



OASIS OF IMAN

ISLAMIC CENTER OF IRVING



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Congratulations

(Nooreddine Nouiouat, Editor-in-Chief)

Asalaam Alaikum All,

AlHamdulliAllah for the return of our Hajjis and the new Muslim year 1429 Hijri. We extend our thanks to all our brothers and sisters at ICI for your generous contributions in helping the community, ICI (Masjid and School), and may Allah bless you, your family, and the whole Muslim Ummah, ameen.

Allah SWT has blessed our community with many blessings, including diversity, a spacious and iconic facility, an ambitious school, a knowledgeable Imam, as well as talented and skillful leaders.

In a nutshell, we have all the ingredients to be a successful model community in America as we move forward to achieve our vision of being the "Minaret of Islam in the West." We should work hand in hand and collaborate in building the dream generation of citizen contributors and community builders. We know from the Seerah that our prophet Mohamed (SAW) built a strong community with three components: a Masjid, Brotherhood/Sisterhood, and healthy relations with the non-Muslims living in Al Madinah.

With no doubt this archetype of our Prophet is our path to success. Let's mirror our community after this wonderful example and work together towards the betterment of our community.

Jazakum Allah Khairan.

Missed last week's khutba?

Listen to it online, download onto Ipods, or burn onto CDs from:

<http://imamzia.wordpress.com>

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Inside this issue:

<i>Dawah Center Update</i>	2
<i>Leadership Breakfast Summary</i>	2
<i>ICI Youth Program</i>	3
<i>From the Assistant Principal's Pen...</i>	4
<i>ISI Library Media Center Mascot</i>	5
<i>ICI Sunday School</i>	6
<i>Community News & Events</i>	7
<i>Iman Zia Q&A</i>	8
<i>Dawah Center update (cont.)</i>	

Dawah Center Update

(Sr. Delhi Ekambo)

The *dawah* department kicked off 2008 to a great start with its New Muslim Celebration Day held on January 6. The event provided an opportunity for new Muslims, ansaars (new Muslim mentors), and their families to listen to lectures given by a dynamic panel, as well as meet and mingle with each other throughout the event. In addition, a lunch was provided to all attendees. Approximately 40 people attended the three-hour event.

After an opening introduction from Br. Yassen Black, five lectures followed. The speakers included Br. Abu Ibrahim, Sr. Saffia Meek, Br. Abdullah Mckail, Sr. Ruqayya Khalifa, and Br. Khalil Meek. Br. Abu Ibrahim began by talking about the importance of seeking knowledge in helping the new Muslim develop his faith. In her talk, "Obstacles [of new Muslims] and how to overcome them, Sr. Saffia Meek offered advice on issues from how deal with family to name changes, to how adjust to life as a new Muslim, particularly in a non-Muslim environment. Br. Abullah Mckail related the history of the Sahabas (RA) and on emulating their example. Sr. Ruqayya Khalifa spoke briefly about the challenges Muslimahs face and overcoming them, pointing to her own experiences as a new Muslimah.

(Continued on page 8)

Ayah of the month

Allah Says:

Serve Allah, and make not any partners with Him in His divinity. Do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet) and those whom your right hands possess (your workers): for Allah loves not the arrogant, the vainglorious. (An-Nisaa' 4: 36)

Leadership breakfast summary

(Br. Ali Luqman)

As-salamu alaikum,

As the person who orchestrated this event I would like to give you a brief summary from my prospective based on some feedback that came from our community. I decided to have a breakfast with the approval of our Shurah Council for the four main leaders in our city. The main purpose of this breakfast was to show the city leaders that our community does appreciate the leadership role that they have demonstrated. We awarded them with plaques and certificates in recognition of their hard work and service.

The city of Irving, with the assistance of the Mayor and the City Manager, played a positive role in making sure we received a left hand turn lane from Esters Road to our Masjid at no cost to our community. We also continue to work closely with the Chief of Police whose door is open to us and is willing to listen to any ideas to make our community safe. The fire department chief was also recognized for his department's constant assistance to our community, particularly to our school.

Plaques were given to Mayor Herbert Gears for his leadership and commitment to diversity. Chief Larry Boyd was also awarded a plaque for his leadership, support, and efforts he demonstrated in making our city of Irving a safe place. We also gave a plaque to Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, the city manager, for his work done in improving the flow of traffic on Esters road. A certificate of recognition was also given to Mr. James Cline, the Director of City works, for his diligent work in making possible the left turn from Esters road to the Masjid.

Hadith of the month

With Muslims being a minority in many non-Muslim countries, we ought to unite together as one brotherhood. Referring to this, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said:

"A believer to his fellow believing brother is like a building whose bricks cement each other."

ICI Youth Program

The G Program

(Br. Mustaqim Dean, Youth Program Director)

The goal of the ICI youth program is to build, and in some cases rebuild, the character of our Muslim youth, ages 3-25. The foundation for this work is based on an important Islamic principle. This is the principle of accountability. By raising awareness among the youth of the concept of accountability, Inshallah we can do this tarbia work. We need to get the youth to truly accept and believe that an account is being kept of their actions, good and bad, and from this record they will be rewarded or punished.

58:6 on the Day when God will raise them all from the dead and will make them truly understand all that they did [in life]: God will have taken [all of] it into account, even though they [themselves] may have forgotten it - for God is witness unto everything.

We really need to drill it in their heads that there are angels on our shoulders and they are keeping count of their good deeds and bad deeds.

50:17 Behold, two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (his doings) learn (and noted them), one sitting on the right and one on the left.

Since the angels are “keeping score”, we make the analogy of a game. This works well with youth because they are constantly playing games throughout their childhood on through adulthood. Thus, by using the game analogy we can teach the principle of accountability in a way in which they can strongly relate. We call it “The Game of Deeds”. Each member of the ICI youth program will be assigned to a Tarbia Coach, which is a big brother or sister whose job is to make him or her aware of the score is being kept. They help the youth learn how to keep score, show them how to monitor their own behavior so they can win the game of deeds every day. Our youth program, or “**The G Program**” (G for good deeds) will help them acquire an appetite for doing good works and will most of all show them how to do good works. The G Program lets them taste the rewards of doing good works. On the other hand it will allow them feel the sense of loss that goes with being penalized for committing wrongdoing. In game terms, the Tarbia Coach will teach them how to “block the shot”, that is, show them how to defend against their nafs and lower desires that cause them to do wrong. Our goal is to produce youth with the mindset reflected in this verse:

28:55 and, whenever they heard frivolous talk, having turned away from it and said: “Unto us shall be accounted our deeds, and unto you, your deeds. Peace be upon you - but we do not seek out such as are ignorant of the meaning of right and wrong.”

We can make The G Program a success with the help of Allah SWT, your du’as, financial donations, and lots of volunteers. For further details, stay tuned to the *Oasis of Iman* or contact the ICI Youth Department at mustaqimdean@yahoo.com. Registration is coming soon Inshallah. **To volunteer in this program**, please also attend our weekly Thursday meetings at 7:00 pm, held in the ICI conference room. JazakumAllahu khairan.

Classified Ads

You are welcome to place classified ads of your business and authorized events in the newsletter.

Br. Ali Luqman has all the details at his office.

From the Assistant Principal's Pen...
Update on the Islamic School of Irving's New Arabic and Quran Curriculum
(Sr. Shahnaz Chowdhury)

The goal of the Arabic department at the Islamic School of Irving is to provide course that ISI students will graduate from with at total grasp of the Standard Arabic (Fussah-eloquent), in order to be able to interpret the meaning of the words in the holy Quran. In simple, the students will:

- 1) Be able to understand what they are reading in the Quran and make connections.
- 2) Be able to read and write in Standard Arabic.
- 3) Be able to, as high school students, to receive credit for the Arabic as a Foreign Language.

Within the last two years there has been a definite move towards raising the quality of Arabic instruction at ISI rather than just requiring the simple memorization of words and the reading of books of a certain Arabic dialect.

ISI is the only one among all the Islamic schools in the DFW area with its own developed Arabic curriculum. May Allah Az'wajal accept the work of Br. Bashir Ansari for this honorable purpose.

As for the Quran curriculum, ISI goals for this department are:

- 1) Students will be able to memorize verses from selected Chapters of the Holy Quran with basic tajweed rules.
- 2) Students will be able to learn the translations of the verses memorized.
- 3) Students will be able to learn the history behind the revelation.
- 4) Students will be able to connect the verses learnt to real life applications.

Our goals at ISI are purely geared towards Islamic academic learning and how to apply the memorized verses in day-to-day life. ISI strives to raise every student to be a "Committed Balanced Muslim and Knowledgeable Scholar." For total memorization of verses, the Hifz Program and the Quranic School are in place as supplements under the auspices of ISI.

Lastly, the faculty and administration, with the intention of pleasing Allah Subhanahu Ta'ala, work with humbleness only for the success of the students, in this world and the Hereafter.

IMPORTANT BULLETIN: MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

“BUILDING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW”

ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF IRVING ANNUAL FUNDRAISER DINNER

WHEN: SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 2008 at 6:00PM

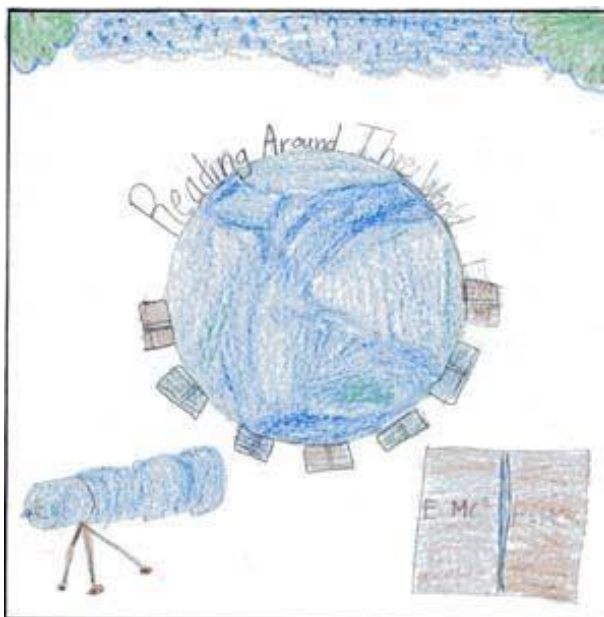
WHERE: THE WESTIN DFW AIRPORT HOTEL, 4545 W. JOHN CARPENTER FRWY, IRVING, TX 75063

TICKETS: \$25.00

YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND CHILDCARE WILL BE PROVIDED FOR AGES 12 AND UNDER

Want to submit an article?

We encourage you to submit articles for the *Oasis of Iman*.
Please email them to oasisofiman@irvingmasjid.org.



Islamic School of Irving Library Media Center Mascot

Resources @ ISI: Library Media Center

Praise be to Allah (SWT) and thanks to the generous support of parents, teachers, students, and community members, the ISI Library Media Center (LMC) was set up in October 2005. Since then the LMC has received generous donations of books, funding for book shelves and other resources that help provide a conducive, learning environment for ISI students.

The LMC's collection consists of fiction books, non-fiction books, Islamic and Arabic books, children's magazines, encyclopedias, audio-visual materials and maps. We are currently seeking donations to purchase educational books and fund library programs for students. If you have gently used fiction/nonfiction books that your children no longer read, we would appreciate it greatly if you could drop them off at the LMC.

The LMC is located on the second floor of the school building. For more information, please visit the LMC web site <http://teacherweb.com/TX/IslamicSchoolofIrving/Library/index.html>.

Jill Chai-Abdolgony
Librarian
[v] 972-812-2220
[e] jiru_c@yahoo.com

About the mascot: The LMC Mascot was designed by Wardah Jaffery, ISI student, during a mascot design contest held in November 2005.

Islamic Center of Irving Sunday School

(Sr. Beth Haddad, Sunday School Coordinator)

The future of Islam is directly dependent on how much effort we expend today on our children's Islamic and intellectual growth. The Islamic Center of Irving (ICI) is dedicated to the development of our next generation. They are our future, and will fill the masjid when we are gone, inshaAllah.

Alhamdulillah, ICI offers a weekend education program for children who regularly attend public schools and who would otherwise not be available to private Islamic education. This opportunity affords children an environment to strengthen their Islamic identity and develop an understanding of their religion.

The curriculum focuses on three key programs:

- ⊙ Arabic is taught so the child may eventually pick up the blessed Quran and be able to read it on their own.
- ⊙ Quran is taught with tajweed and tafseer so the child understands the proper recitation and meaning of Allah's blessed words.
- ⊙ Islamiyat with authentic Sunna and Hadith is taught so the child can understand his religion, its pillars, its history and wisdom for a life with meaning.

The ICI Sunday School meets **every Sunday from September through May from 10:00 – 2:00 pm and is open to children ages 4 through high school.** Holidays are observed for Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha. Tuition is \$40/child/month. **To enroll your child, please visit the Sunday school office upstairs next to the women's prayer hall from 10-2 pm on Sundays.**

A child won't love to make Salah simply because you ask them to. When you convert their heart and mind, then you will never need to tell them to obey their Lord. They'll want do it on their own.

Would you like to advertise in the *Oasis of Iman*?

**To advertise in the newsletter, email
oasisofiman@irvingmasjid.org.**

Community News & Events

Birth Announcements:

- Br. Naveed Uddin and family are blessed with Baby Girl "AAMINAH"
- Br. Hammad Azzam and Sr. Lina are blessed with Baby Girl "NADINE "
- Br. Layeeq Mohammed and his family are blessed with baby boy "ZAYD ABDURRAHMAN"
- Br. Nazim Mohammed and Sr. Meraj are blessed with a baby boy "MOHAMMED ABDULMUQSIT"
- Br. Akram Abdullah and his family were blessed with a baby girl named "SAARAH KOUSAR"
- Br. Khalid Hussein and his wife Sr. Asma were blessed with a baby girl named "MARYAM BINT KHALID"

May Allah (SWT) make all of these children among the Muttaqeen and the aml-e-Saleheen, Ameen.

Obituaries:

Br. Sham and Sr. Fatimah's baby daughter, Hibba, at the age of two weeks, passed away.
Br. Navaid Barney's father, Shujaat Barney, passed away at Taif in Saudi Arabia.

Innalillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Wa Rajioon. May Allah grant the departed souls maghfirah and the highest place in Jannatul Firdaus, Ameen.

Young Muslim Achievements:

ISI Spelling Bee, Wednesday, January 31, 2008

- 1st Place- Badees Nouiouat, grade 4.
- 2nd Place- Sara Y., grade 7.
- 3rd Place- Madeeha, J., grade 6.

The spelling bee had 7 rounds
and the champion word was:
sayonara.

Du'a Requests:

Please remember Abdullah Baig and his family in your dua's. Abdullah is fighting the effects of an illness he was struck with over a year ago in December 2006 and is since battling.

Please remember Sr. Irum Akram, a young woman paralyzed from the neck down in an unfortunate shooting last summer, and her parents in your dua's.

To add your upcoming events, news of births, obituaries and achievements, du'a requests, etc., please email oasisofiman@irvingmasjid.org.

We would love to here from you!

Feedback pertaining to the newsletter is requested from readers of all ages. Please send them to oasisofiman@irvingmasjid.org. It may be published in the forthcoming issue.

(Continued from page 2)

Br. Khalil Meek concluded with his speech that centered on the importance of community involvement. After a break for salat and a delicious lunch catered by Jericho Cuisine, attendees were given the opportunity to ask panelists more about their experiences in a question and answer session. The event was concluded with one of the day's most anticipated events, a graduation and appreciation ceremony, in which all past and current attendees of the Islam 101 class received certificates recognizing their attendance of the course. A few closing remarks by Imam Zia followed by a closing du'a concluded the event. Overall, feedback was positive and encouraging. The department hopes to continue hosting more of these new Muslim and Ansaar gatherings in the future, inshaAllah, to help foster a stronger sense of brotherhood and sisterhood amongst new Muslims and the rest of the community.

New Shahadahs: The *dawah* departments asks you to join us in welcoming Sr. Sandy (December), Br. Juma (January), Br. Christopher (February), Br. Bruno (February), and Sr. Abbey (February), and Sr. Rashida (February) to the community. Takbir!

Classes: Islam 101 for new Muslims, is held every Sunday, from 12:30 pm-1:30 pm.

We truly appreciate the support given by the community. If you would like to donate in the help us in continuing to spread the message, as well as assist our new Muslim brothers and sisters on the path of Islam, please drop donations in the *dawah* drop boxes in the masjid or send to:
Islamic Center of Irving Outreach
Department
P.O. Box 154401
Irving, TX 75062.
JazakumAllahu khairan.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: IMAM ZIA SHEIKH

Recently, the *Oasis of Iman* had the opportunity to sit down the Imam Zia Sheikh and ask him a few questions on topics ranging from the foreseeable challenges facing ICI to his advice to the *Oasis of Iman*.

Q: What kind of challenges do you feel the [ICI] community is facing, and what challenges do you anticipate as the community continues to grow and diversify?

A: "Certainly, the youth is a major issue we all need to be worried about, how we take care of them and provide for them a good environment so that they feel comfortable to come to the masjid. Also, the sharp rise in the actual population of the community, although it has its benefits...and we all feel good having such a large and vibrant community, but handling everybody's concerns, and taking care of everybody's needs, counseling people that are in trouble, that will become a challenge as the community grows."

Q: How would you evaluate the ICI community?

A: MashaAllah, it is a very good community. I think we have to really thank Allah that Allah has given us such a wonderful and united community, and a very vibrant community. It is a very beautiful community we are living in."

Q: What is your advice to the *Oasis of Iman* newsletter, i.e. what type of major function should it serve?

A: "It's very important to, not only distribute the letter in the masjid on Fridays. The Muslim community here is huge. What we need to do is take it on step further and go through the phone books, go through whitepages.com, look for Muslim names... and make sure the newsletter reaches those people, so they are up to date on what's going on in the community, and the don't feel neglected just because they are not coming to the masjid... [It should be] an information source, it could be an avenue for advertising local businesses. So, there are a lot of functions that such a newsletter could serve, [and] particularly when it's related to people moving into the community, it will give them a "one-stop shop" for all the resources they might need..."