

# Islamic Center Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 3  
March 15, 2003  
Muharram 13, 1424

ICNEF, St. John's Bluff Road S., Jacksonville, Florida 32246

## CALENDAR

### MONTHLY GATHERING

Saturday, March 29th  
5:30 pm

### HOST FAMILIES

Dr. Mobeen & Sumra Rathore  
Najmah Shabazz

### ICNEF MANAGING COMMITTEE MEETING

Sunday, March 30th  
After Zuhr Prayer

A man asked the Prophet (PBUH),  
"which expression of Islam is good?"

He said: "feeding the hungry and  
greeting those whom you know and  
those whom you do not know."

-Bukhari

### BLESSED NEW YEAR

Muharram 1, 1424  
March 3, 2003

### Articles News Announcements FOR APRIL NEWSLETTER

Please submit by  
Friday, April 04, 2003

## AN EYE OPENING EXPERIENCE

Sunyia Hussain

Before we arrived at the homeless shelter, I was expecting us to be spending the night standing outside in the rain mechanically handing out plates to faceless men and women. I would be plopping heaps of gruel on to bland Styrofoam dishes and passing them out in a steady stream. However, upon reflection, the experience was much more filling.

Instead of their usual charitably-given peanut butter and jelly sandwiches—something I would never dream of having for dinner on a Sunday night—the inhabitants of the shelter were befitted with a nice, hot meal. The rooms they dined in were brightly decorated with murals and as the homeless families filed in to receive their dinner, I began to realize fully what it means to not have some of the trivial things I need to keep my daily routine as it is now: a microwave, a comfy mattress on my bed, a pile of clothes jammed into my closet, and a fridge full of food of my choosing. I thought of the many times I stood disgruntled in the grocery store checkout line and realized the ignorance of it; here were people who have to stand in a line every day, dependent on the charity and good nature of others for food. So now, whenever I jump off my chair and go to the kitchen for a glass of orange juice or a bowl of ice cream, I remember to start with the name of God and thank Him, not only for the food He has given me, but also for the four walls around me.

"They give food, out of love for Him (God), to the poor, the orphan, and the slave, saying: We feed you only for God's pleasure—we desire from you neither reward nor thanks." (Surah 76:8, 9)

## BEING CHARITABLE

God has given to each person various capabilities and resources, such as knowledge, money, strength, talent, or skill. Every individual must use whatever he or she has been given to benefit other people as well as the rest of God's creation, and not for selfish ends. If this principle is neglected, then not only is there no relief for the distress and the suffering of the needy, but man's increased selfishness makes him his fellow man's deadliest enemy.

Abu Hurairah (RA), reported that the Messenger of God (PBUH), said:  
"On every person's joints or small bones, there is sadaqah every day the sun rises. Doing justice between two people is sadaqah; assisting a man to mount his animal, or lifting up his belongings onto it is sadaqah; a good word is sadaqah; every step you take to prayer is sadaqah; and removing harmful things from pathways is sadaqah." (Bukhari & Muslim)

## AMYA SERVES THE HOMELESS

Homa Mojadidi

“Is there any reward for God—other than good?” [Al-Rahman:60]

About 18 of the AMYA youth, along with their adult volunteers, served 401 hot meals to the homeless at the I. M. Sulzbacher Center for Homeless, located at 611 East Adams Street, in downtown Jacksonville, on Sunday, February 16, 2003. Brothers Shah Faisal, Khaid Lahmeur, Rob Peterson, and Ayub Quraishi had prepared a well-balanced and tasty meal of pasta and beef stroganoff, string beans, bread, and mixed fruit. The whole event was extremely well planned and executed, and may God bless all those, especially the youth, who worked hard to make this event a resounding success.

Upon our arrival at the shelter we were greeted by the weekend meal Supervisor, Scott J. Politano, who cheerfully informed us that we were one of the biggest groups he has yet seen. Scott proceeded to give us some information about the shelter. He informed us that the shelter has approximately 306 beds, all of which are military style bunk beds donated by Cecil Field. They serve three meals a day, 365 days a year. All the residents must first undergo a medical, dental, and vision check-up before being placed in the general population area. They have a medical staff Monday – Friday. The residents must also follow the rules and regulations of the shelter such as seeing their counselor once a week and working within the shelter, either in the kitchen, yard, or dining room. The residents need to earn 50 points per week, 30 minutes of work equaling 1 point. “Our ultimate goal is to build their esteem back up—get them some sort of training” and to rehabilitate them back into society, Scott informed us. He also told us that only 25-35% of the homeless are homeless because of drug or alcohol addiction. He said he finds his work at the shelter extremely rewarding and that “[their] ultimate goal is to serve God.”

Scott went on to inform us that he is very “proud of his spotless kitchen,” which indeed, despite all the cooking that had gone in there that day, was really clean. In fact, the main dining room as well as the adjoining room were very neat, clean, and had a pleasant atmosphere. Both dining areas were decorated by festive paintings and murals painted by the children of the shelter residents, mostly depicting scenes of a happy family life.

Marwa Zahra, Religious Coordinator for AMYA recited a very touching prayer before the meal was served. Scott later informed us that there are always a few residents talking while grace is said before serving the meal, but that this time, while Marwa recited Surah Fatiha first in Arabic, and then the English translation, that there was absolute peace and quiet as everyone attentively listened to her recitation.

We started serving the meal at 6:00 PM, first to the older people in wheelchairs, followed by the rest of the shelter residents, and finally to those waiting outside the door. Everyone was served by 6:30 PM. I was extremely touched by the heartfelt thank you’s we received from the shelter residents as we served them their evening meal. We stayed until the whole kitchen and dining area were cleaned and ate what was left of the meal before we left the shelter to drop the youth off at the Islamic Center. As we were leaving the shelter, the residents standing outside told us “The food was really good” and “Come back any time.”

Scott’s advice to the youth was “Don’t take anything in life for granted, especially your parents and the little things, e.g. clean clothes, toothpaste and toothbrush to brush your teeth with in the morning, taking baths” and the many other comforts and luxuries that most people take for granted. He also told us the shelter accepts donations of cash and clothes, and that among the much needed and useful donations are trial sizes of shampoo, soap, razors, and other grooming items.

“Wealth and sons are allurements of the life of this world: But the things that endure, Good Deeds, are the best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards, and best as (the foundation for) hopes.” [18:46]

Say: “Verily my Lord enlarges and restricts the Sustenance to such of His servants as He pleases: and nothing do ye spend in the least (in His Cause) but He replaces it: for He is the Best of those who Grant Sustenance.” [34:39]

“And render to the kindred their due rights, as (also) to those in want, and to the wayfarer: but squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift.” [17:26]

“And even if thou hast to turn away from them in pursuit of the Mercy from thy Lord which thou dost expect, yet speak to them a word of easy kindness. Make not they hand tied (like a niggard’s) to they neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that thou become blameworthy and destitute” [17:28-29]



I asked some of the youth why they gave up their Sunday afternoon to be at the homeless shelter. Here are some of the responses...

“Good opportunity to do something good for people.” Faridah Abdullah

“I am here to please God.” Marwa Zahra

“It’s my way to give back to the community.” Rana Elbaz

“Gives you a chance to interact with people you don’t normally meet.” Shefa Saulat

“Always wanted to do something like this and help people.” Farzana Shahid

When we went to the homeless shelter and served it gave me a great feeling, that I was not only serving God but also the community.” Faheem Rathore

“It was a great experience, everyone said they didn’t want to leave, the girls were eager to serve the food, and they all told me how good it felt inside, especially when hearing the thank you’s from the many that were fed. There were a couple of children there, it just breaks our hearts to think that they would go hungry. As we were leaving there was a guy rubbing his stomach and telling us thank you for the meal...so altogether it was an experience that I’ll never forget and hope to repeat as often as possible.” Meera

“When I helped feed the homeless I realized that there are a lot of things I take for granted, which people in the homeless shelter would really appreciate.” Saher Quraeshi



“What humbled me the most was their gratitude and respect. As we were leaving many of them asked when we would come again. So many of us get caught up in life and forget that the luxurious lives we live is not a reality for most people. I think the best part was that it symbolized the human family, that even though we weren’t all of the same color or faith, we Muslims came together to help fulfill a basic human need.” Saman Quraeshi

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Shakur Bolden

On behalf of the Islamic Center, I would like to thank all those who participated in the Eid Ul-Adha project of feeding the homeless at the I. M. Sulzbacher Center on Sunday, February 16, 2003. From those who donated their time and energy in coordinating the ritual animal sacrifice and preparing the food, to our youth who gave up their Sunday afternoon to be servers at the Center, may Allah grant each of you a good reward.

I believe that each person involved exemplified that spirit of sacrifice that many take for granted. As we look forward, we have another opportunity to help those in our community in need. On Sunday, April 20, 2003, we will again entertain feeding the less fortunate at the I. M. Sulzbacher Center. This will be a Lunch program.

You can be a part of this effort. If interested, please contact Shakur Bolden at 642-7039.

## WHAT'S IT WORTH?

From Infant RE (Stanley Thornes)

All around Medina there was a famine. Nothing would grow. People were desperate for food. Babies cried with hunger and mothers could do nothing to help. There had been no rain for months and people were starving.

One day the people spotted Uthman, an important leader of the community, returning home. His camels were laden with sacks of food. The people ran to meet him. They waved bags of money at him and threw themselves at his feet. They begged him to sell them food. Some even offered to pay six times what the food was worth. Uthman shook his head and said, "I'm afraid the food is not for sale. It belongs to someone who is paying ten times what it is worth."

Later on that day the people were amazed to find Uthman giving the food away freely to the poor! "Who is paying for the food?" they asked. Uthman smiled and replied, "Our Holy Book, the Qur'an, teaches us that if you do good to others, then Allah our God will reward you ten times over."

"Say: Who gives you sustenance, from the heavens and the earth?" Say: "It is God, and certain it is that either we or you are right guidance of in manifest error." (34:24)

## INFINITE WAYS TO GIVE THANKS

Homa Mojadidi

God has blessed us so that even if we spent all our lives giving thanks for His blessings upon us, it would still not be enough. But what does it mean to give thanks? Does it just mean expressing our verbal gratitude to God? Does it mean donating everything we have to our masjid or giving it away to those less fortunate? Or does it also mean putting the means and abilities (the mental capabilities, unique skills, qualities, and other physical and material attributes) God has blessed us with to His service, and not misusing them in any way? And what does it mean to put ourselves and everything God has given us to His service? Although giving charity or zakat is a major pillar of our religion, it is only one of the many ways we can give thanks. There are many ways that we might not always perceive as giving thanks, but which are nevertheless, different forms of expressing our gratitude to our Maker.

After God and His Prophet (PBUH), being kind, respectful, and obedient to our parents, seeing to their comfort and well being, the way they saw to ours when we were completely dependent on them, is one major form of giving thanks. Striving to represent the best face of Islam, by being a good relative, friend, employee, co-worker, neighbor, and so on, is another form of giving thanks, because whether in a professional or social environment, we represent Islam. Sharing useful knowledge is yet another way of giving thanks, while being merciful to each other out of fear and love of God is another form of giving thanks. These are only a few of the many ways we can express our immense debt of gratitude to the One who Created us, but the ways to thank God are as infinite as the blessings He has bestowed upon us.

We don't have to be kneeling on the prayer rug to properly thank God, although that is probably the best way. We can be in the middle of our work day, driving in our car, being amidst a group of people, or by ourselves—there are no rules or limits on how to express our gratitude to God, except a sincere heart. Let us remember that giving thanks multiplies our blessings, and that there is no greater joy or fulfillment than the joy of prostrating ourselves in total submission and gratitude, before Him Who has given us life, as well as the guidance to succeed in this life and the next.

In fact, giving thanks is a form of worship in itself, because we are acknowledging that God is the ultimate source of all goodness in our lives and that we owe everything we have, including our very existence, to Him and Him alone. He's the one Who gave us life, Who Created us in the best of forms, Who sustains and guides us throughout this life, and Who will deal justly and mercifully with us after we die. What more could we possibly ask for than this? May God bless us all with the ability to appreciate all that He has given us and to thank Him as we should.

"It would not be reasonable in me if I did not serve Him Who created me, and to Whom ye shall (all) be brought back..." (36:22)

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF JANUARY 31, 2003

Khadim Hussain

FUND NAME	BEGINNING BALANCE	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS	ENDING BALANCE
General Operating	\$5, 714.92	\$5, 516.00	\$11, 104.26	\$126.66
Building	\$58, 190.12	\$0.00	\$657.00	\$57, 533.12
Fund Raising	\$0.00	\$180.00	\$0.00	\$180.00
Sound System	\$7, 700.00	\$2, 100.00	\$5, 812.00	\$3, 987.50
Sunday School	\$2, 177.00	\$525.00	\$656.25	\$2, 046.27
Zakat	\$0.00	\$242.00	\$0.00	\$242.00

**I**MPORTANT: we have received less than 50% of our expenses in the Operating Fund. We need people to come forward and donate, so we can continue operating this House of God Almighty. Now you have the option of paying through automatic deduction from your checking/savings account or any kind of credit card. Please refer to the application from the last issue of the newsletter or contact me to sign up.

### THE SUPERIORITY OF A PERSON WHO LEARNS (ISLAM, BECOMES A RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR) AND THEN TEACHES IT TO OTHERS

Zan Shareef

**N**arrated Abu-Musa: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "The example of guidance and knowledge with which God Almighty has sent me is like abundant rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain-water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. Another portion of it was hard and held the rain water and God Almighty benefited the people with it and they utilized it for drinking, (making their animals drink from it) and to irrigate the land for cultivation. A portion of it was barren which could neither hold the water nor bring forth the vegetation (then that land gave no benefits). The first is the example of the person who comprehends God Almighty's Religion (Islam) and gets benefit (from the knowledge) which God Almighty has revealed through me (the Prophet (PBUH)) and learns and then teaches it to others. The (last example is that of a) person who doesn't care for it and does not take God Almighty's Guidance revealed through me (He is like that barren land.)".

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### UNF MSA EVENTS

**T**he UNF MSA has planned the following events for the rest of the Spring 2003 Semester:

#### UNF Culture Fest

This event will be an opportunity for various cultural clubs on campus to educate fellow students about their cultures. Various forms of art will be on display and food from all over the world will also be served.

April 02, 2003 (Wednesday)

11:00am to 5:00pm

UNF Game Room

#### MSA Councils Camp

MSA Councils is a collaborative group where MSA's from all across Florida get together to brainstorm ideas for events at respective campuses. This retreat will be a way for all MSA's to get a chance to hang out and get to know each other better. This is the first one, so participants is greatly encouraged.

April, 2003 (TBA)

Tampa, FL Campsite

#### End of the Year Party

This will be the last event of the semester. We hope to gather everyone one last time and enjoy our last meeting for the Spring Semester.

Mid-April

UNF Game Room

## IMAM'S DIARY

Imam Muhammad Zaid Malik

The month of February was full of external work. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, the Interfaith Council of Jacksonville invited the Jacksonville mayoral candidates to explore their platforms, in which I participated. Among these candidates were Mike Weinstein, John Peyton, Keith Meyers and Matt Carlucci. One question was put to all the candidates: If you are elected as mayor, how will you solve the problem of racial discrimination? While in the interview I posed the question: What would you do to control the religious based propaganda, and I gave the examples of Dr. Jerry Vines and Gene Youngblood. The answer from most of them was that we must educate the community and ourselves and study the different cultures and ways of life to strengthen the diversity.

February 17<sup>th</sup>, Br. Pervez Ahmad, CAIR's chairman in Florida, and I were guests on Andy Johnson Down to Business, a radio program on 1320AM. It was a two-hour long live program where people could call us on phone and we answered their questions. I have done this program several times before with Br. Pervez and with Br. Ashraf Shaikh. Mr. Johnson is a good friend of the Muslims and always tells both sides of the story. He also has invited Gene Youngblood to his program. If you remember, Mr. Youngblood put the sign outside his Church in Mandarin: Muhammad approved murder, Surah 8, Verse 65. On the Andy Johnson Show the ICNEF runs ads about Islam on weekdays. The show airs from 9am-12pm on weekdays, and our ads run twice, first around 9:30am and then around 10:30am.

February 18<sup>th</sup>, there was a program on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at the public library near Regency Mall. Dr. Ilyas organized the program. In the program we show part of the movie, The Message, which is followed by a Q&A session. Br. Pervez, Br. Fawad, Br. Makram and Br. Admir are also involved with organizing this program. We repeated the same program on February 26<sup>th</sup>, at the Deerwood Park public library. The program is held twice a month: on the third Tuesday of every month at the library near Regency Mall and then the same program on the fourth Wednesday of every month at the Deerwood Park library. The time is 7-9 pm. Most of the attendants were non-Muslims and they enjoyed the program.

February 19<sup>th</sup>, we taped the TV program: Faith-to-Faith. It is an interfaith program where Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scholars discuss various issues. Rabbi Michael Matuson, Mother Davette Turk, Reverend Ken Myers and myself are the permanent members of the panel. The program is taped every month. This month's topic was: Is there ever a just cause for war? The Rabbi was neutral. Davette, Ken and I were against war. Davette quoted from a newspaper that 100,000 body bags and 6,000 coffins have been sent for the bodies. Ken said laughingly: 'Our behavior shows as if we are saying we do not know why God has put our oil under their sand?' Sunday at 6:30 pm, channels 24/29.

February 23<sup>rd</sup>, Nation of Islam's representative in Jacksonville, Br. Desmond Muhammad, invited me to speak at the Saviors Day, which is celebrated annually. Coincidentally, I had a Managing Committee Meeting to attend as well. However, I preferred to go speak, because of what I hear of their gradual return to mainstream Islam. Some months ago I met with Br. Rasool Muhammad, son of Elijah Muhammad, in Miami, who is in charge of the Southern region for the Nation of Islam. I liked the comment he made to me. He said: 'You meet with Jews, Christians, can't we also meet?'

February 26<sup>th</sup>, I taped our TV program: Understanding Islam. Br. Ashraf Shaikh is the host for this program and it airs every Sunday at 5:00 pm on Cable channel 24 or 29. We tape two programs every month and every program is broadcasted twice. The topics for these programs were: 'Being thankful to God', and 'Why am I a Muslim'. I request all my brothers and sisters to watch this program and also the one that follows, Faith-to-Faith and give me their feedback.

On the same day we had "the Imams meeting". The Imams of the Jacksonville area meet once every month. Imam Mansoor of Islamic Community of Bosnians, Imam Rashad Shaheed of Jacksonville Masjid, Imam Umar Shareef of Masjid Al-Salaam and I are the members. This meeting was about helping Imam Mansoor's Masjid in their case with the City Council.

February 28<sup>th</sup>, I was invited by Islam on Campus (UF's MSA) to deliver the Friday khutbah in Gainesville. It went well, but was hectic because I had to rush back to Jacksonville for our Tafseer Class. Alhumdulillah, I made it.

## ISLAMIC QUIZ ANSWERS

Here are the answers from last month's quiz:

1. What are the duties of Angel Jibreel (Gabriel)?  
A. Intermediary of God Almighty to the Prophets
2. What are the duties of Angel Mikaeel (Michael)?  
B. Angel of Death
3. What are the duties of Angel Israfeel?  
E. Will blow the horn on the day of Resurrection
4. What are the duties of Angel Ridwan?  
F. In charge of Paradise
5. What are the duties of Angel Zabania?  
D. In charge of Hell
6. What are the Angels who protect everyone called?  
B. Hafaza

Congratulations to **Zubair Quraishi**, for having the HIGHEST score on the quiz! He is a 5th grader at Central Riverside Elementary. Takbir.



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\*also members of Managing Committee

## INTERVIEW WITH BROTHER KHADIM HUSSAIN

Treasurer, Islamic Center of Northeast Florida

**B**r. Khadim Hussain has been living in our Jacksonville community since 1994, when he moved from New Jersey. He is married to Nighat Hussain, and has three children, Muhammad Umair Hussain (16), Sunyia Hussain (16), and Salma Hussain (11). He is originally from Lahore, Pakistan, where he got his BS in Engineering. He moved to New York in 1983. He received his Masters in Computer Science from City University in 1985 and his MBA from Nova Southeastern University in 1997. He has been working as an IT Consultant with Convergys Corp. for the last five (5) years.

#### Newsletter Team: What made you move to Jacksonville from New Jersey?

**Br. Khadim:** Actually, I had two job offers, one in New Jersey and one in Jacksonville. The Jacksonville offer was much less lucrative than the NJ one. But I chose Jacksonville, because I visited the mosque and was really impressed by the diversity. Plus my family was sick of the cold weather and my children wanted to be closer to Disney World.

#### Newsletter Team: How did you first get involved with the Islamic Center?

**Br. Khadim:** I became a member of the Islamic Center as soon as possible, and volunteered my services. Initially I worked as Assistant Secretary for a few years, and I became Treasurer in 1998.

#### Newsletter Team: What do you think has been your biggest contribution as the Treasurer?

**Br. Khadim:** I've spent countless hours in developing a database software which makes tracking the quarter million dollar transactions per year easier to manage. Before we use to perform these transactions manually, which are now automated and less prone to human error.

#### Newsletter Team: How do you feel when you hear members of the community criticize the Islamic Center for their constant solicitation for funds?

**Br. Khadim:** It's hard not to take that sort of criticism personally. I would like to inform everyone that the Islamic Center has an "open book policy" and I invite anyone who has any concerns or questions to check the books for themselves.

#### Newsletter Team: Aren't you also the webmaster for the ICNEF website?

**Br. Khadim:** Actually, I am involved in more than just developing and maintaining the website. In fact I welcome any suggestions for additions or improvements. I am also a member of the ICNEF Election Committee. I have been the AFA Treasurer for the last year and a half, since no one else has come forward to assume that responsibility. I strongly encourage other community members to make a commitment and take on this responsibility. For the past few years, I have been involved with the ICNEF Newsletter as well. Lastly, I record Understanding Islam every Sunday for our video library. I would love to see someone else get involved.

#### Newsletter Team: I think most of our community members are unaware of the different kinds of costs associated with running the Islamic Center on a monthly basis. Can you shed some light on that?

**Br. Khadim:** It takes around \$12,000 to run the Islamic Center on a monthly basis. This cost includes, but is not limited to: utilities, salaries, maintenance, security, and supplies. Without the community's support and commitment we cannot operate our Islamic Center.

#### Newsletter Team: Since you have lived among several other communities, how do you think Jacksonville compares?

**Br. Khadim:** I am very glad that we have a very diverse community here, especially since in New Jersey, we had different Eid prayers for Pakistanis, Arabs, Afghans, etc. I think we should try our best to keep our community united in its diversity.

## NEWSLETTERTEAM

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Homa Mojadidi

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To

## In This Issue

AMYA Service Project, Imam's Diary, Quiz Winner, Interview...

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### IMAM

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## TYPES OF SADAQAH (CHARITY)

Abu Dhar al-Ghafari said: "that the Prophet (PBUH), said: 'Sadaqah is for every person every day the sun rises.' I said: 'O Messenger of God (PBUH), from what do we give sadaqah if we do not possess property?' He said: 'The doors of sadaqah are takbir (allahu akbar:God is Great), tasbih (subhanallah:God is free from imperfection), tamlid (alhumdulillah:all praise is for God), tahlil (la illaha illallah:there is no God, but God), tauba (astaghfirullah:I seek forgiveness from God), enjoining good, forbidding evil, removing thorns, bones and stones from the paths of people, guiding the blind, listening to the deaf and dumb until you understand them, guiding a person to his object of need if you know where it is, hurrying with the strength of your legs to one in sorrow who is appealing for help, and supporting the weak with the strength of your arms. These are all the doors of sadaqah.

The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: "Every good deed is sadaqah. To meet your brother/sister with a smiling face and to pour out from your bucket into his container are sadaqah."