

Manitoba Muslim

September 2009 / Shawwal 1430 Vol.10 Issue 3

Eid Mubarak



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Chicken Pakora (marinated chicken, dipped in batter and deep fried) 6 pieces	\$3.99
Fish Pakora (dipped in butter and deep fried) 4 pieces	\$3.99
Papri Chatt (Indian style chips served with yogurt and tamarind sauce)	\$3.99
Aloo Tikki (potato patty) each	\$1.50
Seekh Kabab (minced beef roasted on skewers) each	\$1.99
Pakora By the Pound (your choice of cheese, chicken or fish)	\$11.99

Vegetarian specialities...

Vegetable Curry	\$6.99
Vegetable Korma (vegetables cooked in creamy sauce with fruits and nuts)	\$7.99
Chickpea Curry	\$5.99
Palak Panier (Spinach and cheese curry)	\$7.99
Mutter Panier (Green peas and cheese curry)	\$7.99

Meat Specialties (your choice of beef, lamb, chicken or shrimp)...

Curry	\$7.99
Korma (cooked in creamy sauce with nuts)	\$8.99
Bhoona (stir fry with mushrooms, tomatoes, green peppers & onions)	\$8.99
Vindaloo (hot n' spicy cooked with tomatoes & potatoes)	\$8.99

Biryani's and Rice entrees...

Extra rice	\$2.50
Biryani (Chicken, Beef, Lamb, Shrimp or Vegetable)	\$8.99
Kashmiri Palao (rice cooked with dry fruit and saffron)	\$6.99

Chefs choice...

Butter Chicken	\$9.99
Tandoori Chicken (5 pieces)	\$8.99
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Breads and More...

Rogni Naan	\$1.50
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Raita---- (creamy indian yogurt with a cucumbers or potatoes)	\$2.50
Mixed Pickles	\$1.50

Special Beverages

Lassi (yogurt drink sweet or salted)	\$2.50
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Milk Shake (banana, mango or mixed berries)	\$3.50
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SPECIALS...

Dinner for 2	
Chicken curry, vegetable curry, 2 samosas, 2 kababs, rice	\$17.99
Dinner for 4	
Beef curry, chicken curry, vegetable korma, 4 samosas, 2 naans	\$27.99
Dinner for 6	
Butter chicken, beef curry, chickpea curry, vegetable korma, 6 samosas, 3 naans	\$39.99

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Feedback

The Manitoba Muslim would like to hear from its readers! If you have any comments, suggestions or if you'd like to advertise in this newsletter please contact us at:

editorialboard@miaonline.org

Friday Prayer Locations

MIA Grand Mosque
2445 Waverley St.
256-1347

MIA St. Vital Mosque
247 Hazelwood Ave.
254-3979

Winnipeg Central Mosque
715 Ellice Ave.
783-6797

University of Manitoba
Education Building, main floor

Health Science Center
820 Sherbrook St.
Room 215

Pakistani Association Center
348 Ross Avenue

Manitoba Muslim

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Opinions and views expressed in this newsletter are the sole responsibility of their authors.

Editorial

Chapter 59 (Surat Al Hashr), verse 10 states that the believers “who come after [the emigrants and helpers] pray: O our Lord! Forgive us our sins, as well as those of our brethren who preceded us in faith, and let not our hearts entertain any hatred or envy against any of those who have attained faith. O our Lord! Verily, You are compassionate, a dispenser of grace.” As we say farewell to Ramadan and welcome Eid, the call of these believers to have their hearts cleansed of any ill feeling towards fellow believers should be heeded by all. Let us make it a point that with Ramadan passing so quickly, we reflect how life passes so quickly, and take action to be reconciled with our fellow Muslims, regardless of our disagreements or past experiences.

This verse also establishes bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood, not just horizontally in the same time and place,

but vertically across time and generations. We feel love and admiration for our predecessors whose legacy we carry, and we pray that our successors will receive from us a legacy that is as powerful, positive and empowering. We are all beneficiaries of the efforts of those who came before us. This year, as MIA reaches its 40th anniversary milestone, we must reflect on the many individuals who worked so hard so that we enjoy what we have today: beautiful mosques, a growing community and established professional services in several sectors. Pioneers have a special place in Islam. The Prophet and his successors always held the earliest Muslims in high regard because of the magnitude of their sacrifice and commitment.

We must also look to the future and hope that we can rise to the occasion, meet the challenges that confront us and be pioneers in our own right. With every Eid and every moment that passes, our community is changing and evolving and we must work hard for a bright and successful future. We want our successors to invoke Allaah’s/God’s mercy on us as we invoke His mercy on our predecessors.

Eid Mubarak!

Words of Revelation

Qur’aan

On rejoicing:

Say: “In [this] bounty of God and in His grace-in this, then, let them rejoice: it is better than all [the worldly wealth] that they may amass!” (Surah Yunus (10), verse 58)

Hadith

Anas Ibn Malik, a companion of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) reported that when the Prophet migrated from Makkah to Madinah, the people of Madinah used to have two festivals. On those two days they had carnivals and festivity. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) asked the Ansaar (the Muslims of Madinah) about it. They replied that before Islam they used to have carnivals on those two joyous days. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told them: ‘Instead of those two days, Allah has appointed two other days which are better, the days of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha.’

Ways to make this Eid special for your family

Excerpts from: soundvision.com

1. **Plan in advance**
2. **Clean and decorate the home**
3. **Make special food**
4. **Set up a family gift exchange**
5. **Have the kids make gifts for each other**
6. **Buy new clothes**
7. **Wash the car**
8. **At Eid prayer, look for those who are alone and invite them over**
9. **Go to a Muslim restaurant to eat as a family**
10. **Record Eid day events**
11. **Visit a homeless shelter or food bank and donate your extra Eid food**
12. **Share Eid with your neighbors**
13. **Visit relatives and friends**
14. **Make the Eid evening a family entertainment night**

Community News

Weddings:

Br. Mubarak Badru was married to Sr. Sawda.

Br. Yaseen Abdulrahman was married to Sr. Samiya in Tanzania. Sr. Samiya arrived in Winnipeg recently.

Births:

Br. Daniel Chornopyski and Sr. Miriam Ali were blessed with a baby girl named Olive.

Br. Samir Sareim and Sr. Nicole Marginet were blessed with a baby boy named Sareim Ali.

Br. Ehab El-Salakawy and Sr. Magda Yasseen were blessed with a baby boy named Mohammad.

Br. Wali Raju and Sr. Andrea Ibanesc were blessed with a baby girl named Nadia

Local Events

Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce - Inaugural Banquet:

The Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce (CICC) held its inaugural banquet, business and community awards gala on June 13th, 2009 at the Fort Garry Hotel. The keynote speaker was Imam Hamid Slimi from Toronto. The event was well attended with a variety of programs and events.

MIA Fundraiser for Grand Mosque:

The annual Fundraising event for the Grand Mosque was held at the Waverly Mosque on Saturday, June 20th. Various food items, jewelry, clothing and gift items were on sale. Further, the pre-Ramadan bake sale event was held on August 9th at the Grand Mosque. All proceeds were for the maintenance of the mosque.

continued on page 3

Greetings

As Minister responsible for Multiculturalism, it is my pleasure to offer Manitoba's Muslim community warmest greetings as you celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr and the 40th anniversary of the Manitoba Islamic Association.

Eid-ul-Fitr is a time for family, friends and community to celebrate the end of Ramadan and break the fast with a special meal. This is a joyous occasion with important religious significance for Manitoba's Muslim community.

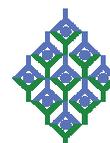
As Manitobans of Muslim faith, you can take great pride in the contributions you have made over the past four decades to promote respect for diversity within our society. Your significant contributions unite and enrich the cultural mosaic of our province.

Your continued efforts to make Manitoba a welcome destination for Muslims from all over the world is evident in this festival's celebration of family, friends and generosity.

I wish you the very best during this festival. May the prayers and practices you share be returned to you in kind from all Manitobans. Eid mubarak!



Nancy Allan
Minister responsible for
Multiculturalism



Manitoba 

Re-opening the MIA library:

The Al-Hikma MIA Library officially opened on March 15th. The library includes a variety of materials on Islam and Muslims for both children and adults, in Arabic and English languages. The library was first established in the '80s at the Hazelwood Mosque. Recently it moved to the Waverly Mosque.

Canada Day Family Picnic:

Canada Day family picnic was held on Sunday July 5th at the St. Vital Park. Activities included face-painting, henna, tug-of-war, three-legged races, BBQ etc. All funds raised from the picnic were used towards the girls' camp.

Summer Programs:

The MIA summer learning program for kids and youth was held daily at the Waverly Mosque from July 6th to July 30th. The program included various educational sessions and was organized by Sh. Hosni Azzabi.

The After School Program/Summer Day Camp was organized during July 7th - Aug 17th. The program included activities such as: field trips, camping and other educational and entertainment activities. The event was organized by ISSA.

Summer Camps:

Two youth camps, one for boys and one for girls, were held at Camp Bereton, Whiteshell Provincial Park from July 15th to July 26th. The girls' camp was held first followed by the boys' camp. Total attendants of both camps were about 80 youth.

Tablighi Gathering:

The annual Tablighi Ijtima (gathering) was held at the Grand Mosque from July 24th to July 27th. Delegates from various cities across Canada, as well as members of the local community attended the event.

Grand opening of Muslim Prayer Room:

A new special prayer room exclusively for Muslim students was opened at the University of Manitoba on Friday August 21st. The prayer room was fully renovated to make it suitable for prayers. It is conveniently located between University Centre & EITC.

Ramadan in Winnipeg:

This year's Ramadan was lively and full of activities. All the three main mosques were bustling with a multitude of activities such as daily Iftars, Taraweeh prayers,

fundraising, tahajud, Itikaf, halaqas etc. Similarly, the MSA prayer room, as well as the Pakistani Centre, held Iftars and Taraweeh. Taraweeh prayers in all locations were led by local Qaris. Taraweeh prayers were led by: Br. Ammar Khattib and Br. Abdullah Abu Safwaan at the Central mosque; at the Hazelwood and Grand mosques they were led alternatively by: Br. Ala Ibrahim, Sh. Hosni Azzabi, Br. Mahmoud Ahmed and Br. Ahmed; at the Pakistani Centre it was led by Br. Junaid and Br. Majid.

Announcements

Al-Nur Saturday Weekend School:

Al-Nur Saturday Weekend School will resume on September 26th with registration from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The school is located at Churchill High School at the corner of Arnold and Hay Street. The school is open to boys and girls between 4 to 18 years of age. The curriculum consists of Quran reading and Islamic studies/tarbiya.

Sisters Swimming:

Swimming for sisters will be starting soon. For more information call Canadian Muslim Women's Institute (CMWI) at 943 8539.

Eid -ul-Fitr Dinner:

The Manitoba Islamic Association and the Manitoba Muslim Seniors Association will host a joint community Eid-ul-Fitr Dinner.

Date: Saturday, October 10, 2009

Place: Grand Masjid, 2445 Waverly Street, Winnipeg

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Tickets: Adult - \$10.00; children under 3 are free.

For more information, please check:

1. MIA Website: www.miaonline.org
2. MMSA Website: www.mmseniors.webs.com
3. Notice boards in Grand masjid, Hazelwood masjid, WPG Central masjid and Pakistani Centre.

Town hall meeting: Discuss Seniors' residence project:

Organized by: Muslim Seniors Association Inc.

Date: October 4, 2009

Time: 2:15 pm (after Zuhr prayer)

Place: Grand Masjid, 2445 Waverley Street.

Be in touch with your community:

The e-newsletter is a bi-weekly newsletter sent to the emails of members of the community. It includes announcements of events and activities happening in the community. If you have not signed up to receive the e-newsletter please join by sending us your email to: editorialboard@miaonline.org

Monthly lecture series: Lessons from Prophet Muhammed:

Dates: 2nd Friday of each month (next: October 9th)

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Winnipeg Central Mosque

Speaker: Shiekh Ismael Mukhtar

More info: <http://iiim.info>



Marilyn Brick

MLA ST. NORBERT

3489 Pembina Hwy. • 261-1794 • marilynbrick@mts.net

Wishing you a blessed Eid,
and, congratulations on the
40th Anniversary of the
Manitoba Islamic Association

Letter to the Editor:

A few of us attended the tenth anniversary celebration of the Manitoba Muslim. It was a great evening with an interesting and very well planned program. We especially enjoyed the keynote address by Imam Mohamed Magid. His remarks about the need to create healthy debate in our community were relevant and timely. As you are well aware, our community is continually expanding and is very diverse. Not only do we differ in terms of ethnicity, culture, language, and nationality - we also represent a variety of ideological perspectives regarding Islamic doctrines and practices. At a time when there is heightened interest in Islam and Muslims, it is important for us to respect and represent one another's views and interpretations publicly. In doing so, we demonstrate that we are not a homogenous group. We are united in our core beliefs, but differ on politics, practice and policy. We hope that the Manitoba Muslim will serve as a vehicle for the intra-faith dialogue such differences naturally produce - in a respectful manner that fosters common understanding.

Intra-community representations also define our characteristics and may dismiss differing viewpoints. The Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW) has welcomed and encouraged inclusive Muslim participation in our national organization, regardless of sectarian or ideological differences. It is our sincere hope that the Manitoba Muslim will encourage this dialogue within Winnipeg so all Muslims in our community have the opportunity to be represented in your pictures and articles.

Isha Khan

CCMW- Winnipeg Chapter

Opinions and views expressed in this newsletter are the sole responsibility of their authors.



Message from Mayor Sam Katz

It is my distinct honour to extend greetings to all of those participating in 'Eid-ul-Fitr, the Festival of Fast-Breaking on the occasion of the Manitoba Islamic Association's 40th anniversary. It is my understanding this festival is a joyous occasion with a strong religious significance. Events such as this also allow you to spend time with family and friends.

I know this celebration of Muslim tradition will bring our Muslim community together. I applaud you in your ability to keep your culture thriving, and by keeping a strong heritage by preserving the traditions of our city's Muslim community. Your contributions to Winnipeg are to be commended and celebrated, and are what helps to define our city as a hub of diversity.

Once again, on behalf of my esteemed colleagues on city council, I offer best wishes as you celebrate 'Eid-ul-Fitr. Eid Mubarak to the Muslim Community and happy 40th anniversary to the MIA.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Katz
Mayor of Winnipeg



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To The Muslim Community

"Eid Mubarak"

&

Happy 40th Birthday MIA

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Interview

Dr. Ghassan Joundi, President of the Manitoba Islamic Association

Idris Elbakri*



The Manitoba Muslim (MM), four issues ago, introduced the feature of interviews with community leaders. The motivation was to promote a culture of openness and accountability. Previous interviews have generated their share of controversy and strong reactions. The editors of the MM welcome readers' feedback and comments on this feature in the form of letters to the editor.

When I first approached Dr. Joundi for an interview, I sensed some reluctance. In the end, he agreed and the interview was conducted over delicious fruit salad, cake and tea at his home. I was very grateful that he made the time for it. To accommodate his schedule, we had to meet at 10 PM and continued our discussion past midnight. He agreed to the interview with the same terms under which prior interviews were conducted which was that the MM maintained the freedom to publish what he said (i.e., no retractions) and he got to check for whether I accurately quoted him or not, but he could not ask for any omissions.

My discussion with Dr. Joundi was very interesting. His words in the interview were carefully chosen and very diplomatic. Off the record, however, he was more animated and shared with me ideas, frustrations and facts about the current affairs of our flagship organization, the Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA) that I promised not to publish. I hope he chooses to make them public at a time that he deems appropriate. The text of the interview follows.

MM: Many of us know you as Dr. Joundi, the President of MIA and a familiar face at Friday prayers and Eid. Can you tell us more about yourself?

GJ: My name is Mohammad Ghassan Joundi. I was born in Beirut, Lebanon in the year...mmm. Let's not mention the year! My father was a shariah court judge. I pursued my studies, including medical school, in Beirut. I then moved to the U.S. where I lived for 5 years and did a fellowship in pathology and dermatopathology. I came to Canada in 1981, first to Montreal where I did my residency in dermatology. I got married soon afterwards in the summer of 1981. My sons, Mokhtar and Raed were born in Montreal. We moved to Winnipeg in 1986 and my daughter, Talia, was born here.

MM: How did you first get involved in the Muslim community?

GJ: Before moving here, I spent 1 month in Winnipeg and people I met in the mosque helped convince me to move here. I was attracted by the fact that there was a mosque and a Muslim community in Winnipeg.

MM: How does the community compare now with what you experienced in 1986?

GJ: We have seen tremendous growth, especially in the past few years. Our diversity here is unique. It is a microcosm of the Muslim world. When I first came, I was mostly in contact with young families. Now these young families are older and their children have grown up. This has changed the face of the community. The kids who were born and grew up here provide a different perspective and outlook.

MM: So, how did you become active in MIA?

GJ: A couple of years after moving here I became the Vice President of MIA. One always tries to look for ways to contribute and help out. I served as Vice President for two years and then served on various committees, such as the land committee and the fundraising committee. In 2001, I became MIA President.

MM: I know from trying to arrange this interview how busy you are, and that your role is quite demanding. How does your family handle your community involvement?

GJ: My family is always supportive, but when one is busy with work and community, the family misses one's presence. I promised on many occasions that I would limit my involvement but could not fulfill my promise due to the circumstances. I must say that my family has been very patient with me.

MM: You described earlier the tremendous growth in the community. What do you see to be MIA's role and mission today?

GJ: MIA is here to serve the community and accommodate each of its members. This is not easy because of our diversity, which however, is a blessing in and of itself. The role of MIA is to try to bring Muslims together, to have a common platform and to serve the various religious, spiritual, educational and social needs.

MM: Does MIA fulfill this role?

GJ: We try. There are shortcomings and as our community grows, we have to stop and analyze the present situation and see how we can improve and do better. MIA has to keep pace with changes in the community such as the influx of immigrants and coming of age of our youth.

MM: Can you give us examples of how MIA is dealing with the influx of immigrants and the youth?

GJ: MIA tries to be welcoming to all. The mosque is the main place for interaction. The community center and gym provide the youth with access and opportunities for various activities. We also have educational programs like Quran instruction and the weekend school and many halaqa's [learning circles].

MM: An often-repeated mantra is that MIA is an umbrella organization for the Muslim community. Is this still true?

GJ: We hope so. We need an organization that is a reference point for the community, especially now that we have a full-time Imam. Many organizations have sprung up over the past decade. Some are more specialized in their services, but MIA encompasses many aspects, if not all.

MM: You have served as President for eight years. How do you rate the performance of the current MIA executive committee?

GJ: Alhamdulillah, all people who served as MIA executives throughout the years have been committed and worked hard in their various capacities. However, sometimes their performance is limited by their affiliations and networks.

MM: To be more specific, I have heard that the executives barely meet or have quorum?

GJ: I will say one thing. Previous executives used to meet more often than the current one. We use email, but it is not a substitute for face-to-face meetings.

MM: I heard that some MIA officials get upset if they are

called at home and are not generally very approachable. Is that true?

GJ: I have not heard. I don't get upset. I don't know about others. Sometimes people don't respect the privacy of the MIA officials. We are diverse and each person interacts based on his or her background and experience.

MM: The first Vice President left in February. According to the MIA constitution, an election should have been held to replace him. Why has that not happened?

GJ: A first Vice President has to be elected. When he left he was not totally certain that his move was final. He still participates by email. The thought was to call for early elections for the whole executive. There was no point in calling for elections for just the VP and then shortly thereafter call a regular election. That dragged on a bit. Circumstances were not favorable to having a general body meeting and elections, especially with Ramadan coming up. We will have elections in November.

MM: So, is he still a member of the executive and does he participate in decision making?

GJ: He voices his opinion. For example, he used to coordinate the MIA scholarships and has been in touch to try to move this along.

MM: You mentioned elections. The elections procedure is very inefficient. Last time the elections ran late into the night. Will that be changed?

GJ: The current MIA constitution has shortcomings, including the elections procedure. It was designed for a smaller, less diverse community. A committee to revamp the constitution was formed.

MM: What is the status of the constitution committee?

GJ: There is a draft constitution and bylaws, but it is at a standstill.

MM: Because?

GJ: Lots of causes.

MM: Give me two.

GJ: There was some disagreement between the constitution committee and the executives. We tried to get it going again but it has not happened.

MM: The executives do not support the draft constitution?

GJ: Everybody is entitled to his/her own opinion. The executives sent back the draft to the constitution committee

continued on page 11



PREMIER OF MANITOBA

Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA
R3C 0V8

A MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the people of Manitoba, I offer Eid Mubarak to the Muslim community on the special occasion of Eid ul-Fitr and congratulate the Muslim Islamic Association on your 40th Anniversary.

As you celebrate these two occasions, may reflect on the important contributions the Islamic community has made to our great province. Your spirit of volunteerism and your commitment to cross-cultural awareness exemplify your positive impact on this province. The vibrant culture and rich history you share with all Manitobans helps to proudly define and strengthen our cultural mosaic.

Eid ul-Fitr is a momentous celebration for your community. It is my sincere hope that Ramadan has provided an opportunity for you and your loved ones to renew your faith, and that the joy and celebration of this occasion is celebrated and shared together.

May your future be filled with happiness, continued success and many blessings.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Doer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Gary" and "Doer" being capitalized and prominent.

Gary Doer

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with comments but communications came to a halt.

MM: What were the executives' concerns?

GJ: There were a few. I do not recall the details.

MM: Does the MIA have a conflict of interest policy for its elected officials, Imam and staff?

GJ: That is something the constitution has to address. Perhaps this is one of the shortcomings of the current constitution. We deal with it now on an individual basis.

MM: Are there examples of how you dealt with conflicts of interest?

GJ: It is not desirable for MIA executives to hold office concurrently in another organization or to take advantage of their MIA position in any shape or form. The same applies to staff.

MM: Winnipeg has an interesting history with the position of the Imam. How do you see the role of the Imam given the changes and growth in the community?

GJ: In a non-Muslim environment, the role of the Imam is multifaceted. He has to deal with community members and the non-Muslim community. He has a role in da'wah, religious affairs, youth, education, social and family counseling, etc...

MM: Is this role being fulfilled?

GJ: Sh. Hosni Azzabi is the third appointed Imam. He has done a lot of good work in bringing the community together. To his credit, most community members are pleased and comfortable with him being the Imam.

MM: Does the Imam undergo any performance review? Is a review even appropriate?

GJ: Well, who is going to do such a review? Feedback is essential. One could have an Imam committee that works with the Imam and brings improvement and change, if needed.

MM: The MIA owns and operates the community's most valuable real estate asset, the Grand Mosque on Waverley. Damage is already visible in the building. What are the current plans for its maintenance and operation?

GJ: We try to make the centre available. With this availability comes responsibility. Whenever there is an activity, someone is designated as responsible for whatever happens. We are trying now to establish a security system, possibly with the assistance of a government grant.

MM: Do you have maintenance staff?

GJ: There used to be a maintenance committee but now it's defunct. There is a cleaning staff person who provides some maintenance. Volunteers also help when needed. Jazahum Allah khairan.

MM: What are the plans for the mosque on Hazelwood?

GJ: It will remain a mosque, insha Allah. It has undergone many renovations recently.

MM: Does it make sense to have two Friday prayers, at Hazelwood and Waverley, with the two mosques only 10 minutes apart?

GJ: This was an issue but it seems people who are close to the Hazelwood mosque want to keep Friday prayer there. The mosque is of course also open for the 5 daily prayers.

MM: Does MIA coordinate the Friday khutba at Hazelwood?

GJ: There is an MIA committee for the Hazelwood mosque.

MM: There are recent efforts to establish the Islamic Council of Manitoba. Where does MIA stand on this?

GJ: MIA has participated in that effort. There are a number of Islamic organizations and the council would have a coordinating role between those different organizations and their various activities.

MM: So MIA supports the establishment of the Islamic Council of Manitoba?

GJ: Yes. However, MIA is still the umbrella organization. What differentiates the MIA is that it represents the community as a whole and its officials are elected. It also has to respond to the community and its membership.

MM: What is the financial status of MIA?

GJ: Unfortunately, there is no sustainable investment to support the two mosques. There are a lot of financial obligations and we cannot keep depending on donations. Alhamdulillah the community is generous and the proof is in the construction of the Grand Mosque and community centre. The need is ongoing and other sources should be made available.

MM: Roughly, what are the monthly expenses?

GJ: On average about \$12K per month.

MM: How is the relationship between the executives and the MIA trustees?

GJ: Again that brings up the constitution. The relationship is not exemplary to say the least. When they come up with a decision without consulting with the executives, the latter has to deal with it, its consequences and operating cost.

MM: Can you give an example?

GJ: The kitchen, coat and shoe racks are the talk of the community. We were not consulted on the cost and now have to deal with community concerns. I am not quite certain that we have the license to operate the kitchen. The trustees should answer to the community and the executives are representatives of the community. We should work in close consultation.

MM: How is the MIA relationship with the Winnipeg Central Mosque?

GJ: It is good. There are no issues. We coordinate certain activities. WCM plays a constructive role in the downtown area and fulfills a big need.

MM: MIA turns 40 this year. Any plans to commemorate the occasion?

GJ: It has been talked about. There are no plans so far. Activities to commemorate the occasion could take place.

MM: Will you run for President again?

GJ: No. Alhamdulillah, it was an enriching experience. I do appreciate all the brothers and sisters I worked with, but it's time for a change.

MM: Do you have anyone in mind?

GJ: It's an election process. The community should have some knowledge and idea of whom they are voting for. The election process currently lacks that.

MM: Any last words?

GJ: I always hear from some Muslims who lived here and have moved on that this community is unique in its cohesiveness, unity and progressiveness.

The blessed month of Ramadan is upon us. We welcome the blessed month and would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the MIA executives to wish everyone a blessed Ramadan. Ramadan Mubarak and may Allah (SWT) accept our prayers and fasting and good deeds. Let's try to maximize our benefit from the countless blessings of the month.

** Idris Elbakri is the deputy editor of the Manitoba Muslim.*

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HADITH SHAREEF

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: 'When a man dies and his relatives are busy in funeral, there stands an extremely handsome man by his head. When the dead body is shrouded, that man gets in between the shroud and the chest of the deceased. When after the burial, the people return home, 2 angels, Munkar and Nakeer (names of two special Angels), come in the grave and try to separate this handsome man so that they may be able to interrogate the dead man in privacy about his faith. But the handsome man says, 'He is my companion, he is my friend. I will not leave him alone in any case. If you are appointed for interrogation, do your job. I cannot leave him until I get him admitted into Paradise '.

Thereafter he turns to his dead companion and says, 'I am the Qur'an, which you used to read, sometimes in a loud voice and sometimes in a low voice. Do not worry. After the interrogation of Munkar and Naker, you will have no grief. 'When the interrogation was over, the handsome man arranges for him from Al-Mala'ul A'laa (the angels in Heaven) silk bedding filled with musk.

DID YOU KNOW?

- * Before writing each Hadith Imam Bokhari would make 2 Rakaat nafil Salaat.
- * The 10 Sahabah who were promised Paradise during their lifetime were Abubakr Siddique, Umar bin Khattab, Uthman bin Affan, Ali bin Abi Talib, Talha Bin Ubaidullah, Saeed Bin Zaid, Abu Ubaidah Bin Jarrah, Zubair bin Awwam, Saad Bin Abi Waqqas, and Abdur Rahman Bin Auf RadiAllahu Anhum Ajmaeen.
- * Zaid RadiAllahu Anhu is the only Sahabi whose name is mentioned in the Quran (Surah Ahzaab)
- * Adam Alayhis salam was approximately 30 Ziraa tall. Ziraa is a measurement and one Ziraa is approximately half a metre.

Riddle: What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?

3		1			
				5	
	3	5			4
4					
					5
			2	6	

Sudoku is a placement puzzle. The point of the puzzle is to place a number between 1 to 6 in each cell. Each row and column must contain one of each number. Also each bolded section should contain only one of each number.

HEALTH TIPS

- *The recommended application of sunscreen for adequate protection is 35ml to 40ml per person per session (a handful).
- *Overcast weather still requires sunscreen in summer because 80 per cent of ultra-violet radiation is still present on cloudy days.
- *Sunscreen should be applied to clean, dry skin 30 minutes before exposure to the sun which allows it time to absorb properly.
- *Combination sunscreen/insect repellent products should be avoided because sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours, but the insect repellent should not be reapplied.
- *Insect repellents containing DEET are most effective against ticks, which can transmit Lyme Disease, and mosquitoes, which can transmit West Nile Virus and other viruses.

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Community Profile

Br. Mohammed Khaleel Baksh, 1st President of MIA

Profiled by: Br. Abdulaziz Mian
(Reproduced from the archives of Manitoba Muslim Magazine)



Q. Can you tell me a bit about your background?

Br. Khaleel: I was born in San Fernando, Trinidad in 1928. I call both Trinidad and Tobago my home country. I came to Canada in 1961 and moved to Winnipeg in May, 1962. I have four children namely: Salima, Imran, Khalid and Ashan. My wife Salima is known as Auntie G in Winnipeg. I left Winnipeg in 1978 and moved to Ottawa. Currently, I am retired and living in Kingston.

Q. Why did you choose to reside in Winnipeg? Where did you live before? What was your involvement in your previous place of residence?

Br. Khaleel: I came to Winnipeg to study at the University of Manitoba. I lived in Winnipeg for 16 years. My involvement in Muslim activities began as a youth in the Masjid in San Fernando, Trinidad. I became the President of the Young Muslim Cultural League and later a member of the Central Muslim Youth Organization of Trinidad and Tobago.

Q. What was your impression of the Muslim community when you first arrived in Winnipeg?

Br. Khaleel: When I arrived in Winnipeg, the Muslim community consisted of about twelve members mostly university students.

Q. Do you feel the Muslim community has progressed since you became involved? If so, how?

Br. Khaleel: Yes, the Muslim community has progressed. I continued my participation in community activities when I moved to Winnipeg. I also served the community as a President for four terms. I was also Chairman of the Board of Trustees for one term. In addition, I was involved in the development of the first Youth Camp in Winnipeg. The community's biggest achievement was the construction of the Masjid which is still serving the community. During the construction of the Masjid, we were let down by the

contractor. Therefore, I had to assume the role of a contractor. Since resources were scarce in those days, I had the tables and chairs built at the Stony Mountain Penitentiary for the Masjid. On the national scene, I served as the Secretary and as the Vice President for the Council of Muslim Communities of Canada.

Q. When did you leave Winnipeg? Where did you move to? What was your involvement in the community after moving from Winnipeg?

Br. Khaleel: I moved to Ottawa in 1978. There, I served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Ottawa Muslim Association. In 1983, I moved to Kingston where I served as a member of the Masjid building committee.

Q. What are your views on the MIA, and the plans for the new centre?

Br. Khaleel: I am very delighted to know that you are planning for a new centre*. I am sure you have outgrown your existing centre. I was also happy to hear about the Islamic School in Winnipeg. I would congratulate the community for their efforts.

Q. As a community where do we need to go from here?

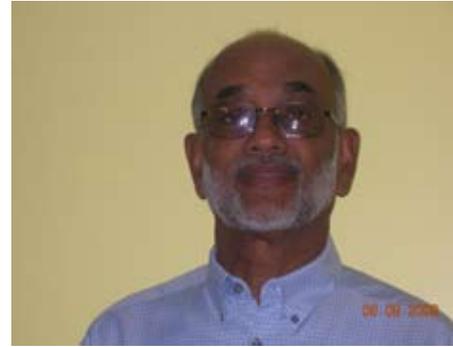
Br. Khaleel: I think the Muslim community in Canada has come a long way. I am proud to be a Muslim living in this great country. I am also very proud to see the developments of Mosques and Islamic schools. Islam is the fastest growing religion in Canada. Many members are doing great work to move our communities forward but lack of national cooperation among Muslims is not healthy for our community. I believe that we need a united front on a national level providing leadership and guidance.

* Note: this interview was conducted before the opening of the new center.

Interview

Br. Abed Hosein, veteran Secretary of MIA

Interviewed by: Ryan Ramchandar



Q: When did you come to Winnipeg?

A: I came to Winnipeg in 1958 to attend the University of Manitoba. That first winter we had 99 consecutive days of below freezing weather. It was a challenge but most of us persevered.

Q: What position(s) did you take in the MIA?

A: For many years I served as the General Secretary of the organization. This included the publishing of the MIA newsletter. It gave me great pleasure to work in this capacity. It exposed some of the fissures that existed and continued to exist and gave the Executive an opportunity to try and bridge the gaps and cement relationships to the best of our ability.

Q: What was the shape of the community when you first arrived?

A: During these early times the Muslim community comprised mainly of students attending post-secondary educational institutions, together with those Muslims who

were gainfully employed in the city. We met in the apartment homes of our brothers and sisters to offer Salaat-ul-Zuhr on Sundays. These meetings strengthened the bonds between us, for we came from far and distant lands from around the globe.

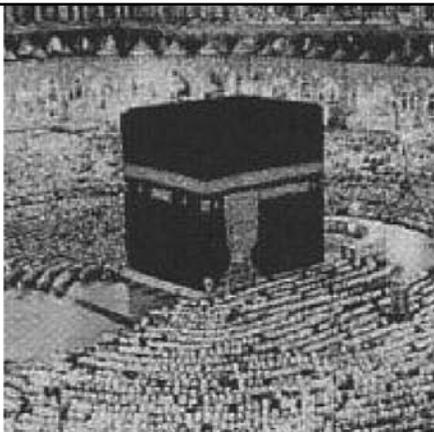
Q: How was the MIA established?

A: To organize the Islamic Community was essential to our success and our well being. Having a spokesperson, the President, to speak on behalf of the Manitoba Muslims would give legitimacy to our needs as a growing community. This led to the establishment of the Manitoba Islamic Association in 1969, and its role was to act in the best interests of the Muslim community by serving the religious, educational and social aspects of our group.

Q: When was the first mosque built and by whom?

A: The needs of our Jamaat grew and this led to the purchase of a parcel of land in St. Vital and plans were drawn up for

continued on page 17



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a masjid to provide a permanent home for the Manitoba Muslims. The Centre was built through contributions from the local members. Some financial assistance came from outside the community.

The construction of the first masjid posed its challenges and tested the commitment of those Muslims living in Winnipeg at the time. The Jamaat, in its determination to have the building ready for the end of Ramadan, took it upon themselves to pick up from where the contractors left us dangling. Through this blessed month, the Jamaat worked tirelessly completing electrical work, insulating walls and ceiling, erecting vapour barrier and drywall and finally painting the structure in order to have it available for Eid Salaat of that year.

There was no turning back. The Trustees, the Executive and the members-at-large were pleased with the input of everyone, and this added to our strength as the MIA. We made no distinction between one another regarding our Islamic background. Our goal was to eliminate differences and focus as believers who declare: "La ilaha illal laahu, Muhammadur Rasoolullah".

Q: Was there tension between Muslims from different backgrounds?

A: In the formative years we lived and prayed in peace and harmony as one ummah. However, as time rolled on, groups with similar traditions began to emerge and we were faced with cultural Islamization. Our leaders in general were strong, and they continued to stress on the Islam our Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) taught and practiced. They sought the best alternatives in trying to deal with politics, the cultures of some of us and the true Islam.

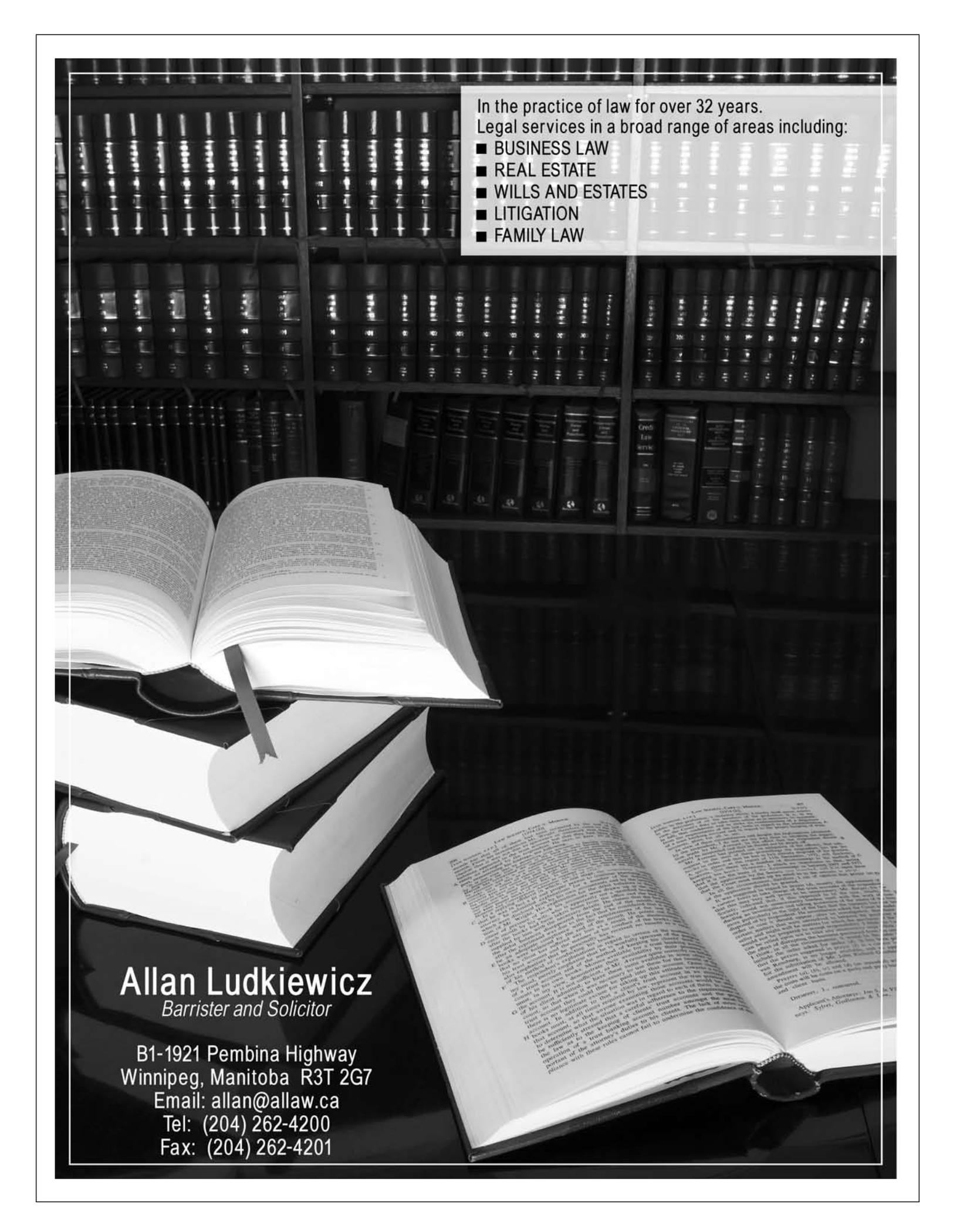
Q: What are your views on the future direction for the Muslim Community?

A: Winnipeg, I think, will continue to evolve as the Muslim population expands. In the initial phases it is a struggle to finance the upkeep and maintenance of many centres as most of the brothers and sisters are struggling to house, clothe, educate and provide for their families. As a result, their contributions are not large and you have to allocate wisely in order to facilitate all aspects of the programs you are undertaking.

Time is the best provider. The Waverley location was purchased many years ago, but an Islamic Centre rose as a structure within the last few years. Today we are all proud of this achievement and the Waverley Centre is a proud indication of the resolve of the Muslims in Manitoba. Many more of these will come into being but careful planning and proper budgeting are necessary as well. Heed the caution and advice of the elders of the community. With these in place, the Islamic community in Manitoba will continue to grow in stature, respect and numbers and continue to be a firm pillar in the Manitoba mosaic.

MIA List of Presidents

1. Br. Khaleel Baksh	1966-1967
2. Br. Adil Mohsin	1967- 1968
3. Br. Mohamad Inayatullah	1968- 1969
4. Dr. Abdul Malik	1969- 1971
5. Br. Khaleel Baksh	1971- 1973
6. Dr. Jameel Ali	1973- 1974
7. Dr. Izzat Ibrahim	1974-1975
8. Br. Haider Ali	1975- 1977
9. Br. Khaleel Baksh	1977- 1978
10. Br. Hassan Ozaid	1978-1979
11. Br. Ghaffar Omar	1979-1980
12. Dr. Taib Sufi	1980- 1981
13. Dr. Abdul Malik	1981- 1982
14. Br. Aftab Bukhari	1982- 1983
15. Dr. Abdul Mannan	1983- 1984
16. Br. Ayub Hamid	1984- 1985
17. Br. Helmy Alshareef	1985-1986
18. Dr. Mujibur Rahman	1986-1987
19. Dr. Anwar Islam	1987- 1989
20. Br. Khalid Iqbal	1989- 1992
21. Dr. Mirghani Sheikheldin	1992-1993
22. Br. Waheed Mustapha	1993- 1995
23. Br. Emamuddin Khan	1995-1997
24. Br. Golam Kibria	1997- 1999
25. Br. Iqbal Siddiqui	1999- 2001
26. Dr. Ghassan joundi	2001- 2009



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Messages of Congratulations to Manitoba Islamic Association

"Islamic Social Services Association (ISSA) is very pleased and happy to celebrate with the community the 40th anniversary of the Manitoba Islamic Association. MIA has been and continues to be the pioneering vision of Muslim integration into Canada. ISSA values MIA as a partner in community based events and programming. We pray that MIA as a community based organization will continue to flourish and respond to the needs of the community. Collaboration and cooperation within the Muslim organizations in Manitoba will only enhance and empower Manitoba Muslims in their quest to make the multicultural fabric of Canada stronger and more inclusive."

Sr. Shahina Siddiqui, Islamic Social Services Association President

"Canadian Muslim Women's Institute extends heartfelt congratulations to the MIA on its 40th anniversary. Over the years, it has taken volunteer dedication and commitment from many community members at all levels of participation to keep an organization of this size vibrant and flexible to meet the growing needs of the Ummah. CMWI prays for the well-being of the MIA and expresses its gratitude to all those who have served this premiere Islamic organization in any capacity; Board, Trustees, general volunteer and members. May Allah continue to bless and guide the MIA in all its future endeavors"

Sr. Yasmin Ali, Canadian Muslim Women's Institute President

"Achieving 40 years of service to the Muslims here in Manitoba is a great milestone. May Allah SWT bless the founders of MIA for their vision and initiative, and all those persons who have worked hard to maintain and expand MIA over the years. Mabrook!"

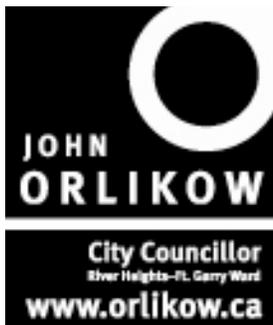
Sr. Jennifer W. Rahman, Winnipeg Central Mosque Council Chair

"My family and I extend congratulations to the Muslims in Manitoba on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the M.I.A. We pray to Allah (swt) for continued growth and spiritual upliftment for your Muslim Umma throughout the years ahead."

Br. Abed Hosein, veteran Secretary of MIA

"The Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce would like to extend its sincerest and warmest congratulations to the Manitoba Islamic Association on its 40th anniversary. MIA plays an important role in Manitoba Muslim community life and its efforts in the past have been valuable in providing places of prayer for the community and other useful services. We look forward to bigger and better things from MIA as our community continues to evolve and grow. Congratulations and may Allah bless the future of our community."

Dr. Asim Ashique, Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce President



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Contest

The Manitoba Muslim Presents: The MIA 40th Anniversary Competition

Below you will find a list of MIA contest questions. To find the right answers, you can ask people, research archives or guess.

Deadline: November 15th

Prize: \$50 gift certificate to St. Vital Centre (or the store of your choice).

Eligibility: The competition is open to all ages.

1. **Who is the longest serving President in MIA?**
2. **Who among the MIA Presidents, was a veterinarian?**
3. **Who was the first Chairman of the land committee established to buy land for the centre on Waverley?**
4. **When was the Waverley center officially opened?**
5. **Who was the first sister to be elected to an MIA executive position?**
6. **What is the main function of the MIA Takaful fund?**
7. **Who was the 1st full time Imam in Winnipeg?**
8. **What was MIA's gross operating revenue for last fiscal year?**
9. **Approximately how much did the Waverley centre cost to build?**
10. **How are MIA trustees chosen for office?**
11. **What is the role of the MIA Trustees?**
12. **How many facilities does the MIA support; financially and other wise?**
13. **What is the total land acreage at Waverley?**

Entries are to be submitted to:
editorialboard@miaonline.org

Manitoba Islamic Association, a historic critical overview

Ismael Mukhtar *

On the 27th of November 1969, the small Muslim community in Manitoba took a bold step of formally incorporating the first Muslim organization in the history of Manitoba. The new organization was named Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA). As early as the mid- sixties, the newly emerging Muslim community had been taking baby steps towards organizing itself and creating a formal structure. A constitution was ratified and the first President for the MIA, Br. Khalil Baksh, was elected in 1967 for a one-year term. The formal incorporation of MIA came as a necessary step towards the establishment of an officially recognized Muslim presence in Manitoba. The Muslim community at that time was made up of a small number of families; it had no mosque, no place of gathering or any institution of any sort. The founders of MIA set in motion an ambitious vision articulated in the MIA constitution preamble. Stated in the preamble is: *"WE, THE MUSLIMS OF MANITOBA, HEREBY JOIN TOGETHER TO FORM AN ASSOCIATION HEADQUARTERED IN THE CITY OF WINNIPEG TO BE CALLED THE "MANITOBA ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION" WHOSE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE IS TO CREATE, NOURISH, AND MAINTAIN A TRULY ISLAMIC COMMUNITY IN MANITOBA FOR THE MUSLIMS"*.

Guided by this vision, the small Muslim community under its newly established organization, started pulling its meager resources and diligently working towards the fulfillment of its long cherished dream: the establishment of the first ever mosque in Manitoba. Years of hard work and a generous partial contribution from the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia bore fruit and the mosque was completed and officially opened in August 1975 on 247 Hazelwood Avenue. The establishment of the mosque

was a historical moment that gave Manitoban Muslims a place they can call their own and a great sense of accomplishment.

When MIA was established it had virtually no tangible assets, today it has grown to be a large organization that directly owns two mosques, provides a multitude of services and generates thousands in revenue. MIA has been at the core of the history of Muslims in Manitoba. No Muslim history in this province can be written without referencing MIA and its long lasting legacy. For decades MIA has served as a platform for Muslims from a cross section coming to work together under one umbrella for the common good and the greater benefit. It provided a training ground for many volunteers and prepared them for taking greater roles locally or nationally. Many other local institutions emerged and flourished from within the MIA's platform. Further, MIA remained open to all Muslims; not only to be members but to also to be elected to positions of leadership.

Despite many challenges, MIA has come a long way. Even in today's multi-Muslim organization era, MIA still remains among the few bodies that have a broader mandate, open structure and an elected official leadership. MIA, like any other organization has seen its share of challenges and difficulties. Even though many of these challenges are common across organizations, MIA's challenges haven't yet been systematically identified and objectively analyzed. For the purpose of this article, the following four challenges will be discussed and analyzed in the following paragraphs. These four by no means are the only challenges, but they are certainly among the major ones.

Challenges:

1. Managing conflict: Like any organization MIA has its share of internal conflicts and frictions. Many of these conflicts have a common underlying theme; they appear to be cyclical in nature and keep on recurring. One of these recurring sources of conflict in the history of MIA has been the election process. The bi-annual election process has been in many cases antagonistic, adversarial and polarizing in nature. During elections, competing groups emerge and engage in campaigns that lead to unhealthy rifts. This results in disenfranchisement, apathy and constant loss of active members. Further, as noted by the late Br. M. Inayatullah (MIA President 1968-1969), this adversarial process has discouraged many talented and competent individuals from taking active leadership roles in MIA. Surely, MIA should remain an

open organization and its leadership should be elected; however, the current electoral process has to be revamped to ensure minimal group politics, smooth transition of power and the election of people with proven competence and proficiency.

The worst and most dreadful conflict ever to happen in the history of MIA was the conflict that took place in the early 90s between the former official Imam of MIA and the MIA executives. This conflict caused a kind of polarization never seen before; it led to the first major split in the community, created unprecedented havoc and seriously hampered the progress of the community. That conflict, fortunately, is now history; however, the systemic causes that led to that conflict are still existent and a similar conflict could erupt at any time in the future. No serious attempt has been done, so far, to objectively analyze and understand what led to that conflict and take measures to avoid the recurrence of such a conflict. MIA had three full time paid Imams in its history. The first Imam left voluntarily after mounting tension between him and the executives; the second was abruptly dismissed. Imams and executives represent the core of the highest body of decision making in MIA. Accordingly, it is essential that they function as a team in a comfortable, cordial environment where the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, the reporting structures are clear-cut and their accountability process is less arbitrary.

2. Staying relevant: When MIA was created the community was small, its needs were limited and was relatively homogeneous. Accordingly, a simple structure with a simple governing model was suitable and sufficient at that time. Over the years, however, the community has increased not only in number, but diversity, needs, issues and problems. MIA itself has expanded in terms of the assets it owns and manages. However, the same governing structure and the same working framework created 40 years ago is the order of the day. The MIA constitution, for example, has not been updated to reflect the current complex and diversified structure of the community. The constitution, as it exists today, lacks many organizational safeguards, essential checks and balances and clear definitions. Further, the elected officials of MIA still function within the same old management framework suitable for a small emerging organization. Most MIA executives have been pre-occupied with minute administrative and maintenance issues of the mosque such as: cleaning, record keeping, logistics, organizing recurring events (Eid, Ramadan), making announcements etc. Elected officials of an organization

as big as MIA should not be bogged down by these administrative issues. In large organizations, these tasks are handled by paid staff or volunteer subcommittees. Hence, the MIA constitution needs to be reviewed by a competent body of experts and its elected leaders need to have a change of focus. The primary focus of MIA leadership should be on strategic initiatives, futuristic planning, fostering a common renewed vision and a proactive tackling of the critical social, economic, educational and settlement challenges facing the community at large. It is a travesty that MIA despite its long history has only one part time administrative staff and a primitive management structure.

Another area where a significant change has taken place in the local Muslim community is the emergence of multi Muslim organizations. The days where MIA was the sole Muslim organization in Manitoba is gone. True, MIA still remains the largest, the broadest in mandate and the most open to all. However, the existence of many other organizations providing vital services to the community is a reality that can't be overlooked. Accordingly, MIA needs to formulate a new strategy of working within this multi-organizational environment. MIA should embrace the change rather than resist it. MIA should actively work towards fostering cooperative relations with these organizations; lending hands of support, exchanging expertise, building alliances and readily sharing workload. The emergence of these organizations is a natural phenomenon that occurs in any growing community. Their appearance will not undercut MIA, it would rather strengthen MIA by freeing its resources to take a lead on more critical areas and venture into new realms. This would certainly help MIA in maintaining and strengthening its leadership role in the province. Resisting the inevitable change rather than riding it, thinking small and failing to seize the opportunity is a recipe for stagnation and ultimate demise.

3. Being inclusive: The participation of 1st generation Muslims at the leadership level of MIA is undoubtedly very weak. This was understandable in the 70s and 80s. But now after forty years, MIA should have had a significant portion of its leadership coming from the ranks of the 1st generation who have grown up in Manitoba and developed within the community's framework. Similarly, women's participation at the highest level of decision making in MIA seems to be non-existent. Over the last forty years only one woman was elected to a position in the MIA executive. Manitoban Muslim women are well educated; many of them play leading roles within their own professions or other organizations. They have been

active as volunteers at the grass root level of every MIA event; however, their presence at a higher level is still weak.

Further, given the reality that we are a predominantly immigrant community, MIA needs to find a happy medium of preserving its collective memory and legacy established over the last 40 years while seamlessly incorporating newcomers into its body. There is a clear disconnect within MIA between those who founded MIA and acted as volunteers during the early years and most of the current leadership. It is essential that this link is re-established. Many of the ex-MIA officials and volunteers are on the margin and rarely part of any process of consultation on MIA affairs. The new ones not having that historical perspective keep on venturing into areas already ventured before and run the risk of re-inventing the wheel and starting from square one. A mechanism of preserving the old history, tapping into past experiences of MIA veterans and bringing newcomers into the system in a seamless progression is very critical for future viability of MIA.

4. Being true to its name: MIA is "Islamic" and "Manitoban". Being Islamic, MIA needs to fully uphold the authentic teaching of Islam based on Quran, sunnah and authentic scholarly tradition. Further, the core Islamic concepts and values should permeate through the whole body of MIA functions and relationships. Moreover, MIA has a duty to carry the universal message of Islam to the surrounding larger community. The challenge here is to differentiate between culture-based understanding and genuine Islamic injunctions. Further challenge is to take a middle course and not fall into narrow conservative interpretations or one school partisan positions or dilutive liberal understanding.

To be Manitoban, MIA needs to act as a genuine Manitoban organization not an alien body residing in Manitoba. MIA needs to be actively engaged with the larger society, showing concern to all local issues and being an integral body of the civic society. Certainly, MIA has made some inroads; however, it is a long way from being a truly Islamic Manitoban organization. Given the high turnover in the Manitoba Muslim community, the risk MIA faces, despite its long history, is its propensity to be colored by the customs of any dominant ethnic group at any particular time. Other Muslim ethnic groups can have their own sub-stream on the margin, but MIA should remain at its core, Manitoban and Canadian in its culture, outlook and norms.

Conclusion:

MIA certainly is a proud accomplishment for all of us; old, young; new, veteran; men and women. MIA's legacy is a great legacy that no particular group or individual can claim; it is a legacy that transcends all. Surely, MIA had its own challenges, difficulties and growing pains. The challenge for us is to build upon past successes, learn from past mistakes and take MIA to the second stage with a greater vision, bold ambitions and a confident outlook. MIA is not a "ritual" defined by its logo, a website, a street address, a ten member elected body and hired staff. MIA is a vision, a legacy, a tradition and a set of core values.

MIA will remain vital, progressive, strong and forward moving as long as it remains focused on its greater objectives and not side-tracked by petty organizational tangles. The day MIA becomes reduced to a narrow tunnel vision, happy with an outdated status quo, paranoid with control and averse to constructive criticism, the predicament of history on all organizations that lose

sight of their greater objectives will fall upon it. If that would ever was to happen, it would be a sad end to a great legacy.

Br. Ismael Mukhtar, Editor-in-Chief of the Manitoba Muslim magazine.



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Reports:

Islamic Council of Manitoba

Dr. Asim Ashique*

Twenty-five years ago life as a Muslim in Winnipeg was quite simple. We had two organizations. One served the general Muslim population. The other served the students on campus.

We had one masjid. It was open for jum'a and zuhr prayer on Sundays; and sporadically in between. We had one Sunday school which operated out of the basement of the Hazelwood masjid. Yes, life was simple.

Today, the Muslim population has tripled. We need masjids in various areas of the city to serve the concentrated pockets of Muslims living in those regions. Each sub-population has its unique characteristics and requires customized programs to serve their specific needs. The population expansion has also resulted in a strong demand for services that did not exist in the earlier years. To address this demand, various new Islamic organizations have begun to appear on the scene. Each one serves a purpose.

At last count, there are more than fifteen provincial and national Islamic organizations that have a presence in Manitoba, if you include the Islamic schools and masjids. Two organizations are no longer enough to meet our needs. And it's too late to go back and do it a different way.

The upside of new organizations is new services and programs for our people. The downside is the potential for lack of communication, scheduling conflicts, duplication of services and competition for resources, especially financial.

All of this begs the question, "Is there a way to benefit from the services that specialized organizations bring to the community, while mitigating the confusion that this causes on an organizational level?"

This question has been discussed on an ad hoc and informal level for several years. Six months ago we finally embarked on a serious, structured effort to unify all of our organizations under one banner and begin working as a team.

Alhamdulillah! After months of negotiations, group discussions and one on one consultations with the local leaders of Islamic organizations, we have arrived at a strong decision to move forward with an organization called the Islamic Council of Manitoba.

The Islamic Council of Manitoba will be made up of local

Islamic organizations. The President of each organization will have a seat on the council. There will be regular meetings. The group will strive to improve communication between organizations, facilitate cooperation of projects that warrant it, reduce confusion and scheduling conflicts, and generally foster a spirit of goodwill and unity between us all. Each organization will continue to cooperate independently without accountability to one another, thereby maintaining their autonomy.

There is an agreement to start slow and informally, and to re-evaluate the process periodically with the intent of creating a formalized structure in the future.

This is an historic step for our community. Insha Allah, it is the beginning of something that will allow us to serve the community on a much higher level in the future - politically, socially and financially.

** Dr. Asim Ashique has served as director of several provincial and national Islamic organizations, including MSA, MIA (Trustee) and the Canadian Islamic Congress. He is the founder and current President of the Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce.*

Seniors' Housing

By: Mian Hameed*

The Muslim population in Manitoba is growing rapidly. In recent years thousands of Muslims have migrated to Canada and many of them have settled in Winnipeg. Alhamdulillah, it is a very good sign that our community is growing. This increase will also create a number of issues and concerns including services for seniors/elders.

To this end, we would like to address the fact that in time the number of seniors/elders in this community is going to increase. This includes long time residents of Manitoba, parents of long time residents who immigrated recently and new immigrants who are close to being seniors.

It is about time that we consider the possibilities of establishing Muslim Seniors' Housing that will enable us to meet the needs of not only Muslim elders, but also temporary shelter for the homeless and students. Due to religious and cultural needs, including food and languages, family and children, it is very important for us to have a specialized facility.

It is a fact that elderly Muslims/elderly parents end up staying home most of the time. Loneliness can be a major problem, and the severe, cold winter is another problem. A Seniors' Housing facility close to the Grand Masjid will not only increase the ease with which they can get to the Mosque, but

also with the Active Living Programs, they will be motivated to be involved in exercise which includes walking and other activities.

In this regard the Muslim Seniors Association Inc. has initiated a preliminary feasibility study. Mohammed Isse is the Research Assistant and has been hired to do the initial study to assess the need for a Senior' Housing facility and if it should be independent or assisted living. In order to share our findings and community concerns a TOWN HALL meeting will be held as follows;

Date: October 4, 2009

Time: 2.15 p.m. after Zuhur Prayer

Place: Grand Masjid, 2445 Waverley Street, Winnipeg, Mb.

We encourage you to attend and participate. Youth and elders, male and female, your input will make a difference for the future of this community. The outcome of this meeting will allow us to proceed towards achieving this goal.

** Mian Hameed is the President of Manitoba Muslim Seniors Association*

Canadian Muslim Women's Institute

By: Yasmin Ali*

The Canadian Muslim Women's Institute (CMWI) would like to wish everyone Eid Mubarak. This year CMWI was able to give Ramadan Hampers to over 80 families. May Allaah SWT shower his blessings on all those who donated money or food items and who assisted in organizing and distributing the hampers. For the record, CMWI is in continuous need of food items/money to help these families all year long. We know that there are many needy causes requiring your financial support, however, there are many Muslim newcomers to Winnipeg who need help settling in. The Government is unable to meet all of their needs and it is up to us to fill the gaps. Of special note is the fact that the newcomers include many single mothers. Without your financial support, Muslims mothers/families/children fall through the cracks of our society and could fall prey to gangs and social dysfunction.

One of CMWI's goals is to protect these vulnerable members of our society from being seduced by other religions, whose intent is to offer help and conversion to their ways. Again, without your financial support, our task becomes that much harder if not impossible, and we all have a collective responsibility to assist our brethren.

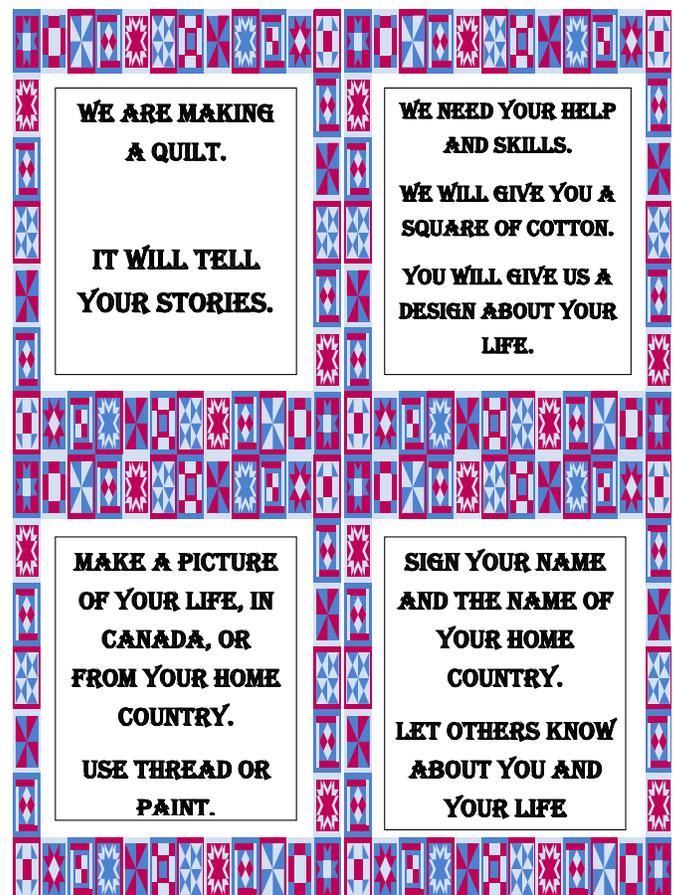
CMWI implements programs to help Muslim women engage/integrate/assimilate into the larger society. English literacy is a key factor in this objective. This year a very successful English conversation support group was held where a qualified teacher helped the women practice their English.

One of the more popular programs is the sewing class. The ladies are taught by a qualified teacher how to operate a sewing machine and sew a variety of items. The sewing program has been featured in the community newsletter, The Times, CBC Radio, The Winnipeg Foundation's spring newsletter and on Shaw TV. The ladies are in the process of making a quilt for The Winnipeg Foundation who is one of the funders for the sewing program. Everyone is invited to participate. All that is required is to embroider a piece of fabric 12 inches by 12 inches with a unique design. This is an opportunity to showcase your country by sewing, embroidering or painting something that reflects your origins/culture/interests.

Please call CMWI's office at 943- 8539 for more information and take a look at our poster.

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- Attend a Board meeting once a month for 2 hours
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Yasmin Ali: 489-3803 (home) 795-9479 (cell)
yasminali@shaw.ca (email)

CMWI's office: 943-8539

** Sr. Yasmin Ali is the President of the Canadian Muslim Women's Institute.*

Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce 1st Annual Muslim Business Awards Dinner

Dr. Asim Ashique



Our community is blessed with many talented people. Some of them are achieving outstanding results in their personal ventures, while others are valuable members of the community volunteer structure. Like many communities, we often expect much from our volunteers, leaders and entrepreneurs, but come up short in recognizing their service or achievement.

The Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce (CICC) is a national organization with its head office in Winnipeg. Our goal is, among many other things, to help Muslim businesses to network and grow. We also want to facilitate the development of a strong bond between the grassroots community and the business community. This applies to the Muslim community as well as the greater community. In our short history, we have developed strong links with the non-Muslim business and political community and we feel that there is excellent mutual benefit to be gained from this in the long term.

In keeping with its mission and objectives, CICC held its First Annual Muslim Business Awards dinner on June 13, 2008 at the Hotel Fort Garry. The dinner was designed to be an upscale event. It was an amazing night of celebration, awards, entertainment and great food. It was attended by over 175 people, about 25 of whom were non-Muslim politicians, dignitaries and community leaders.

The CICC Annual Awards Dinner will be an annual event - the one night every year where we can roll out the red carpet, don our best attire and rub shoulders with the best and the brightest of the Muslim community as well as local politicians and higher-ups. Most of all, we get to recognize some of the achievements of our brothers and sisters.

At this year's dinner, we wanted to showcase some of our young and budding talent. In keeping with this, the evening was hosted by Sister Asma Mneina, a grade 12 student at Fort Richmond Collegiate.

Four Awards were given out at the event. The Scholar of the Year Award was presented by Imam Hamid Slimi to Sheikh Faraz Rabbani of Toronto. The Entrepreneur of the Year Award was presented by David Angus, President of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce to Omar Kalair, Founder of UM Financial (Toronto). The Community Service Award was presented by The Hon. John Gerard to Dr. Ghassan Joundi, President of Manitoba Islamic Association. Finally, the Lifetime Achievement award was presented by Lt. Governor John Harvard to Abdo Eltassi. We would like to offer special thanks to Lt. Governor John Harvard who became ill the day before the event. He informed us that he did not want to miss the dinner, but may have to leave early. To accommodate him, we made some last minute changes to the agenda and moved the awards up earlier in the program. Unfortunately, this left no time for acceptance speeches. Look for bios of the awards recipients on our website shortly. <http://www.islamicchamber.ca>.

Mr. Dave Angus kicked off the post-dinner speeches with an energetic address. He talked to the audience about the strong relationship that CICC had developed with the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and the value of an organization like CICC to the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. He discussed the strong history that chambers of commerce have in community philanthropy and supported our work to develop the Muslim Vision Endowment Fund for our community.

Dr. Idris Elbakri, Vice-President of CICC, presented the audience with an overview of the CICC structure and objectives. Then he presented details relating to the Vision Endowment Fund - talking about the need for a sustainable long-term revenue generation strategy for Canadian Muslims, the importance of being independent and self-sufficient, and giving examples of other endowment funds that have succeeded in community development. In attendance, were

Mr. Jon Holeman and his team from RBC Dominion Securities, the portfolio managers for the Vision Endowment Fund.

Dr. Elbakri took the time to acknowledge Mr. Dave Angus' tenth anniversary as the President of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce. It was an honor for me to present Mr. Angus with an award acknowledging his dedication and service to Winnipeg's business community.

The keynote address at this year's awards dinner was from Sheikh Hamid Slimi of Toronto, Chairperson of the Canadian Council of Imams. Sheikh Hamid gave a very entertaining address about the importance of having an Islamic Chamber of Commerce. He talked about the virtues of having an Islamic Waqf and also gave examples from Islamic history of the endowment fund or Waqf model. Sheikh Hamid explained that a professionally run endowment fund is way overdue. He emphasized the importance of involving the greater community in our activities. Most importantly, he offered his personal time and support to CICC saying, "I am with you, and the Canadian Council of Imams is with you."

My most vivid memory of the event happened after it ended. I walked across the room to find a City Councilor standing alone and looking somewhat shocked. I introduced myself, but his look and demeanor did not change. After a brief pause he finally spoke, "That was amazing. I had no idea that your community was capable of putting on an event like this." Then he reached into his pocket. "Here is my card. Call me anytime and I'd be pleased to discuss your needs."

And at that moment my feelings were confirmed - the dinner was a big success. I can't wait until next year!

Camp Awakening 2009

By: Br. Adeel Mirza*

The successful Camp Awakening 2009 occurred from July 22 – 26th 2009 and what an event it was! I had one mother come up to me saying that "you guys made quite an impression on my son". There was another family who commented by saying "that they were quite pleased that we appointed a Safety Officer for the camp - it showed that we cared for the well-being of their boys". No matter where you look and whom you talk to, positive things about the camp was heard.

It all started with campers assembling at the Grand Mosque at 9:00 a.m. Wednesday morning. You could feel the excitement both with the parents and the kids. It was palpable. The organizers then got the boys organized in their cabins and assigned their counselors. One of the major mandates of the counselors this year was to be with their group 100% of the time - through research and discussion it was identified that the counselor was one of the major components to the camp and the enjoyment for the boys. Immediately, you could see the counselors making an impression on their cabin charges through discussion and various "ice-breaking" activities.

The Camp Booklets were then handed out. The counselors told their respective cabins not to lose these (of course, they were lost) as certain activities require the booklet to be handy. The booklet contained the program, survival tips, prayers and supplications, stories of some sahaba etc.

At the camp, there were definitely some major highlights

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and surprises. One of the major highlights was the survival training led by “Survivorman”, Idris Knapp. Several demonstrations and activities were done including different techniques of making and building a fire and trail marking. Br. Idris also demonstrated the development of a sun compass out of sticks and drawing lines in the sand. A couple of hours later we would go to the sun compass and be astonished that it was actually working. Teaching the kids such an innovative Muslim technique gave them a sense of pride and a source of motivation. We also learned how to create different types of snares and we then were assessed on how well we did. The final test was for each cabin to create a shelter. We were marked on how well the shelter would protect against rain, wind and animals. The survival training was fun. It was practical knowledge and we all learned.

Another highlight of the camp was the entertainment sessions. We had a section in the program dedicated for the preparation and then we also had a section for the entertainment itself. We learned a lot during this exercise. The respective cabins used their ingenuity to create original skits/songs/poems. The entertainment was assessed by the Camp Officers using three criteria: delight, creativity and Islamic content. Suffice it to say, we sometimes failed on using these criteria - however, it did make it that much more entertaining. There was dancing, laughing, joke telling, skits, poems, more dancing... it was a good time had by all!

The major focus of this year’s camp was balance; providing that combination of spiritual, physical and intellectual content. Who says you cannot have it all? There were guest speakers that made the trip to speak and lead workshops for the guys. Also, we had regular “reading” sessions - just 15 minutes long, where the goal was to emphasize the importance of reading. There were workshops demonstrating the requirements of prayers and there were some about the importance of critical thinking. We had regular 5-minute supplication sessions held after the Fajr and Asr prayers. Whatever it was, everything had some sort of “Islamic thread” attached to it.

Now, a “camp report” cannot be written without mentioning the food and the aunties who made it. It was fabulous. From the sandwiches, burgers, the chicken dinners to the final night’s surprise, Biryani, it was quite the effort. Not to mention the creative desserts. It takes a lot of work and stress to do what they did and we would like to thank the Auntie volunteers for their efforts.

On the final day, the Camp Director promised a surprise visitor and we were honored that Obby Khan, the Winnipeg Blue Bomber himself, was able to come and distribute some gifts to the guys. A photo op was then taken and the boys had an opportunity to ask questions of this honored guest.

With a strong volunteer base and an excellent group of campers, this was a camp for the ages. For this “Awakening group” there will be focused events provided throughout the

year. We have the Camp Ceremony and an elegant banquet planned for October. Also, there might be some additional surprise events planned - stay tuned!

We would like to thank the organizers, counselors and aunties that helped out before, during and after the camp. Also, the sponsors were essential to the financial backbone of the camp. Without them, there would be no camp. May their support be counted as an ongoing charity for them as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “When a man dies, all his good deeds come to a halt, apart from three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge or a righteous child who will pray for him.”

The final word goes to the Awakening Brothers. A camp is not a camp, without great campers and we would like to, above all, thank them for their participation and the awakened spirit in them.

** Adeel Mirza is a member of the Editorial Board of Manitoba Muslim Magazine and a counselor at camp Awakening.*

Camp Awakening for Boys a Great Success

Sr. Sofia Mirza*

I wanted to thank the organizers of Camp Awakening for putting on such a fabulous camp. It was the first camp of its kind that my son has attended and I was so pleased with the effect it had on him. He told me stories of several of the funny events that occurred, about the interesting things he had learned about Islam, about survival techniques, and how happy he was to meet new people. Having “survivor man” at the camp was perfect. It was impressive seeing what the kids had learned re: survival and safety. It was one of the things that my son looked forward to each day. The brother teaching it was gifted in his interaction with people and the campers specifically and so bringing him back to share his knowledge in this area is a good idea, in my view. I heard lots of positive feedback from campers re: the food. As everyone was aware, the food was well organized and fabulous. The cooking team very much appreciated the fact that the campers recognized this with their tribute to them on Saturday evening.

I was also quite pleased to hear that a safety officer had been appointed for the camp and that his main goal was to monitor safety the entire time. That is a comfort to a parent as well and I must admit I enjoyed watching some of his disciplinary training as did the other campers. It was a nice touch to have Ibrahim from the Blue Bombers come out and talk with the kids about his experience as well, and it was very kind of him to give Blue Bomber caps to the campers as a souvenir!

It must have been a massive commitment to put this camp

on and once again I want to thank the organizers and camp counselors for organizing such a great camp. It has sparked a new found “awakening” for our family, so for us mission accomplished!

** Sr. Sofia Mirza is the mother of an Awakening Camper*

Muslim Girls Youth Camp

By: Raja El-Mazini*

Once summer graces us with its presence, excitement is in the air. This excitement is usually geared towards the Muslim Girl’s Youth Camp (MGYC). A common feeling spreads around the Muslim girls in Winnipeg; it is finally time to leave our hectic city lives and spend five days in the beautiful Brereton Lake.

Early on Wednesday morning, thirty five bustling, excited girls gather at the WCM and Waverly Mosque, bidding farewell to their parents and hello to the great outdoors. The weather was quite gloomy, with a dark sky, strong wind, and drizzles of rain, but that did not bring us down. Finally, after reassuring our parents for the umpteenth time that we would stay safe and always walk in groups, we were on our way.

The MGYC takes place every summer, during a week in either July or August. The duration of the camp always fluctuates lasting sometimes four, five or six days, with the latter usually being preferable by most girls. For the past four years, the location of the camp was at Brereton Lake, in the Whiteshell. It is a quiet, isolated campsite with a private beach, beautiful hiking trail, and acres of healthy green trees.



Those who attend the MGYC are familiar with an unfortunate fact about our beloved camp; it always rains. For the past few years, rain has always played a significant role in our camp, taking a day or two out of our programs and forcing us to take our activities indoors. Surely once again, it rained this year; not only for one or two days, but four. However despite the rain and mosquitoes that seem to come hand in hand, we had an absolutely amazing time. We refused to let the rain dampen our spirits. Our activities took place indoors, and included games such as jeopardy, the human knot and building structures. At night, when the rain would finally cease, we would have a bonfire and sing Islamic songs at the top of our lungs while munching on popcorn. The rain finally stopped two days before camp ended, allowing us to go canoeing, hiking, and swimming.

Amidst all the fun and games, time was set aside in order for us to receive essential information about our religion. This year’s theme was ‘Balance between mind, body, and soul’, and everyday we would listen to a lecture pertaining to the theme. Our guest speakers this year were Sr. Shahina, Sr. Deema, Sr. Saadia and Sr. Qamer. We received a wide range of lectures covering essential topics such as gender relationships, balance in life, and being a Muslim teenager. The knowledge we gained was helpful and useful, and surely had an impact on our lives.

When thinking of camp, one often associates it with canned beans and an endless supply of hot dogs and hamburgers, but not at the MGYC. We had the most amazing cooks who served us only the best food and always ensured that we were satisfied. Lasagna, roasted chicken, brownies, mashed potatoes are only some of the foods that were on the menu. Our cooks made great efforts to accommodate the appetites of a group of diverse girls and their efforts are greatly appreciated.

Lastly and most importantly, this camp would not have taken place without the hard work of some amazing women: Shaheen Rana, Nusraat Masood, Aisha Awan, Jennifer Rahman, and Ferdose Sheikheldin were only some of the people who poured their hearts and souls into running this year’s camp and ensuring that we were always entertained, safe, and most of all having fun. On behalf of all campers who attended the MGYC this year, I extend a great thank you.

** Raja El-Mazini is a high school student and a member of the Manitoba Muslim Editorial Board.*

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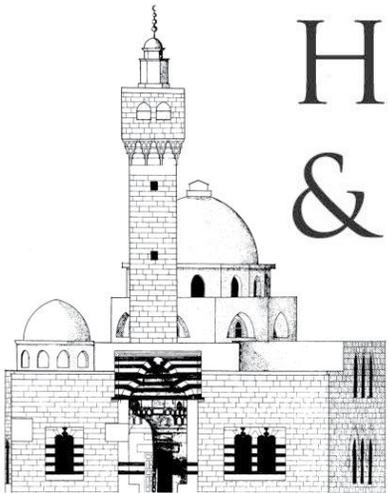


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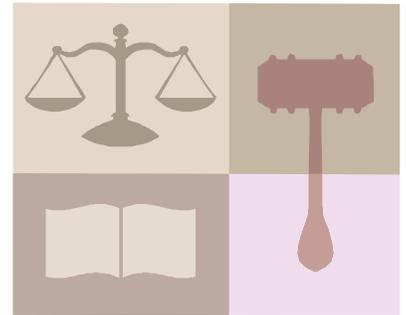


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