventually offer bachelor's degrees and programs around the nation. It will prepare young Muslims to work as imams and chaplains in America.

"You could memorize the Quran, but you don't really know the Quran until you know how it applies in the context in which you live," Kobeisy said.

An imam with experience working in the United States is what the Islamic Center seeks in its next leader, said mosque president Tariq Niazi. That person will take over a 28-year-old mosque with members from Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Middle East, North Africa and the United States.

"It's difficult, because there are not that many candidates, especially if you are not reaching out abroad," Niazi said.

The Rev. James Kane, the official in charge of interfaith affairs for the Albany Catholic Diocese, appreciated Kobeisy's effort to reach out after the Pope made controversial remarks about Muslims last year. At Kobeisy's invitation, Bishop Howard Hubbard spoke at the mosque.

"That certainly was a first," Kane said.

**"I love this community and I'm not leaving them because of looking for another community" Kobeisy said.**

## ICCD Announcements From the Vice President

- Eid Al-Adha observance at the ICCD will follow ISNA's announcement.
- Prayers will most likely be held at the masjid and there will be consecutive prayer services.
- Eid Al-Adha get-together details will be announced.



- In December, the monthly community get together will be held on the fourth instead of the third Saturday of the month. It will be on Saturday, Dec.22. From January, the community meetings will resume on the third Saturday of the month. Speakers will be announced.
- The Jum'ah Khutbah will start at 12:30 p.m, followed by the prayer services at 1 p.m, because of the switch to Eastern Standard Time.

- The advertisement for an Imam for the ICCD was in the November issue of the Islamic Horizon's magazine. if you have any nominations please contact

### MUSLIM COMMUNITY CENTER

The ICCD's final submission for the plans was given to the town of Colonie on Nov.14. We are expecting the town to schedule a hearing for us around mid-December. We are on track for a spring ground breaking for the center, Insha'Allah.

## Farewell By Michael J. Murphy

*This letter to the editor appeared in the Times Union on Oct. 28, 2007. (It is being printed with permission from the Times Union.)*

I am writing both in response to the excellent Oct. 8 Times Union article about the departure of Dr. Ahmed Kobeisy, imam of the Islamic Center of the Capital District, and also to report on the simply amazing farewell celebration on Oct. 20.

The dinner and formal reception for Dr. Kobeisy included Muslims, Jews, Christians and atheists. Even more exceptionally telling was the (invited) presence of two members of the FBI.

All spoke high praise of the imam as well

as the members and community of the Islamic Center. This was due in no small part to the message of respect for all persons - regardless of religious affiliation (or lack thereof) or lifestyle.

Dr. Kobeisy's main message of respectful coexistence and abstinence from judging others is a reasoned approach to world peace often not duplicated enough today.

Further, the humor and nonjudgmental affection in which Dr. Kobeisy greets each guest is representative of the ICCD community.

For example, when the FBI representatives told the gathering that Sheik Ahmed Kobeisy was the first imam to visit the FBI in Albany, he responded with great amuse-

ment, "Well, you mean as a guest."

Finally, Dr. Kobeisy reminded us all that federal institutions like the FBI are our institutions and we need to support their efforts to protect us and provide security, but it is also our responsibility to help ensure oversight and accountability.

Dr. Ahmed Kobeisy will be missed indeed in the area.

He and the ICCD are to be congratulated for their outreach activities.

MICHAEL J. MURPHY, Ph.D.

Distinguished Teaching Professor Founding President Eastern New York Chapter of the Fulbright Association Albany

## An Eye-Opener in India: Eliminating Preventable Blindness by Hiba Ayaz

senior, Union College, Schenectady

I spent the month of December 2006 volunteering in Chennai, India, in an effort to eliminate preventable blindness.

I found out about the program Unite For Sight by Googling "optometry volunteer opportunity." What really motivated me to

take on this endeavor was that I learned 80 percent of all blindness in the world is PREVENTABLE. I thought perhaps I could make a small difference by giving the gift of sight to the people of India.

There were five people in our group. I traveled alone from America and met the rest



of the group in Chennai. We stayed in a residency about three blocks from the eye clinic. We would leave from the eye clinic in the morning and travel by van and/or boat to the camp sites and return by the end of the day. As part of a rural outreach program, I traveled several kilometers outside the city to set up free eye camps. At each

## An Eye Opener in India -Continued

thalmologist and two optometrists. I had brought along 500 pairs of eyeglasses and two dozen sunglasses from America.

I was able to help screen over 1,000 villagers with Uma Eye Clinic and provide sight-restoring cataract surgeries to dozens, none of whom had access to eye care before our arrival. These surgeries were made possible by the \$2,000 in donations I raised with the help of our very own Muslim community. I raised the money by distributing fliers about my trip and explained how the money would support cataract surgeries performed at the Uma Eye Clinic. I also just simply asked friends and family for their support.

Furthermore, I was able to distribute over 500 prescription eyeglasses and sunglasses that were prescribed by optometrists. I will never forget the way those faces lit up with sheer happiness when they first put on the specs. For me, it was truly an eye-opening opportunity to experience first-hand the life in rural India. It was also a great educational experience because we received training in identifying certain diseases of the eye and learned how to use some of the diagnostic equipment. Also, we

were able to stand alongside the ophthalmologists in the Operating Room as they performed cataract surgery on the patients. It was remarkable to see the life-altering transformation occur in just a few minutes.

The most memorable camps were those conducted in the tsunami-affected villages of Pulicat, which we reached by boat. To spend a day in the life of an Indian villager was unforgettable. And to stand on the beach facing the Bay of Bengal exactly two years after the tsunami struck was a bone-chilling coincidence.

The smiles and laughter of those village children will forever be embedded in my memories. Giving them a sense of hope, visiting their schools and homes, running together on the sandy beaches sporting new sunglasses--those moments are ones I will forever cherish. I have never been shown so much respect and appreciation for being me. Despite our world of differences, to them, I wasn't some strange foreigner; I was simply one of them. It was such an honor and blessing to volunteer for these incredible individuals.

After returning home, I reflected upon all I

had seen. And what I realized is that the gift of sight does not have to be done by some top-notch surgeon, it can be as simple yet powerful as placing a great pair of glasses on someone's face. An experience like this really makes you appreciate the little things in life most of us take for granted.

This experience enabled me to fully grasp some of the attributes of Allah: Ar-Raheem (the Merciful), Al-Muhyi (the giver of life) and Al-Muqit (the sustainer). I am so thankful to have gone on this adventure because Allah has allowed me to open the closed eyes of my heart. Insh'Allah with a little effort we can all make a difference in the world. As they say in Chennai, "Nandri" (Tamil for "thank you") to everyone who supported me and to Unite For Sight for changing my life, and improving the lives of thousands around the globe.

For details about Unite For Sight, visit <http://www.uniteforsight.org/>

## A year (2007) in the life of an ICCD Treasurer

By Mofeez Murtaza

**L**ife was busy as is for my wife Maliha and myself with our two young boys Faizan and Jibran, full time jobs and a fulfilling social life with friends and family. However, when I decided to run for the Board of Trustees in 2006, much to the chagrin of Maliha, things went from ridiculous to ludicrous in a heartbeat.

Maliha was right! There are not enough hours in the day to meet everyone's needs. So eventually family suffers because you shortchange your family to fulfill your responsibilities to the Center. All the past treasurers know this. It brings a wry smile to their faces when they hear of a new "Bakra" (sacrificial goat) getting ready for sacrifice! May Allah accept their efforts and

mine too!

Having said all that, I have enjoyed the responsibility. I had informed the Board before elections that I would be stepping down from this position. While you learn the Operations of the Center as Treasurer there is not enough time to spend on strategy and long-term vision. Also, I feel there should always be rotation in key positions at the center so that we develop a lot of folks in the community who



are capable of leadership and can represent the Center.

Our accounts are in great shape alhamdulillah. A heavy amount of money (\$604,000) resides in the Muslim Community Center account. This account is a Money Market Savings account at 5.15 percent. The Masjid fund has a healthy surplus and after a long time we have a buffer in the AnNur account. Zakat account has a healthy balance of \$35,000 even after disbursing Zakat-ul-Fitr and about \$13,000 in Zakat for the year thus far. The Cemetery fund likewise now has some balance that can be used for development. We have just signed an annual contract

## A year (2007) in the life of an ICCD Treasurer-CONTINUED

By Mofeez Murtaza

The weekend school is a self-sufficient institution and typically raises more than enough to pay teacher salaries and take care of graduation events.

From January to September this year, we have collected a total of about \$207,500: about \$182,000 by cash and checks for the Masjid fund, another \$15,000 via Friday collections and a further \$10,500 from membership dues. MCC collected about \$42,00 and \$32,000 was given towards Zakat.

On the expense side, we spent about \$21,000 on the Trailer this year to connect it to the AnNur building. Br. Hadi Ipek's team did this project very well. This Masjid and AnNur School picked up the cost 50-50, as decided by the Boards. The other big project this year was the Masjid play ground. It is a part of the MCC project and hopefully will draw more kids to the masjid. It cost us about \$22,000. We took \$10,000 from the MCC account as agreed upon by the Board and for the rest we did a focused fund raising with a few very generous friends of ours. May Allah accept their donation. Ameen. The kids have used the play set extensively since it was put up in August especially during the month of Ramadhan. As we do space expansion projects at the AnNur School we need to think of a long-term plan for that land. We have hired AEG architectural firm from New Jersey to develop an AnNur Master Plan. This goes hand in hand with getting AnNur

School a separate Tax ID and developing new bylaws. We are working with a CPA to get a new Tax ID for the school.

The ICCD picnic held in a park in Niskayuna has been a big topic of discussion. We spent around \$6,300 on the picnic, with its catered meal and uniformed wait staff. The community was, justifiably, not happy with this expenditure. The Board accepts the responsibility. This spawned a discussion on what people's donation money can be used for and what it shouldn't be used for. We have created a new account called the "Special Programs Fund". The idea is that if people want to donate money specifically for a picnic or an event, their money will go into this account. So for picnic expenses, money will come out of this account in the future.

We had hired a certified public accountant last year to perform what is called a "Report on Agreed upon Procedures" for 2004 and 2005. That report highlights areas for improvement. It pointed out a need for proper program classification and allocation. It was pointed out that our system lacks segregation of duties. Also, there were recommendations for monitoring/reporting procedures, dedicated bank accounts, monthly reports and development of a comprehensive procedure manual. Another CPA is working on a similar report for 2006, which should be complete by year.-end.

Some of the suggestions above like separate accounts and two persons emptying collection boxes have already been implemented. Having a CPA (Br. Saeed Siddiqui) on the Board since January 2007 has been a very welcome addition. We have created a new function in the Board called the "Comptroller," whose function will help set up a check and balance system. The functions of fund handling and record keeping will be separated. We have established a Receiving journal. Now we use two people to open the Donation boxes. Br. Siddique Tai has been very helpful in giving his time to both of us. Another welcome move has been the hiring of a bookkeeper. The bookkeeper comes highly recommended by a respected community member, Br. Ghouse Farooqui.

As a Treasurer there is never a day off. In this day and age, we have to be very transparent, rigorous and professional in our approach. We have setup direct withdrawals from our accounts for almost all recurring bills. We write online checks whenever we can and have recurring online payments for our contracts. We have setup online payroll. Whoever gets to accept this responsibility next year will have the work cut out but with better procedures, more delegation, checks and balance, a bookkeeper and a smooth transition we can improve upon where we are today...and that is always the goal!

## Ramadan Quran Contest



*Congratulations!!! the following children are the winners in the Quran Contest*

Haniyah Saqib, Fatima Ahmed, Mina Wali, Moiz Shah, Walid, Amina Sharif, Abdullah Saqib, Suleman Taqiri, Ahmed Khan, Samim Siraj, Waseem Ijaz, Salwan Riaz, Zubair Shirzad, Fareed Barak, Saima Fatima, Iman Ahmed, Hussein, Sabir, Kamil, Jaweed, Shabbir Scrha, Fattah Ahmed, Iman Khan, Waqqas Tai, Taha Ahmed

May ALLAH shower his blessings over them and their parents and all Muslims.



## Martin Luther King Jr. and Islam

By Ayesha Ropri

**M**artin Luther King Jr., minister and civil rights leader from Atlanta, courageously dealt with the evil that was caused by discrimination in the middle 20<sup>th</sup> century. He spoke against it fearlessly and took measures to bring an end to the mistreatment of human beings on the basis of their color. Dr. King's civil rights movement illustrates his tireless efforts to solve the problem of racism. Martin Luther King Jr. states his desire in the following quote made in his "I have a dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. on Aug. 28, 1963. "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character". In the same speech, he also says, "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." This shows how aware Rev. King was of inequality among people. Islam always appreciates the efforts of speaking and acting against an evil.

Prejudice due to race, color, and nationality has been present throughout history and has caused disruption in the world. Discrimination has given rise to the concept of superiority, which then has taken the worst forms of hatred, enmity and contempt. Examples of how the nationalism of the nations has turned one nation against the others and made it their enemies have been seen in the wars of the recent past and are being seen even in the present

time. There is no place for such concepts in Islam, even though many Islamic countries continue to do so. The message of Islam has always been to establish brotherhood among communities and nations regardless of their societal differences. Allah has delivered this message in several places in the Quran and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has exemplified it in a manner that is unmatched by anyone in this world. Islam recognizes everyone who is committed to work for human rights and for people who are oppressed, as well as Martin Luther King Jr. for his fearless efforts to end prejudice against African Americans.

Why, then, has Allah divided us amongst communities and nations? Allah says in the Quran, "Oh mankind, Verily We have created you from a male and female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may recognize one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious of you. Surely, Allah is the

most knowledgeable and aware" (Surah Hujrat Verse 13). As regards to differences in race, color, and culture, all of humankind is equal, for their Creator is One, their substance of creation is one, and their way of creation is one. The basic teach-

ings of Islam include to treat each other equally and not to discriminate. This was the message in the verse.



The mere fact that we are divided into nations and tribes is that this is the natural way of cooperation and distinction between us. The criterion of superiority in Islam is moral excellence. The goal of Rev. King. was to establish equality in society.

When he was 35, Rev. King received the Nobel Peace Prize, the youngest man to do so. When notified of his selection, he announced he would turn over the prize of \$54,123 to further the civil rights cause.

Racism continues to exist even today. This evil has been a cause to many disruptions in the human world, including the Holocaust during World War II. However, in the message of Islam, Allah has asked human beings to live as one community despite the many communities that have already split us into different races and cultures. However, because Allah has granted mankind free will, we seem to think of ourselves as superior, whereas in Islam, the only superiority is in moral excellence.

Our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) exhorted us to establish brotherhood and sisterhood among ourselves. He set us an example unrivaled in this world. Islam has also valued the endeavors of Rev. King to end desegregation, as well the attempts of others who tried their hardest to

## Reader's Question



Since our imam Brother Ahmed Kobeisy left us at the end of October to pursue a slightly different career path, the imam search committee at ICCD is looking for a replacement. We wondered what qualities you think are most important for the imam of ICCD.

Perhaps you think the imam should be:

- (1) proficient in English and a good communicator
- (2) a hafiz

- (3) be at the masjid to lead prayers five times a day
- (4) lead youth activities
- (5) have a great deal of Islamic knowledge

Perhaps you have other qualities in mind as priority for an imam. Send in your response by e-mail to

[newsletter@iccdny.org](mailto:newsletter@iccdny.org)

## Community Announcements

### Welcome back

Zainab Chaudhry of Niskayuna has returned to the area after spending four years in Syria where she studied Islamic jurisprudence. A graduate of Albany Law School, she is working as an assistant solicitor general in the office of the state attorney general Andrew Cuomo.

May Allah guide you in your new job!



### Thank you

Because of generous contributions from the community, the sisters at ICCD collected \$2,285 for needy children and other purposes during Ramadan. They got \$20 and \$25 gift cards from Target and Wal-Mart for 30 kids. They also gave cash gifts to both the custodians and helped 10 families with money for the holidays.

Thank you to all who participated and may Allah reward you with more. ameen.

The sisters collect throughout the year for people in need.

For details, call Maliha Nazeer, 477-8544, or Humera Khan, 370-3849.



### Death

*Inna lilla he wa inna ilaihi rajjoon.*

Farzana Saleem, sister of Noreen Azam of Clifton Park, passed away suddenly in Clifton Park on Aug. 30 while she and her husband were visiting from Pakistan. The late lady's husband and Noreen accompanied the body to Pakistan for burial. May ALLAH bless the departed and may He give their family the strength. Ameen

### Good Luck

Nisreen and Ahmed Bahi El-Din of Niskayuna moved to Join GE in Atlanta ,GA

Noha ,Yahia and Mohmed Ali of Clifton Park will be moving in December to join GE in Houston, TX



### Interfaith

Muslim-Catholic dialogue is scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. June 3, 2008 in the Hubbard Interfaith Sanctuary, The College of Saint Rose, 432 Western Ave., Albany. The topic is "Abraham." Everyone is welcome to attend.

### Birth

Ayesha Hasan was born Nov 10th 2007. Parents are Umima Baig and Riaz Hasan of North Greenbush. Maternal grandparents are Tabassum and Arif Baig. Paternal grandparents are Kaneez and Badar Hasan. They live in North Greenbush.



Noor Hisham was born October 24th 2007, Parents are Saba Hisham Of Niskayuna .

### Eid Bazar

Join us for the Eid Bazar on Dec 18th 6:00-11:00 pm In the RPI Academic Auditorium.

Henna /Clothing/Food

Table rent is \$20 please contact Sister Maliha Nazeer for more information.

**Latham BIRYANI**

Restaurant

INDIAN / PAKISTANI

Lunch/dinner/takeout/catering

Lunch buffet Tuesday-Friday 11:30-2:30pm

Weekend Brunch buffet 12-3pm

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## Heart Talk

### Quran

“The Parable of those who choose protectors other than God is that of a spider who builds for itself a dwelling; but surely the weakest of all dwellings is (that) of a spider, if they but knew” 29:14

### Hadeeth

The Messenger of Allah, Sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said, “The case of a believer is amazing! Every affair of his is good for him, and this is not for anyone except a believer: if he experiences something pleasant, he is grateful to Allah and that is good for him; and if he comes across some adversity, he is patiently preserving (i.e. has sabr) and that too is good for him!” **Muslim**

### Notable Quotes

“Seize the opportunity, and anticipate not what will happen tomorrow, for who can, indeed, guarantee that tomorrow will emerge.”

*-Abdullah ibnul Mu'taz*

“If you are lacking provision, you will not find any provision quite like that of righteousness.”

*-Al Akhtal*

“What you love to have with you in the hereafter you should advance today, and what you hate to have with you, you should abandon today.”

*-Salman Ibn Dinar*