

# Manitoba MUSLIM



*Eid Mubarak*

**Your Community Newsletter**



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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](mailto: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

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# Manitoba Muslim

Volume 9 - Issue 3, September 2008

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



# Editorial

The Editorial Board of Manitoba Muslim wishes all its readers Eid Mubarak.

Today the Muslims living in Manitoba are celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr to celebrate the end of the holy month of Ramadan and to thank Allah for another opportunity to attain a higher level of piety. In addition, there are also many other blessings that this community should thank Allah for.

The Muslim community in Manitoba has grown significantly over the last two decades. This Ramadan, by Allah's blessings the Taraweeh prayers were organized at six different locations throughout Winnipeg, and were all led by local Hafiz. This is quite a contrast to the time - not too distant in the past -

when Taraweeh prayers were held only at one location (the Hazelwood Masjid) and that too sometimes without a Hafiz.

The next issue of the Manitoba Muslim Newsletter will mark the tenth anniversary of the publication. The newsletter has now become the prime resource for disseminating information regarding community news, events and activities. It also provides a forum to debate and deal with issues confronting the community. In addition, the local businesses, especially Muslim business, get an opportunity to promote their services and products to the community. The readers also take advantage of various initiatives and announcements such as different learning classes offered for all age groups, scholarships, employment opportunities and summer camps for the youth.

Manitoba is now blessed with three fully operational and permanent mosques in Winnipeg, plus one in Thompson and one in Brandon. There is also a first-rate indoor sports facility and a large multipurpose hall with a commercially equipped kitchen at the Grand Mosque in Winnipeg. Our youth can come and take advantage of these facilities and also form strong and long lasting bonds with their Muslim peers. The hall is now also fully suitable for organizing group functions such as social events, seminars and workshops.

This type of rapid growth of a community – especially a diverse one like ours - usually poses many new challenges for its leaders. The challenge now lies for these leaders to provide a vision, an implementation strategy, and execution to address the spiritual and the socio-economic needs for all Muslims in Manitoba. Strong and effective leadership will ensure a cohesive, strong and a viable community that our future generations will thank us for. May Allah give us the strength and the wisdom to achieve this noble goal.

## Words of Revelation

### Quran

“Blessed is He Who made constellations in the skies, and placed therein a Lamp and a Moon giving light;  
And it is He Who made the Night and the Day to follow each other: for such as have the will to celebrate His praises or to show their gratitude.  
And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, “Peace!”;”  
Sural Al-Furqan (verse 61-63)

### Hadith

Recommendation to fast six days of Shawal (month following Ramadan)  
Abu Ayyub al-Ansari reported Allah's Messenger (PBU) as saying: He who observed the fast of Ramadan and then followed it with six (fasts) of Shawwal, it would be as if he fasted perpetually. (Reported by Imam Muslim).



*Community Picnic at Assiniboine Park.*

# President's Message

Bismillahi Alrahman Alraheem

Alhamdullillah wassalaat wassalaam ala Rasulellah

Assalamu Alaikum and Eid Fitr Mubarak from the MIA executive to all community members and congratulations on this joyous occasion of graduating inshaAllah with excellence from the annual school of the Blessed Month of Ramadan: The Month of the Quran as a guidance to humankind, the month of self-discipline and spiritual growth with a powerful message of soul over body; the month of mercy, forgiveness and in its ending, liberation from the hellfire inshaAllah.

The abundance of the benefits of the month reflects the Mercy and Blessings of Allah SWT.

Attaining /gaining Taqwa, consciousness of Allah and drawing closer to Him is one of the greatest benefits, with attributes of righteousness, self-restraint, self control and discipline.

Sabr (patience) is another profound teaching of the school of Ramadan and we are all aware of the hadeeth of Prophet Mohamad SAAWS that Ramadan is the month of Sabr and the reward of Sabr is Jenna (paradise). This is the month of kindness, generosity and betterment of our behavior, in addition to the many social benefits with charity as its cornerstone, helping the disadvantaged and strengthening the social fabric of the society, not to mention the many health benefits of sawm.

Let's keep the spirit of Ramadan alive all year. It is a golden opportunity that Allah offers us each year and we should be thankful and grateful for it and show that by continuing to be steadfast and vigilant in our worship, good deeds, character and behavior inshaAllah to please the Creator SWT and receive His countless Blessings.

Alhamdullillah, the community keeps growing and we should always try to welcome and help the newcomers.

The completion of the grand masjid and community center on Waverley is ongoing and recently there was some renovation work done at the masjid on Hazelwood. JazakumAllahou khairan all who have contributed.

This year Sheikh Ali Salama from Egypt led taraweeh prayers along with Imam Sheikh Hosni, Br. Mahmoud, brs. Alaa, Ahmed and Mohamad. JazaAllahou khairan All. Sheikh Ali was warmly welcomed by the community and we thank him for his contributions.

JazakumAllahou khairan also all those who volunteered to provide iftars at the masjids, and also the water bottles.

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The MIA constitution needs revamping and a team is currently studying the current constitution before presenting the needed changes to a General Body Meeting in the near future inshaAllah. A consultation process is under way.

The Islamic full time and week-end schools are great assets for the future of the community and their support is always needed and a must.

The project on Waverley is not complete as yet and it includes building senior housing as well as a store front mall. Your contribution and donations to this end as well as to completion of the masjid and community center and its maintenance is most appreciated and May Allah SWT Add this to your balance of hasanaat (good deeds).

Rabbana la tuzigh quloobana baAAda ith hadaytana wahab lana min ladunka rahmatan innaka anta alwahhab (al Imran 3:8)

"Our Lord!, Let not our hearts deviate now after you have guided us, but grant us mercy from your own Presence; for you are the Grantor of bounties without measure."

The Blessed Month of Ramadan will be missed by all of us and we wish everybody many happy returns. Enjoy Eid inshaAllah with family and friends and kul aam wa antoum bikheir.

- Ghassan Joundi



*Church group visits the Grand Masjid.*

# Community News

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## Congratulations to:

Dr. Sabiha Haseeb for an award from Hon. Gary Doer, the Premier of Manitoba, to recognize her and her late husband's dedicated services for the Muslim Community of Manitoba and also for their relentless efforts to raise funds for the construction of the Grand Mosque.

## Births

Br. Tareq Mussa and Sr. Bayan Sibai were blessed with their first baby girl named Noor.

Br. Omar Siddiqui and Sr. Nadia were blessed with their second son named Yunus.

Br. Hiwa and his wife were blessed with a baby girl named Summaya.

Br. Omar Alkhateeb and his wife were blessed with a baby boy named Abdul Rahman.

Br. Ismael Buodaf and his wife were blessed with a baby boy.

Br. AbdelKareem Buolhout and his wife were blessed with a baby boy.

## Weddings

Br. Usaid Khan was married to Sr. Sadiya Qureshi.

Br. Youssef Loukili was married to Sr. Aesha Peyawary.

Br. Kashif Hayat was married to Sr. Saba Kashif.



*Dr. Sabiha Haseeb receiving award from Hon. Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba.*

Br. Zeeshan Siddiqui was married to Sr. Atiya Tayyab.

Br. Khurram Ali was married to Sr. Amna Khurram.

## Welcome

Dr. Reda Al-Jazzar and family moved to Winnipeg from Egypt to work at the HSC.

Br. Arshad Nazeer Siddiqui and Sr. Manhaz Siddiqui arrived as landed immigrants from Pakistan with their two children: Arham and Shaheel.

Br. Tariq Siddiquie and Sr. Humariah arrived as landed immigrants from Saudi Arabia with their three children: Ahmad, Junaid and Rayyan.

## Good-bye to:

Sr. Ruqaiya and her daughter Lisa Kibria moved to Edmonton to join Br. Gulam Kibria who moved to the city earlier. The family of Br. Gulam has been actively involved in various community activities and projects for more than 20 years. Br. Gulam was MIA president, trustee and

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chairman of the land committee. His daughter Sr. Lisa was an active organizer of youth activities and a member of the Editorial Board of the Manitoba Muslim Newsletter.

Br. Haji Naseem and Sr. Ashi moved to Ontario. They have been residents of Winnipeg for more than 30 years and active participants and organizers of community projects and activities. Haji Naseem was a founding member of the recently established Senior's organization.

Sr. Abeda Mohammed, a long time resident of Winnipeg, moved to the USA to join her daughter. Sr. Abeda is the wife of late Br. Obaidullah; she has been a passionate supporter of the community for over 25 years.

Br. Rayhan Azmat, his wife Sr. Shireen and their son Kareem moved to work in the Toronto office of the CA firm he worked for in Winnipeg.

Br. Saqib Rajput who received his CA designation recently moved to Toronto to work for a CA firm. Br. Saqib has served in various capacities within the community including MSA President, Chairman of the MIA Library Committee and Treasurer of ISSA.

Br. Ridwan, Sr. Mushrifa and their two young children moved to Montreal. Br. Ridwan was a member of the Winnipeg Central Mosque (WCM) Board and Sr. Mushrifa was an active community volunteer.

Br. Parvez Shere and his wife Rana moved to Mississauga, Ontario after his retirement from a teaching position at Red River College.

## Condolences

Sr. Hajar Abas passed away peacefully on Tuesday June 17.

Br. Zein al-Abdeen Ghazal son of Br. Ali Ghazal and Sr. Watfa Ghazal passed away July 09.

Sr. Darlene Al-Zawawy, wife of Br. Hazim Al-Zawawy, passed away in Winnipeg.



*Having fun at camp.*

# Local Events

## MSA National West Zone Conference

MSA National West Zone conference was held in Winnipeg on May 30th and 31st at the University of Manitoba campus. The title of the conference was "Ties that Bind: Faith, Family and Community". Speakers included Dr. Jamal Badawi and Sh. Faraz Rabbani from out of town and our own Sr. Shahina Siddiqui, Br. Idris Elbakri and Br. Ismael Mukhtar.

## Community Dinner at Winnipeg Central Mosque

A community dinner and get together was organized at the WCM on Sunday June 8th. The event was sponsored by WCM and Zubaidah Tallab Foundation. The program included a variety of activities for adults, children and families. The event was very well attended.

## Documentary and Film presentation on Palestine

A series of films was shown at the Hazelwood Mosque featuring "Occupation in Palestine". Among the films shown were: *Occupation 101: Voices Of The Silent Majority* (Winner of 8 Film Festival Awards), *The Iron Wall* and *Tragedy in the Holy Land*. The series was organized by Canadian Muslims for Palestine.

## Kids Activities

Various activities were organized for the kids and their families during the summer. Included among these activities were a Kids Festival held at the Grand Mosque, a trip to Tinkertown, soccer games and monthly fun nights.

## Walk Against Violence

The "Across Canada multi-faith walk against violence" led by Syed Sohrawardi, President of Muslims Against Terrorism, arrived in Winnipeg on August 5th. They were received by members of the Muslim community as well as others at the Grand Mosque. Syed Sohrawardi explained the purpose of the walk was to create greater awareness of the dangers of violence (domestic, terrorism etc) and that all faiths and in particular Islam, are opposed to violence.

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## Annual Tableegh Ijteema (meeting)

The annual Tableegh meeting was held at the Grand Mosque between August 8th and August 10th. The meeting was attended by members of the local community and participants from other cities and towns in Canada.

## Educational Activities

Various summer educational activities geared towards the young were organized at the Grand Mosque. Two of these programs were: A Youth Day Camp 2008 under the theme of: "Shaping Our Muslim Canadian Identity", was organized between August 11th to August 15th and knitting lessons for young sisters for 8 weeks from July 8th to August 26th. Another day camp was also organized by ISSA in the downtown area.

## Muslim Community Picnic

A community wide picnic was organized on August 16th, 2008 at the Assiniboine Park. The picnic was hosted jointly by:

Islamic Social Services (ISSA), Canadian Muslim Women's Institute (CMWI), Winnipeg Central Mosque (WCM), Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA), Canadian Council for Muslim Women (CCMW), Al Hijra School and Hussaini Association of Manitoba (HAM). The picnic was the first of its kind. Its main purpose was to bring all members together to enjoy outdoor activities and share happy moments together. All the food was donated by the above organizations.

## First Annual Golf Tournament

The Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce organized its First Annual Golf Tournament on August 17, 2008 at the River Oak Golf Course.

## Annual Bake Sale

The annual fundraising bake sale was held on August 24th at the Grand Mosque. A total of \$9,000 was collected. This event is organized every year prior to Ramadan by a group of sisters. The funds generated from the bake sale are used for mosque maintenance.



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## Ramadan activities

The month of Ramadan was lively and full of various activities within the community. Taraweeh prayers were held at the three main mosques in the city as well as the two main Mussalas. Despite the late hours, all the locations were very well attended. Imam Sh. Hosni and Qari Sh. Ali Salama from Egypt led the Taraweeh at Hazelwood and Waverley. They were assisted by Brs. Mahmoud, Ala and Ahmed. As well, Brs. Ammar and Yasser led the Taraweeh in WCM. Similarly, daily iftars were also held at the three mosques as well as the University of Manitoba. Also, fund raising activities, collection of Zakat El-fitr and distribution of food to the needy were conducted. The city of Thompson was blessed to have a visiting Imam from Lebanon, Sh. Mohamed El-Baradi.

# Announcements

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## MIA 2008-2009 Scholarship Program

The MIA and UM-MSA are pleased to announce ten scholarships of \$1,000 each for students currently enrolled and the new students entering University. The criteria for awarding the scholarships will be based on academic achievement, financial need and commitment to the Muslim community. The deadline to apply for the scholarships is August 30th, 2008. For more information visit [www.miaonline.org](http://www.miaonline.org).

## University Scholarship Opportunity for Sisters

The Islamic Education Foundation of Manitoba is granting scholarships for sisters pursuing University degrees. For more information visit [www.iefm.net](http://www.iefm.net).

## Canadian Muslims for Palestine Presents

### CMP Online Course 2008-2009 Jerusalem in Islamic Consciousness

Commencing October 2008, CMP will be conducting a CMP Online Course entitled, "Jerusalem in Islamic Consciousness."

" It will be a full year course, utilizing Dr. Hatem Bazian's seminal work, *Jerusalem in Islamic Consciousness: A Textual Survey of Muslim Claims and Rights to the Sacred City* as the main text. If you plan to take the course, we ask that you e-mail us at [cmpalastine@cmpalastine.org](mailto:cmpalastine@cmpalastine.org) with the information listed below under the heading, "Contact Information." (Please see [www.cmpalastine.org](http://www.cmpalastine.org)).

### Dates

October 1st, 2008 – May 31st, 2009 [Course Duration: One Hour Per Week]

Textbook: "Jerusalem in Islamic Consciousness: A Textual Survey of Muslim Claims and Rights to the Sacred City" by Dr. Hatem Bazian

You do not want to miss out on this fun, simple and imperative opportunity to learn about the significance of Al-Quds in Islam and from authentic sources!

Registration Deadline: September 30th, 2008

Late Registration Deadline: October 15th, 2008

Course Cost: Free

Textbook Cost: \$20

### Course Objectives and Highlights

- \* You will understand the major claims, from an Islamic perspective, that Muslims have in relation to Jerusalem.
- \* You will be able to educate your family and colleagues of the importance of Jerusalem in Islam.
- \* You will be directly and indirectly assisting the crises in Al-Quds, from an academic, educational and professional basis.
- \* You will not have to be bombarded by actually attending course lectures in a physical setting.
- \* You will be able to easily fit in the very short yet concise required readings in your day-to-day schedule.
- \* You will have access to the CMP Team for any of your queries concerning Al-Quds at anytime.

For More Information visit [www.cmpalastine.org](http://www.cmpalastine.org)



# Activities

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## For Sisters

### Yoga Class

When: Sundays, 2pm – 3pm

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Yasmin Ali, yasminali@shaw.ca

### Sports

When: Monday night, 6pm – 8pm

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Sr. Nusraat Masood, nusraat@gmail.com

### Badminton

When: Thursdays nights, 7pm – 9pm

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Naeem Akhtar, makhtar8@shaw.ca

### Halaqa

When: Fridays, 7:30pm – 9pm

Where: Grand Mosque, Mezzanine level

Contact: Magda Yasseen, magday02@hotmail.com

## For Brothers

### Martial Arts

When: Tuesday nights, 7pm – 9pm

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Ehtesham Saleem, saleem.ehtesham@gmail.com

### Badminton

When: Wednesday nights, 8pm – 11pm

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Br. Tariq Mian, Tel. 999-7844

### Floor Hockey

When: Fridays, 11pm to midnight

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Raza Hameed, razo\_11@hotmail.com

### Basketball

When: Saturdays 11pm – midnight

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Raza Hameed, razo\_11@hotmail.com

## For Kids

### Martial Arts

When: Tuesday nights, 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Sr. Saeed Khadijah, skhadijah@hotmail.com

### Quran Classes:

When: Sundays, 11am – 2pm

Where: Grand Mosque

Contact: Sh. Hosni Azzabi, hazzabi@hotmail.com

When: Sundays, 12am – 2pm

Where: Winnipeg Central Mosque

Contact: Br. Ammar Al-Khateeb, ammarjka@yahoo.com

# Tablighi Ijtimaa and MSA Conference Observations

Ismael Mukhtar

---

This year our community was blessed with a multitude of activities, programs and initiatives. Certainly, this is heart warming and a sign of hope and revival. The Winnipeg Muslim community used to be known as one of the most active and vibrant communities at one time. However, over the last few years there was an evident slow down and decline. This year though was noticeably different. Even though many of these activities were not well coordinated and were occasionally overlapping, they aggregately are a hopeful sign of a beginning of greater vibrancy and activism for our community. Two of this year's many activities I had the opportunity of attending -partially- were the Tablighi Ijtimaa (gathering) and the Muslim Student Association (MSA) West Zone conference. Attending both events was a refreshing and heart warming experience. The two gatherings were different in style, content, focus, organization and attendants. They both had their own flavors that provided unique intellectual and spiritual stimuli.

The Tablighi Ijtiima is strikingly simple. The gathering is held in the masjid. Everyone sits on the floor. They eat, and listen to lectures and reminders while sitting. No power point presentation, no laptops, no name badges, no formal program and no speaker profiles. The only technology in place is the microphone. Personally, I found that a humbling experience, a more environmentally friendly setting and more natural. The two speakers I listened to were well spoken. Their English was very fluent; as well, their quotation from Quran and Hadith in Arabic was fluent. The content of the speeches focused on the basics: on death, the hereafter, the deceptive nature of the materialistic life, the commitment to faith and sacrifice for the cause of Allah. Even though the lectures were too long, the messages resonated with me and at times I was emotional and went home with a refreshed perspective on the true nature of this life.

The MSA conference was certainly different; it was relatively high tech and was organized and managed in a North American conference style. The out of town speakers were very well versed in the topics they addressed. Dr. J. Badawi is a veteran renowned speaker who has inspired thousands of people across North America. Sheikh Faraz Rabbani is a young, well-spoken speaker who studied Islam in Syria and Jordan. The content of the speeches was mostly on

community and family issues. The speakers' knowledge and experience were of great value in shedding light on many issues that are of great importance to the North American Muslim community. It was certainly very informative, highly educational and refreshing in many ways. One thing that was clearly evident in this conference is that it was all youth organized. I found that extremely heart warming. Youth alienation and apathy has been a simmering problem in our community and other communities across North America. To see the youth leading, organizing and volunteering was greatly encouraging. The entertainment section at the end of the conference was equally creative. Even though it was geared primarily for the youth and I could not grasp every part of it, it was definitely enjoyable. Providing avenues for Islamically acceptable ways for laughter and entertainment is a desperately lacking feature in many of our events. The youths' creativity on this front is commendable.

## General Observations

First, the Tablighi Ijtiima, had a good turnout with a significant

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### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION AVAILABLE**

The Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce (CICC) is an exciting new organization. We have a powerful, broad-based vision for the future of our community and are putting into place sustainable, high-impact initiatives to help realize that vision. These projects are supported by influential leaders from within and outside the Muslim community.

The Board of Directors of the CICC is made up of young professionals with a progressive management style and a commitment to excellence. Our flagship projects are the Vision Endowment Fund (Waqf) and the Welfare Deterrence Program.

CICC is currently looking for an Executive Director to coordinate the day today affairs of the organization.

This is an exciting opportunity for someone to be part of history. Must be willing to push the bar higher and raise the standard of community activism. If you are well-organized, resourceful and passionate about the future of our community, we would love to speak with you.

Interested parties may send resumes and enquiries to [dr.asim@shaw.ca](mailto:dr.asim@shaw.ca).

*Planting the seeds for a prosperous tomorrow!*



number of attendants from out of the city. The local attendance seemed to be low and less in variety. There could be many explanations for this. One possible explanation could be an image problem that the Tablighi chapter has in Winnipeg. The Tablighi Jamaat (founded in 1920) as articulated by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelvi (born in 1885 in India) and demonstrated by many of his followers is known as a non-political body that focuses on dawa, grassroots outreach and fundamentals of faith. However, over the last few years the Tablighi local chapter's engagement in what appeared to be "block voting" and "block membership campaigns" in MIA elections has created a perception of Tablighi as being a body bent on taking over MIA and transforming it into a closed entity. I remember during one of those tense MIA elections, a young sister, who barely knows any thing about the Tablighi Jamaat, asking me distressfully, what can we do to stop the "Tablighi" from taking over our organization that our forefathers worked so hard to establish? This is definitely unfortunate and doesn't reflect the essence of the Tablighi message and legacy. I have witnessed the Tablighi work in many countries, including war torn areas in Africa. The examples set in those areas and the work done is markedly different from the perceptions evident within sections of our community. I, humbly think that it would be wise for the local members of the Tablighi to re-evaluate the consequences of their "block voting and campaigning" on the reputation of the great movement they represent and the valuable grassroots dawa work they do. Certainly, every individual MIA member has the right to participate as individuals whether Tablighi or otherwise but not in a partisan block fashion. Block voting compromises the pristine nature of the dawa and the integrity of the work. Further, it runs the risk of triggering suspicion, mistrust and innuendo from the community at large.

Second, it was clearly evident from the outset that the attendants in the Tablighi Ijtimah and MSA conference were distinctly different. Those who were present in the former were absent in the latter and vice versa. Although this could understandably be an issue of proximity, familiarity and time, it is, however, unfortunate. Every Islamic event has its own flavor and its own touch that appeals to different spiritual and intellectual triggers. Listening to different perspectives and viewpoints nourishes the mind and the soul and opens doors for greater insight, wisdom and understanding. Our body benefits when we consume a variety of food items such as meat, vegetable, fruit, cereal etc. Insisting on eating only one type of food could potentially cause physical malnourishment and ailment. Similarly, insisting on listening to only one perspective, one school, and one sheikh could potentially lead to a similar, though invisible, intellectual and spiritual malnourishment.

Third, the "official leadership" of the community was mostly, except for a few people, absent from these two events. This is cause for alarm because its absence has been evidently consistent in many of the local events with the exception of those events organized under its direct supervision. To maximize effectiveness, leaders need to be actively engaging, openly interactive, clearly visible and present in all community events. The presence of the leadership encourages the organizers, particularly the youth. It sends a message to all that we are an open community that welcomes positive contributions from every angle and that narrow partisanship has no place in our community. Further, it helps leaders to feel the pulse of the community and be in tune with the needs and concerns of the cross section of community. Accordingly, it is imperative upon leaders to step out of their area of comfort and be in the field with the people at large. The more remote the leadership becomes from the people, the greater it risks of becoming irrelevant and outdated.

## Book Review: A Muslim in Victorian America

Br. Furqan Rajput\*

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Usually when we think of Islamic history, the pieces that come to our mind are the Middle East, Africa, or the Sub Continent. As Muslims in the West, it seems like our history in North America is relatively new or just being formed. With further research it shows that Muslims have deep roots here, in our new home. The historical mosques in the prairies of Canada and America, the coming to the new world by the Chinese Muslims, or our African brothers and sisters who were ripped from their homeland to become slaves in Colonial America, are just some of the example of our rich heritage.

Many of us are familiar with the earliest mosques in Edmonton, Alberta and Ross, North Dakota but not too

*continued*

many of us know much more when it comes to the history of American Islam. There are several examples of Muslims that not only shaped the North American Muslim identity but also the North American identity too. One of them is Alexander Russell Webb. There are a couple of books written on his life, including a biography written by Dr. Umar F. Abd-Allah titled "A Muslim in Victorian America."

The book is quite intriguing and goes into great detail of every part of Webb's life, from his upbringing in New England's Hudson Valley, his many diverse occupations, his travels to the Philippines and India, his dialogue with his many contacts and of course his spiritual life. One of the more interesting chapters in the book was Passage to India, in which Dr. Abd-Allah does such an amazing job at describing the travels of Webb throughout India that it feels like we are right there in the audience listening to one of the numerous lectures Alexander Russell Webb would give. Another chapter that is very fascinating is Manhattan Beginnings. After Webb had finished travelling and gaining both knowledge and monetary backing, he began to spread the message of Islam in New York City. He had started one of the first Muslim organizations in North America, called the American Propaganda. Actually one of the buildings

in which he ran the organization and in which had a mosque, is today still intact in the Chelsea neighbourhood of Manhattan.

Webb was a great speaker and excelled in giving Islam an appropriate image, to the point that even Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) had mentioned him as a Missouri Moslem in "Tom Sawyer Abroad." He was even mentioned in the New York Times when he had arrived from India; they described his office and gave him the opportunity to talk about his mission. He represented Islam at Chicago World's Fair and First Parliament of Religions in 1893.

Dr. Abd-Allah gives us plenty of interesting stories from Webb's life, including the dialogue between himself and Ghulam Mirza Ahmad. This was before Mirza Ahmad started his Ahmadiyya movement. Their correspondence included letters about the basic elements of Islam and had no evidence of Webb being Ahmadiyya.

Another captivating story is about how Webb came to Islam. It is an interesting example of how people become Muslims and how they try to speak to everyone to see which path is right for them. Webb started the first Muslim publishing

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company in North America. From there he printed his newspaper Moslem Word and his many journals. One of the lessons we can take from Webb is his determination to get things done and always thinking positively while completing a task. He had many struggles to overcome to spread the message of Islam and May Allah (SWT) reward him for his perseverance.

Although the novel may be at times a little dry, Dr. Bad-Allah provides many details including dedicating a quarter of his book to footnotes, citations, and his bibliography. "A Muslim in Victorian America," is a great book for anyone who is looking for more information about Muslims and their heritage, especially for those who love history.

*\* Br. Furqan Rajput a student at the University of Winnipeg and active member of the MSA.*

# Child Soldiers

Dareen El-Sayed\*

You can't abduct a child; give them a gun to kill with; traumatize them with violence then expect them to heal by themselves.

I would like to issue a reminder. War doesn't have background music or slow motion like in the movies a lot of us watch. It is a traumatizing experience for those who suffer it and in these conflicts it's the children.

Every child has a right to a childhood accompanied by family and community. No child should ever serve as a soldier in armed conflict or war. No child should be victimized by it. Children who have been recruited and victimized in these conflicts have a right to rehabilitation and reintegration. These rights are non-negotiable and every child is entitled to it.

In the last decade in armed conflict, 2 million children have died, 6 million children have been seriously injured or disabled, 1 million children have been orphaned and separated from their families and 8,000-10,000 children have been killed while laying land mines. At present there are 300,000 children involved in armed conflicts in 30 different locations around the world.

The creation of Child soldiers is a process that includes abducting children; then training them in the most inhumane

and brutal ways like making them kill their families and destroy their villages. Then after breaking their spirit and dehumanizing them, they make them part of the army or rebel group. They use them in the most heart-breaking ways; as decoys (bait) to distract the opposition so they can trick them, by making them go into areas, which have land mines (explosives). The rebels would also use the child soldiers as guards and scouts. When the children suffer all this and come out alive, they need all the help and support they can get.

These children need to get psychological and medical help. They would need to be reunited with their families. If they are orphaned, then they would need a caring community to live in. They would also need a healthy environment, education, social development and skills; they also need to heal in order to have a successful life.

So what does peace look like for these children? Peace for them is when there are no armed conflicts in their country. It's having a family, a village and a healthy environment. It's not being forced to kill people or lay land mines. It's living in your house without having to worry about being abducted at night (security from fear). It's having food to eat, water to drink and a place to live in (shelter). It's the feeling of love, happiness and relief.

The United Nations can help by going to schools and presenting information about the use of child soldiers. Then they should ask the students and staff to write letters or petitions to stop the use of child soldiers. Then the UN and students would put the government under pressure to stop these conflicts and the use of child soldiers. The UN should try to give the child soldiers rehabilitation and the care and support they need. The UN should also help educate the child soldier by making more schools and educational programs.

As the United Nations said in the Convention of the Rights of a child:

Children shall be protected from all forms of neglect, cruelty or exploitation. The children did not receive protection in these conflicts. What are we going to do now? Are we going to give them our back and let them suffer? Or are we going to stand up for these children until they get their rights back?

*\* Dareen El-Sayed is 13 old year student at Arthur E. Wright School who received a certificate on her article by UNAC Winnipeg competition.*



# The MSA West Zone Conference

Abdallah Sheikheldin\*

On Friday May 30th, 2008 the Manitoba Students Association (MSA) West Zone Conference was revived in Winnipeg. Unfortunately, in most recent years the conference was sadly neglected and its importance lost. However, because of the time and effort put forth by a group of young optimistic Muslim students, the conference was a success and beautifully embraced by the Muslim community. In recent months, the organizing members of the event volunteered their time and energy to the renewal of the conference and due to endless meetings and intense brainstorming sessions, the end result was an extremely beneficial occasion to help remind ourselves of the essential values and practices that we must all follow.

The theme of the conference was "Ties that bind: Faith, Family and Community," and Al-hamdullilah the conference's success was due largely to the collection of high caliber local and out of town speakers that we were able to secure, among them Dr. Jamal Badawi and Sheikh Faraz Rabani. Special thanks to our local speakers Sheikh Ismael Mukhtar, Sister Shahina Siddiqui and Dr. Idris El Bakri whose valued help and advice along the way were greatly appreciated.

A number of important topics were addressed, the focus being on relevant issues aimed primarily towards Muslim youth living in a society with constant struggles. The lectures highlighted such aspects as the ties that bind, dealing with desires, the pursuit of perfection following the Prophetic model, Islamic etiquette, creating community beyond specific social arenas and lastly, bringing it all together by holding firmly to the rope of Allah (SWT). Apart from the main sessions there were two breakout sessions presented by Sheikh Ismael Mukhtar on the seven habits for highly effective Muslims, and also by Dr. Idris El Bakri on compass training and conflict resolution.

The entertainment portion presented at the end of the second day was composed of skits and songs by brother Nabeel. We were blessed with the presence of renowned scientist Ali Mukhtar Bamboola and his protegee Hagaar, as well as Dateline MSA's Kareem Hussein. Meals for the conference were provided by Joey's, Barakah Bakery and the Halal Meat Centre.

Inevitably, the course leading up to the conference was very

difficult with many set backs and discouragements but with the help of Allah (SWT) we were able to persist through the difficulties and reach our aims. Our goal for the conference was not only to educate and remind but also to help dissolve feelings of alienation or animosity and unite our community. Young Muslims can create a more unified Canadian Muslim community by strengthening the ties that bind us. Islamic etiquette and values of respect, brotherhood and sisterhood help us overcome obstacles and achieve unity.

*\* Br. Abdallah Sheikheldin is a university student and member of the conference organizing committee.*

## The Ultimate Camp Experience

Sr. Raja El-Mazini\*

It is seven a.m. as I jumped out of bed. Finally the day I was waiting for all year was here. I made wudu, prayed salat As-Subh and quickly got dressed. I grabbed my bags, got into the car and headed towards the mosque to board the bus that would take me to my destination. As I got on the bus I couldn't help but feel excited for the adventure that was about to come.

This day is highly anticipated not only by me but also by at least forty other girls in Winnipeg and Saskatchewan; it was the day of the Muslim Girls Youth Camp. This camp only comes once a year and lasts for a few days, this year longer than others with six long days on the beautiful Brereton Lake. It is the only camp for Muslim girls in Winnipeg, so for most girls it is the only time they can leave home for a few days and have their parents rest assured that they are in good hands.

The Manitoba Muslim Youth Camp is a summer Camp that allows Muslim girls aged 12 and up to have the ultimate camp experience. Our days are filled with canoeing, hiking, swimming and other sports and of course the religious aspect. While most of the camp is fun and games, camp organizers make sure that participants pray every prayer even waking early for Fajr; counselors and guest speakers lecture on Islamic topics that are relevant to our daily lives.

Part of the whole idea of camp is to indulge in some serious physical activity and participants did just that at MMYC. Each day when the weather cooperated, we would participate in a different sport activity. Some days were spent canoeing and hiking and everyday we went swimming in our little private beach. Besides these activities, we also participated in an organized activity called "Camp Olympics/Amazing Race". We were divided into groups and each group was assigned a country to represent. We would undergo a series of competitions until a winner was crowned. This was not only enjoyable but was a great work-out and definitely increased our physical endurance.

All the sports and activities at camp was really fun, but I have to admit that my favorite part of camp were the "halaqas". Each day a counselor or guest speaker gave a small speech about a certain topic and then we were given time to discuss it as a group and to ask questions. We talked about the Day of Judgment, following in the Prophet's footsteps, characteristics of a Muslim woman and many more amazing topics. The unique thing about these halaqas was that like any other halaqa we were given lots of information, but then we had the opportunity to discuss the topic amongst our friends and probe deeper into the topic together. Each one of the lectures was beautifully delivered and has left an impact on not only me but on every girl in camp who participated.

One of the greatest benefits of camp is the knowledge we obtain and bring back to our homes. Going on the six day trip to the Manitoba Muslim Youth Camp is a way to revitalize our Iman. We are isolated from television, music and the material objects we depend on in our daily lives; what is left in front of us is the great outdoors and of course our faith. We are able to focus on strengthening our Iman and on becoming the better Muslims we've always wanted to be. We come back home with the passion and drive to apply our knowledge and share it with our family and friends.

*\* Sr. Raja El-Mazini is a high school student who regularly attend the Manitoba Muslim Youth Camp; as well, she is a new member of the Manitoba Muslim newsletter Editorial Board.*

# Camp Reflection

Br. Hamza Mustapha\*

This year I attended the Manitoba Muslim Youth Camp for boys, which took place at Camp Bereton. This was my second year attending camp, and once again I had a great time. I met new Muslim brothers and made a special friend, Taha. We got to eat, pray and play together as we learned to respect one another. We spoke about different topics that affect Muslims today, within and out of the community. We got to meet a new Muslim brother named Joel, who spoke about how and why he converted. We got to learn survivor skills while we did the survival challenges; the coolest part was how to start a fire without matches. One of the activities I found most enjoyable was the skits and late night entertainment. I would recommend it to all the brothers who did not get a chance to attend this year to book your calendars for next year; I know I will be there!

*\* Br. Hamza Mustapha 12 years old participant of the summer youth camp.*

# Reports

## Muslim Youth Achievement Day 2008

Al-Noor weekend school staff

On a beautiful spring morning, June 7th, 2008, approximately 100 youth, accompanied by their families, celebrated a remarkable moment in their life: Achievement Day 2008. On this day, the staff of Al Noor Weekend Islamic School saluted Winnipeg youth for congregating every Saturday throughout the year in order to strengthen their Iman, increase their knowledge of Islam and network with Muslim youth across the city. As one of the teachers at Al Noor Islamic School this past academic year, I was very honoured to return after one decade to teach the Senior Class, Grades 7-12. I

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was astonished by the wide-range and in-depth nature of questions, from the fiqh of salah to shari'a practice in Saudi Arabia, from gender relations/modesty to characteristics of the Ottoman Empire, from al-Ghazali's Ihya Ulum ad-Din to the dynamic nature of usul al-hadith. It was a formidable year that students and teachers alike looked forward to celebrating.

### Certificates and Awards

The festivities of the day began with the youth, accompanied by their families, meeting in their individual classrooms to receive their Certificate of Completion and Outstanding Achievement Awards. It was a difficult endeavour for the staff to choose the youth to receive awards, such as Projects Award, Leadership Skills Award, Participation Award, Committee Award and Punctuality Award, as each student excelled in their own individual and unique way. The distribution of the certificates and awards was a very special moment, acknowledging the individual efforts of youth -- their dedication, interest, care and motivation. The first part of the day ended when the teachers entertained questions from the youth and their families with regard to the curriculum and summer programming.

### Youth Presentations

The second half of the program, consisting of presentations by the students in front of the entire student body and their families, continued in the cafeteria wherein Hamidiya School joined Al Noor Islamic School. The program commenced with our youngest students, ages 4-6, under the supervision of their teacher, Sr. Shaheena Awan. With great enthusiasm, eagerness and delicateness, they presented the poem, "I Love Allah" and recited Surah al-Fatiha. Thereafter, Sr. Aisha Awan and Br. Ali Hussein, who taught two separate sections, both ages 7-11, invited their classes to graciously recite three surahs each.

Interestingly enough, the Senior Class, ages 12-18, chose to present a series of items. The sisters presented two role-plays, namely, "What Goes Around, Comes Around" emphasizing the dangers and social ills of slander, and "Believe in Yourself" expressing the need for our Muslim youth to be proud of their religion in the eyes of their own Muslim peers who may be struggling with their Muslim identity. One brothers' group presented a role-play stressing the importance of salah. Other youth from the Senior Class presented and chose the poems: "I Wonder" and "Mountains of Mecca," both paying tribute to our beloved Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. One student composed and presented an inspirational and thought-provoking poem entitled

"Good Will." For the Qur'anic recitation portion, under the supervision of Imam Mahmoud, the Senior Class presented the Arabic with English translation of Ayat al-Kursi, Surah an-Naba and Surah al-Mulk. The teachers were utterly proud of the efforts, leadership skills and participation of the youth.

### BBQ, Prayer and Canoeing

After the presentations, the BBQ crew cheerfully brought in the beef burgers and hot dogs from the picnic area. Numerous side dishes were laid out on the tables accompanied by a lavish variety of cakes and sweets that were brought by the staff and parents of Al Noor Islamic School. The air was full of laughter, festivity, happiness, warmth and most of all, by the grace and mercy of Allah -- accomplishment.

For the Senior Class, the day culminated with canoeing at the Canoe and Kayak Center, walking distance from the school. Before heading down to the dock, the youth prayed together outside on the grass. It was a moment of serenity, tranquility and peace as well as a first for many. After prayer, everyone excitedly headed over to the canoe resort. As a result of heavy winds, the two certified coaches decided to have the youth ride the Dragon Boat. The coaches gave some quick lessons, distributed life-jackets and directed everyone to the boat. Over a span of an hour, the youth and their coaches encircled the area disappearing around a cove enjoying the beautiful

*continued*



*Having fun at camp.*

waves and picturesque scenery. Upon returning, with smiles and laughter, many if not most, seemed to be quite wet! What was truly remarkable about their canoeing adventure was that the youth fundraised the monies to go canoeing through their canteen project and researched the booking information. Most certainly, it was TRUE INITIATIVE on their behalf.

### Our Future

Next year Insha Allaah, Al Noor Islamic School plans to implement several innovative changes. For instance, we hope to advance the curriculum and simultaneously divide the classes in smaller groups. We also hope to plunge deeply into certain topics, depending on the age group, such as the civilization of Islam (Islamic History), historical development of usul al-fiqh (Shari'a), the attributes of Allah ('Aqida) and exegesis of the Qur'an (Tafseer). We intend to continue to have hands-on workshops such as how to actually integrate with the Canadian society yet be a formidable asset to the community at-large guided by our Muslim characteristics such as honesty, kindness, mercy and compassion. A new component for some classes next year will be to invite guest speakers from the Winnipeg community to address the youth, Insha Allaah.

Al Noor Weekend Islamic School most certainly requires more teachers and volunteers and looks forward to hearing from the Winnipeg community. May Allah reward the staff and parent volunteers of the school for their interest and unlimited assistance. May Allah bless each and every individual who contributed, in the last 30 years, in making Al Noor Islamic School the versatile, strong and notable institution it is today. May Allah reward the Muslim youth of Winnipeg and Canada at-large for their efforts, motivation, vibrant nature, sincerity and dedication for it is our youth today that will be our leaders for tomorrow, Insha Allaah. " ... They were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance." (Surah al-Kahf 18:13)

## Canadian Muslim Women's Institute

CMWI staff

"Whosoever submits themselves to Allah and are doers of Good – Their reward is with their Lord" 2:112

The Canadian Muslim Women's Institute (CMWI) is pleased to announce that the Institute held its 1st Community Appreciation Dinner on June 19th 2008 at the Waverley Street Grand Mosque. The purpose of this event was to



*Apron and bag made in the sewing class.*

thank all the organizations that have supported CMWI over the past 2 years either financially or in-kind, enabling the Institute to develop programs and services to meet the needs of the community.

The first year was spent in building the infrastructure of the Institute, hiring staff, applying for funding and planning for program delivery. Some of the programs that got underway this year are:

### Moms and Tots Program

This weekly program brings Muslim mothers and their preschoolers together at IRCOM House in downtown Winnipeg. The program provides both informal playtime and structured theme related activities for the preschoolers. Information and speakers are provided for the "Moms" portion of the program. Topics covered include parenting issues, school readiness, immigration and the law, nutrition and a variety of health-related topics.

### English Conversation Support Group

While immigrant and refugee women often attend the English as a Second Language classes, they very often remain isolated in their homes for the balance of the week. Hence they are unable to practice their new language skills and progress is very slow. The English Conversation Group is a weekly support group with a trained English as an Additional Language (EAL) facilitator. Participants are able

to practice their English skills in a friendly setting and meet other Muslim women in similar circumstances. Childcare is provided as well.

### **Community Pantry**

Twice a month, CMWI operates a food pantry for women and their families who are in need. The majority of the Pantry clients are widows in high need circumstances. The Community Food Pantry not only serves Muslim women and their families by providing nutritious food, but also affords CMWI the opportunity to connect Muslim newcomers with programs and services, specifically designed to meet their needs.

### **Women's Exercise Class (Yoga)**

A trained teacher of the Moksha Yoga School conducts this weekly program at the grand Mosque.

### **Community Gatherings**

These monthly meetings at Winnipeg mosques bring Muslim women (both newcomers and Canadian born) together to connect and to share their experiences and concerns. CMWI handles the promotion of the gatherings, provides refreshments and arranges for speakers and informational

resources. This summer we joined forces with several other Muslim organizations and helped to host a community picnic at Assiniboine Park.

### **Muslim Community Pool of Volunteers**

CMWI has established a pool of Muslim volunteers made up of newcomers, well established and Canadian born Muslims. CMWI clients are encouraged to volunteer at the Institute.

### **Canadian Muslim Women's Sewing Training Program and Social Enterprise**

The Canadian Muslim Women's Sewing Training Program and Social Enterprise are made up of two components: a one year training program and the establishment of a Social Enterprise called "SewFair".

The Training Program commenced in April 2008. The goal of the training is to provide industrial sewing machine training and employment skills to Muslim women and to prepare them for entry into the Canadian workforce. The training gives women, who are economically dependent on social services, an opportunity to gain the skills necessary to become independent and self-sustaining. The training program is made up of three major components:

1. Vocational training for women in sewing machine operation (from beginner to advanced),
2. Life and employment skills which will enhance the participants' abilities to apply for and obtain work and to integrate into mainstream Canadian society as productive community members and employees,
3. English as a Second Language (ESL) through vocabulary building, using words and vocabulary relevant to the training, employment and common day to day usage.

CMWI will have the social enterprise (SewFair) up and running in 2009. The purpose of this social enterprise is to create jobs for participants who have successfully completed the training program. The objectives of the Enterprise include:

1. To provide practical work experience for graduates.
2. To build participants' resumes.
3. To enhance the graduates' confidence.
4. To earn revenue that can be reinvested in the Enterprise.

These programs are open to the entire Muslim community of Winnipeg and anyone wishing to participate in any program



*Ladies at work in the sewing class.*

*continued*



## Healthy Meat Consumption in Manitoba

*Mamoon Rashid*

*(204-945-7557) mamoon.rashid@gov.mb.ca*

*Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives*

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) is continuing its efforts in providing safe food to Manitobans. In the following paragraphs you will find a brief overview of the Food and Food Handling Regulation, *The Public Health Act* (Manitoba) regarding meats. This regulation helps to ensure provision of safe and wholesome meats to Manitoba public.

### **What is an Uninspected Meat?**

Uninspected meat means meats which has not been inspected and approved in a slaughterhouse registered under the *Meat Inspection Act* (Canada) or the *Canada/Manitoba Meat Inspection Agreement*. Uninspected meat includes wild game and animals killed on the farm.

### **What is an Inspected Meat?**

The inspection and approval of meat involves following:

- Before slaughter inspection (ante-mortem) by an inspector
- Animal slaughtered at a provincial or federally registered slaughterhouse (abattoir)
- After slaughter inspection (post-mortem)
- The inspector approves the carcass to be healthy and fit for human consumption
- Approved carcass bears a stamp and labelled properly if packaged

### **On-Farm Slaughtering**

According to *Manitoba Public Health Act* it is against the law to slaughter animals on the farm for sale or give away. Producers may sell live animals to public. It is recommended to transport animals humanely away from the farm. Meat products from animals slaughtered in an inspected facility may be sold via farm gate or freezer sale with a permit from Manitoba Health & Healthy Living.

### **Storage, Transport and Labelling of Inspected meat**

Only establishments (retailers) carrying a special permit or license to receive, store and market meat are allowed to trade in meat products. Meat must be stored and transported at refrigerated (5°C) or freezer temperatures (-18°C). Meats from different species must be stored separately unless it is packaged and frozen. After bringing home the refrigerated (5°C) meat can only be stored for one or two days if not frozen.



Retail Packaged product labelling must be completed at a registered meat facility and must include following information:

- Common name/species (e.g. lamb, goat, chicken, beef)
- Cut of meat (e.g. lamb chops, legs)
- Name and address of registered meat plant
- Net quantity (weight in Pounds or Kilos)
- If fresh, durable shelf life (“best before” date) and the recommendation “Keep refrigerated”
- If frozen, the recommendations “keep frozen”

Contact Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) at 204-983-2200 for further information.

### **Where to find inspected meat?**

Provincially Registered abattoirs (list provided at MAFRI website  
[www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture))

Butcher shops

Retail chain stores (Safeway, Superstore, Sobeys, Costco etc.)

Ethnic retail stores (Halal Meat Ctr & Spec Food, Millad Supermarket, etc)

For further information visit MAFRI website ([www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture))

Eid Mubarak



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None of these programs would have been possible without the help of our funders and supporters.

United Way and Winnipeg Foundation gave CMWI a grant to hire 2 part time Outreach and Volunteer Coordinators as well as funds for programming and administrative costs.

Assiniboine Credit Union funded our English Conversation Support Group.

Multiculturalism Secretariat and Winnipeg Partnership Agreement have both been the major funders for the Sewing Training Program with Peerless Garment Factory subsidizing the rent.

CMWI shares offices with Islamic Social Services Association (ISSA) located at 416 McDermot Ave, Winnipeg, so the office staff support each other and both organizations have the opportunity to share ideas and collaborate on projects.

Manitoba Islamic Association has generously funded the community Pantry and this month our clients have been given supplies to facilitate a good Ramadan.

Winnipeg Central Mosque has given CMWI use of the Mosque to host our social events such as Eid parties and monthly gatherings.

IRCOM House has given CMWI use of their programming space so we can host the Mom and Tots program as well as the English Conversation Support Group.

SEED Winnipeg has been working with the staff of CMWI to help develop a business plan for the sewing enterprise.

Last but not least, CMWI has been blessed to have many members of our community volunteer their time to make our programs a success.

Employment Opportunities: Program and Service Manager Applicants should have:

Good command of English;  
Good writing skills;  
Computer literacy;  
The ability to work in a team setting;  
Enjoy working with people in the community.

Please send resumes to contact emails listed below:

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Member at Large: Aliyah Rahman

Contact info:

Address: 416 McDermot Ave, Winnipeg, R3A 0A9

Phone: 204.943.8539

Email: oc@cmwi.ca or yasminali@shaw.ca

## Word of thanks

Muslim Youth Summer Program (Camp)

This year it was held at Variety's Camp Brereton at Brereton Lake in the Whiteshell National Park from July 14-19th for girls and July 19-24th for boys. The Camp Committee 2008 would especially like to thank Dr. Samiul Haque who drove in from Regina, SK to serve as Director for the boys' camp and to Dr. Abdul Azim Mustapha who drove in from Toledo, Ohio with his sons. He also served as an on site doctor. Thanks also to invited speaker Sr. Shahina Siddiqui who gave a morning workshop to the girls about the current challenges facing Muslim women. As head of the Camp Committee 2008, I would also like to thank all the committee members, counselors and volunteers who are dedicated to bringing a fun, enjoyable, safe and informative camp experience to our Muslim Youth. This year the camp was attended by youth from Winnipeg, Brandon, Regina and Toledo, Ohio. Insha'Allah, next year's camp will be held at Camp Brereton from Wednesday 15 July to Sunday 26 July 2009. Watch for Registration Deadline Dates in April/May 2009! See you then – insha'Allah!

Jennifer Rahman,  
Camp Committee Chair

# People Who Spoil Social Ties\*

Adil Salahi

Wherever a Muslim community exists, a system of social relations between its members comes into being, one that amazes outsiders by its strong ties, cohesion, absence of selfishness, and frank and genuine dealings.

Indeed, Muslims themselves wonder at their own model of community relations because it is exceptional, unique, and very much related to the degree of their own commitment to Islamic life.

As it is the case between people and all other philosophies and religions, communities may vary in how far they implement the Islamic code of living, how strongly they hold Islamic values, and how far they put Islamic principles into operation.

It is in the nature of Islam to make a person's conscience very sensitive, so that it objects to any violation of moral values. It is perhaps worth remembering here that there are values shared by all communities and philosophies.

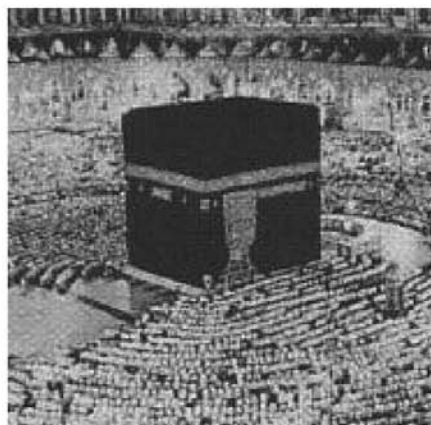
For example, speaking the truth is praised in all cultures, philosophies, and religions. We may find differences in how violating this principle is seen. For example, certain cultures speak of a "white lie" with a degree of acceptability, especially when such a white lie will bring some benefit to the person who says it and bring no harm to no one else. This represents a rather complacent approach to the vice of telling lies.

Islam does not accept such complacency. It wants its followers to always say the truth and considers telling a lie in any circumstance, apart from two or three specific cases, to be a punishable violation of Islamic virtues, or to use the Islamic terminology, a sin.

While all communities and philosophies try to maintain strong social relations, Islam makes that a duty of the individual. It works to that end through the establishment of a host of values that complement one another and give the individual a sense of responsibility to maintain close and sound relations with the rest of the community. This means that everybody will be pulling in the same direction.

When something or someone works against this setup

*continued*



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and tries to undermine it, this incurs very strong censure. The perpetrator is viewed in a bad light and is warned against heavy punishment.

For example, backbiting is considered repugnant by all human societies. However, Islam describes it in terms that make it appear extremely repugnant to the person who contemplates backbiting and much more so to those who listen or are forced to listen to him. Backbiting is defined as talking about your brothers or sisters in Islam in their absence in a way that they dislike. Muslims are warned against this in the Qur'an:

((Do not backbite one another. Does any of you wish to eat the flesh of his brother when he is dead? You certainly hate that.) (Al-Hujurat 49:12)

There is another sort of backbiting that is even more hateful because its effects are even worse. That is to go about in society spreading tales that are certain to spoil relations.

If a man comes to you with a tale about one of your friends suggesting that he does not respect your friendship and that he speaks ill of you in your absence, you are bound to be upset. You may decide to have as little dealings with that person as possible. You may take such a decision when you realize that you have no means of proving whether what you have been told is true or not.

Now, assume that this very person goes to that particular friend of yours and tells him that you have been telling tales about him and that you do not respect his friendship and you speak ill of him in his absence, he is bound to have the same attitude toward you.

The net result is that your friendship is spoilt, broken, and replaced by a hostile attitude toward each other. This sort of telling false tales and spoiling social relations is viewed very seriously in Islam.

Asmaa' bint Yazeed quoted Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) as saying, "Shall I tell you who are the best among you?" When the Prophet's Companions requested him to give them that information, he said, "Those whose appearance reminds you of Allah. Shall I tell you who are the evil ones among you?" Again the Prophet's Companions said, "Please, do." He said, "Those who go about telling tales about people, spoil relationships between intimate friends, and bring affliction to innocent people" (Ahmad).

This hadith tells us that those who go about telling tales about other people are certainly evil ones.

Indeed, this is an apt description because such tales are bound to bring hostility, instead of close relationships, within a community. It replaces the feeling of unity within the community with division. People become weary of one another and unwilling to trust those who are close to them.

Indeed, they try to weaken the very fabric of society. They may feel that they stand to gain as a result of spoiling certain relationships. If this is the case, then they are exhibiting a degree of selfishness that cannot be tolerated by any community.

They place their own interest above that of the community. While individual and community interests should be accommodated as far as possible without encroaching on either, it is totally unacceptable for a person to try to spoil relations among people in order to ensure his or her own personal gain. When individual benefit means that close friendship is replaced by hostility, such person's sinful action appears in a light that makes it extremely repugnant.

Such sinful action is described by the Prophet as one that seeks to bring affliction to innocent people. So it is their aim that other people, innocent as they may be, will be afflicted.

Scholars have explained such doings as trying to facilitate sinful actions for people who would otherwise have refrained from them. Fornication and adultery are particularly mentioned in this context, which means that a person who makes it easier for another to persuade him or her to commit adultery or fornication is indeed a very evil person. This is certainly true because such a sinful action can bring affliction only. On the other hand, the person who is so persuaded or led to commit such a grossly indecent act may have otherwise refrained from it.

On the other hand, the best people are described as those whose very presence reminds one of Allah. This is either a reference to the fact that they are very pious, highly praised for conscious implementation of Islamic rules, and always abiding by Islamic moral values, or to the fact that when they talk to people, their discussion is always directed to encourage them to implement Islam and conduct their lives according to Islamic principles.

So, it is either because of the example they provide of how a Muslim should live or because of the advice and counsel they give to people, their very presence becomes associated with the remembrance of Allah. This means that they are indeed people who bring goodness with them wherever they go.

They are certainly the best of people, as the Prophet describes them. The contrast between such people and the other ones, described by the Prophet as the evil ones, is complete.

It is perhaps useful to mention here that the first type of people, that is the good ones, help maintain community ties at the strongest level. That is what Islam wants of its followers.

Moreover, when people remember Allah, they remember their obligations towards one another and when they try to fulfill these obligations as best as they can, that is certainly conducive to improving their ties.

\* Excerpt from Islamonline.



# Community Profile:

## Br. Ghulam Irtiza Chughtai

Interviewed by Br. Abdulaziz Mian.

### Can you tell me a bit about your background?

As you know my name is Ghulam Irtiza Chughtai. I married my wonderful wife Kehkashan in 1984 in England. I have a very responsible son Muhib Chughtai who is now 23 years old. We lost our younger son Zohaib in an accident. He was seven weeks old at the time.

I was born and raised in Lahore, Pakistan. I have four brothers and one sister. I completed my degree in Bio-Chemistry from the government college in Lahore. My Masters Degree in Administration was from Punjab University. I went to Salzburg, Austria for a degree in hotel management. I came to Canada in 1974.

### I know you worked at the Sheraton Winnipeg and I remember seeing you play cricket. Tell our readers about your work and extracurricular activities?

Yes, you are right. I did work at Sheraton in the eighties. I also worked in many other prestigious hotels such as the Hilton, Hyatt, 4 Seasons and De La Chaudiere. I was the resident manager and head of various departments. If it was not for the accident, I would have been in Iraq working as the general manager for Sheraton Al-Rashid.

You are also correct about cricket. I love cricket. I played cricket regularly in Ottawa and played only a few games in Winnipeg. Now, I watch cricket regularly.

### Is it possible to share with our readers how the accident happened?

We took a family trip to Kenora, Ontario on May 5th, 1990. It was a beautiful summer's day when we were driving



back to Winnipeg. I was driving within the speed limit. Suddenly, the car swerved to the right heading into the ditch due to a flat tire. I steered the car to the left to avoid the ditch. The car went out of control making a 360-degree turn and then it flipped over. Next, I remember my head was stuck in the steering wheel and I was unable to free myself. An ambulance arrived shortly after what seemed like an eternity. Before passing out I remember hearing "he is not going to make it".

### What about your family at the time of the accident?

Br. Irtiza: My five-year-old son sustained minor injuries. My seven-week-old baby was thrown out of the car into a ditch and my wife fractured her shoulder blade. I remember hearing my wife telling the paramedics to take our baby with them. A Good Samaritan searched for the baby who was lying in a ditch. She rushed our baby to the same hospital where I was taken. Later, the ambulance returned to pick up my wife and son.

### I remember visiting you in the hospital. You were unconsciousness for days. What happened after you regained consciousness?

*continued*

Yes, I regained consciousness six days after the accident when a doctor was examining me. He said, "I am afraid you will remain paralyzed for the rest of your life. You won't be able to move on your own." The words sounded very inhumane for someone who just regained consciousness. This is when I learned that my spinal cord was broken at level C5 and C6.

It took me three weeks before I could speak. My lungs were injured and even to this day they are only partly functional. My ribs were broken so a suction tube had to be inserted to extract the mucus. My whole body was in pain. I had trouble breathing and my muscles started degenerating. I saw no hope in sight.

Eventually, I found out that my baby did not survive the accident. "I was very upset with God. Why did he choose me for this ordeal? For many days I lost my faith in my Creator,"

### **After losing faith what was the turning point in your life?**

One day I saw a man in the hospital whose both legs were amputated. That day, I started to count my blessings. I started to beat the odds for my son and wife. I grew up without my father and I did not want my son to go through that pain. Despite losing a son and having lifelong injuries, my wife gave me rock solid support. I drew power from her strength.

I used to pray regularly before the accident. It took me almost two years to get back on track and say my prayers. I also performed my kaza prayers.

### **How long were you in hospital and what was returning home like?**

I was hospitalized for nine months. It was difficult to accept and adjust to my disability. It took months to make even a tiny progress. Even a simple task like learning how to hold a spoon was a big challenge.

### **I remember you saying doctors were not hopeful. What can you tell me about that?**

First responders said I will not survive. Allah made the way and spared my life. Then the doctors predicted that I would not be able to move my hands at all. I made constant efforts despite pain and once again Allah made the way. The doctors were amazed at my recovery.

### **What would you say about the healthcare system in Canada?**

Br. Irtiza: There are pros and cons. I think it is good that they do not take pity on you. They help you with your self-esteem and self-confidence. On the negative, it takes months to get an appointment. I was going through unimaginable pain due to bedsores and there was nothing I could do. I had to wait for months to get treatment.

### **How are you trying to live your life now?**

I try to live a full and normal life. I traveled to Pakistan to visit my family where my brother had to build a ramp for my mobility. I encourage people to do their best. I try to participate in every community activity whenever I am invited or asked. My wife is always helping with bake sales at the Masjid. Some people think I sit around all day and do nothing. I surf the net and trade in mutual funds, which brings me some money. My wife puts me through painful exercises. When I complain, she says, "you have to be cruel to be kind".

### **Do you feel the community supported you?**

Yes and no. I had lots of visitors at the hospital. I know people were praying for my health and recovery. I felt the community failed me as a disabled person. There was no support in my rehabilitation and there was no support for my son. He had to grow up faster than his age to help me. Nobody took my son for an outing when they took their own kids. I also do not recall anyone asking if we needed help for shopping. I believe Islam teaches humanity and caring for others who need our help and that goes beyond praying for Him.

### **Any last words?**

I do not want people to take things for granted. What happened to me can happen to anyone. Count your blessings, believe in Allah, rely on your loved ones for strength, be patient but strong and do not give up.

# Board of Trustees

MANITOBA ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION

No: 004

August 25, 2008

## INFORMATION BULLETIN

Assalam O Alaikum

1. Following are the current activities in progress as well as some of the planned activities for the future

General Area	Task Description	% Complete	Est Completion Date	Approx Cost incl taxes	Approx. Outstanding Dues As of July 31 '08
<b>Current Activities</b>					
Under mezzanine	Main divider - accordion style	98%		4,500	-
	Sub dividers to create multi-purpose rooms with structure		N/A	15,000	-
	Main prayer hall separation doors		N/A	8,000	-
Gym	Removable separation wall	98%		44,000	7,000
	Partition curtain	100%		6,000	6,000
	Basket ball infrastructure	100%		12,000	-
	Acoustic insulation	0%	30-Sep-08	20,000	20,000
	Fridge and cooler	100%		7,000	-
Kitchen	Stainless steel wash basins & floor counters	100%		13,000	-
	Stainless steel window framing and wash basin backsplash	100%		4,500	-
	Food serving window shutter	100%		2,500	-
	Engineering work and specifications	98%		6,500	3,500
	Six burner range + stock pot range + fryer			7,500	7,500
	Stainless steel exhaust hood with backsplash				
	Makeup air unit with heaters				
	Fire suppression system				
	Exhaust fan				
	Freight, installation, ductwork, , canopy, support structure, gas supply, electrical, certification, inspections, permits, etc	5%	1-Sep-08	45,000	45,000
Entrance	Vestibule doors - NW & SE	100%		9,000	9,000
	Vestibule doors - main (community center)	0%	19-Sep-08	8,000	8,000
	Electronic entrance system - NW (ladies) side	100%		3,000	-
	Camera security system	0%	12-Dec-08	15,000	15,000
	Permanent shoe /coat rack - all entrances	0%	30-Nov-08	45,000	45,000
<b>Future Activities</b>					
Outdoor	Landscaping around building				
	Playground				
	Entrance gate with lights				
	Multipurpose extension (parking lot)				
	Minaret(s)				
	Solar power / wind turbine / Geothermal				
	Water collection system				
Indoor	Interior design (calligraphy, tiles, etc) including mimer				
	HVAC balancing				
	Video projection system in gym				

Approximate outstanding dues as of July 31, 2008 166,000

Bank balance as of July 31, 2008 154,451

Approved city grant 47,000

201,451

Saudi grant (SR500,000) 140,000

# *Board of Trustees*

MANITOBA ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION

No: 004

August 25, 2008

2. As of July 31, 2008 we have approximately \$154K in the construction account and \$47K in approved grants by the city. Out of this, approximately \$166K has been allocated for various current activities.
3. A grant application was submitted to Saudi embassy a few years ago which finally got approved recently. We have been granted SR500K towards the Grand mosque construction project. This money will be used towards some of the planned future activities.
4. Jazakallahu Khairun and thank you to all those who have donated the money and worked on all the grant applications to obtain the money from various sources.
5. According to the plan, ladies' entrance supposed to be on the SE side which currently is the men's entrance. The SE entrance features an elevator shaft. In future this will be used to provide "accessibility" to the mezzanine level. The NW side entrance (current ladies' entrance) is bigger and designed to handle more men coming for Jumma and other prayer as well as to accommodate funerals. The switch for the entrances has to be done prior to commencing the coat/shoe rack activity.
6. The Grand mosque is a multi million dollar project. A public building like this requires a full time caretaker to continuously maintain the facilities and routine house keeping. Having a full time caretaker will lead to better public safety and longevity to the building.
7. The gym is already completed and the kitchen will be finished in the next couple of weeks. Both of the facilities are designed and build to be used as revenue generating sources for the Grand mosque. Sound planning, effective policies, strict policy implementation and a caretaker (as mentioned above) are needed to successfully run these facilities as intended.
8. As you may have noticed, development activities are underway on the neighboring land. The land is being developed by LADCO and the attached image is the conceptual plan copied from their internet site for illustration purpose only. We talked to Michael Carrathers (982-5900, LADCO) and Kevin Lalor (986-5069, Planner for South Winnipeg, City of Winnipeg) independently and following are conclusions of the discussion:
  - a. LADCO development has no impact what so ever on our land zoning and the city will not arbitrarily change our zoning from agriculture to commercial or residence. So the zoning of our land will most likely stay as A-Agr.
  - b. There is water main running across from Waverly but it will take "enormous" amount of money if we want to tap into it.
  - c. If we ever want to add a senior's or any type of residential complex we would have to apply for re-zoning which we will not get until we have water and sewer services which will cost "enormous" sum of money
  - d. Possibly the only way we will get the services at a cheaper cost is if a company like LADCO buys the lots in the surrounding area, assembles and develops it, and brings the services closer to us.
  - e. Warwick Road will most likely never open and probably will become part of the lots.
  - f. According to Kevin, it is LADCO's responsibility to make sure that we are not flooded due to their higher grounds. Therefore we do not need to do any anything and if we ever see a problem we would need to contact the city.



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### COMBO 4 \$ 5.99

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Aloo Tikki Canned Drink



### COMBO 5 \$ 5.99

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### COMBO 6 \$ 6.50

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