

# ISLAMIC CENTER OF ROCKLAND

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## ISLAMIC CENTER OF ROCKLAND's Inaugural Newsletter Issue

21 Jamadi Awwal 1430, Volume I: Issue I

May 16th, 2009

Alhamdulillah, this is the first issue of a Newsletter from the Islamic Center of Rockland (ICR), New York. The purpose of writing and publishing the ICR Newsletter is to achieve several goals. First, to inform the current status of the construction of ICR Mosque; second, to communicate the planned events and activities at ICR Mosque and ICR School, and third to seek active participation from all congregation members by their attendance at the Mosque for performing all five obligatory prayers. We plan to continue this publication on a quarterly basis throughout the coming years, Insha'Allah.

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### ICR Mosque

*"It is only those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, who establish prayer and pay Zakat, and fear none but Allah, who are worthy of maintaining the Mosques of Allah". (Sura 9 At-Tauba, Ayat 18)*

*The Prophet (PBBUH) said: "The prayer is the pillar of Islam, whoever keeps it builds the religion, and whoever forgets it destroys the religion".*

The Islamic Center of Rockland (ICR) was formed in 1989. We purchased 15 acres of land in 1989 on the highest hill in Rockland County in Valley Cottage, for \$350,000. In August 1991, the Trustees of ICR established a charitable, non-profit religious Trust and named it **Rockland Muslim Trust (RMT)** for the exclusive purpose of to own, develop and operate the properties of ICR. The Trust is incorporated pursuant to section 191 and 192 of the Religious Corporation Law of the State of New York.

It took many years from the time we purchased the land with the intention of building a Mosque to its completion today. In 2002, plans to construct a Mosque were drawn up but were not implemented due to lack of resources. After satisfying several local building code requirements and obtaining every conceivable permit from Rockland County authorities, we got the approval in August 2005 and finally the Mosque construction project started.

Foundation was laid in early summer of 2006 and as of today we have built a two-story building. A Mosque of 9,600 square feet capacity is fully operational with capacity of 4800 square feet on each floor. The Mosque is earthquake and fire proof. The foundation is reinforced concrete and the entire structure is of steel beams and concrete. Two parking lots are under the final stages of construction to accommodate the growing park-

ing needs. An elevator system linking the two floors of the Mosque is fully operational to accommodate handicapped and those congregation members who prefer to avoid taking the stairs. The first floor has class rooms, kitchen, bathrooms and facility for potential funeral preparation which is currently not used as additional approval and permits are required. The second floor has prayer area for approximately 475 people and it is completely covered with beautifully designed Turkish carpet. The building is designed to allow maximum sunlight. The entire premises are fully secured via high powered security cameras constantly monitoring and recording activities inside and outside the Mosque.

The ICR Mosque opened on the first day of Ramadan, 1429 AH coinciding with September 1, 2008. A temporary Certificate of Occupancy from the Township was obtained for the month of Ramadan. This blessed occasion was attended by many local congregation members as well as several Rockland County executives including Mr. Alexander Gromack (Town Supervisor), Mr. Peter Noonan (Police Chief), Mr. Mark Papenmeyer (Fire Chief) and Mr. David Carlucci (Town Clerk). The event was extensively covered and superbly documented by Peter Applebome in the September 24, 2008 issue of the New York Times.

Throughout the month of Ramadan, Travee Prayers were held each night and attended by a large number of Muslims. Arrangements were made to have Qari Sheikh Muneer Ahmed lead the Travee Prayers. We celebrated the two Eids - Eid ul Fitr and Eid ul Adha with hundreds of families attending prayers at the Mosque. As of today, we are pleased to inform you that by the Grace of Allah, the ICR Mosque is open for prayers 5 times a day.

### 'continued from Front Page - ICR Mosque History

Prayer times are posted and updated at the Mosque. For Friday prayers, we follow a strict schedule; the Khutba starts exactly at 1:00 pm and the prayers are held at 1:30 pm sharp. It is a beautiful sight to see a large group of Muslims arrive at the Mosque on time and leave the Mosque on time to go back to their offices and business. Boxed lunch is also available at a modest cost.

It should be noted with genuine humility of accomplishment that the ICR Mosque was built entirely by generous donations raised within the community by the congregation members and

their intense personal efforts to seek further donations from friends and families. Again by the Grace of Allah, we have not incurred any loans from any bank or financial institution whatsoever; nor have we paid a single penny in **Ribah** or interest or usury to anyone towards the construction of this beautiful Masjid. However, we do acknowledge owing **Qarz Hasna** to several Muslim brothers and sisters within the congregation and we certainly intend to pay them back by the continued support and generosity of the **Muslim Umma** during our Fund Raising efforts, Insha'Allah.

We are especially grateful to two sources: first, Br. Junaid Dar and his wife Sr. Shama Dar for providing a large amount of personal funds; second, Management of Darul Islah Mosque in Teaneck, NJ for their timely monetary assistance to ICR during the construction of our Mosque. Alhamdulillah, both loans have been gratefully re-paid by ICR thru internal funding within the congregation members. We are looking forward and hope to accumulate enough revenues thru the annual Fund Raising Event scheduled on May 16, 2009 to absolve the Mosque completely from its current obligation of \$361,150 loan, Insha'Allah.

AZEEM FAROOKI

## ICR Management

The ICR management has 19 Board Members including 13 Board of Trustees of RMT and 6 Board of Directors of ICR. Several Working Committees are established to carry out specific activities. A Working Committee is headed by a Committee Chair who must be a Board Member. The Committee Chairs plan activities and budgets and get approval from the Board to carry out their plans. Each Working Committee consists of several participants. It is not necessary for a participant to be a Board Member.

Current management listing is as follows:

<u>Board of Trustees (RMT)</u>	<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>Chair of Committee</u>	<u>Committee Name</u>
1. Mohammad Ziaullah (Chairman)	Ezz Hamza (President)	1. Muhammed Aminullah	Building Management
2. Khaja Fasihuddin	Azfar Farooq (President Elect)	2. Gami Mostafa	Mosque & Religious Affairs
3. Jamal Kibria	1. Seema Kibria	3. Meherban Syed	Education
4. Aftab Dar	2. Mona Syed	4. Ezz Hamza	Fund Raising
5. Gami Mostafa	3. Yasar Inanc	5. Azra Fasiuddin	Social Activities & Food Mgt
6. Mohamed Bhana	4. Abdul Rehman Khan	6. Seema Kibria	Youth Group
7. Ezz Hamza	5. Eric Shamsid-Deen	7. Junaid Dar	Event Planning
8. Meherban Syed	6. Naila Uddin	8. Mohammad Ziaullah	Funeral & Cemetery
9. Junaid Dar		9. Naila Uddin	Library & Newsletter
10. Azra Fasihuddin		10. Mohamed Bhana	Family Social Services
11. Azfar Farooq		11. Mona Syed	Finance & Record Keeping
12. Muhammed Aminullah		12. Azeem Farooki	Interfaith & Dawa
13. Azeem Farooki			

### A note from...

Congratulations on publishing the first issue of the ICR Newsletter.

Three years ago Islamic Center of Rockland plans and drawings were just a dream. Today with Allah's Grace and your support this mere drawing has turned into a visible reality: a Mosque and a Community Center at ICR.

The ICR Mosque provides a welcoming worshipful environment where both men and women pray with peace of mind and a sense of home. In this sacred place, hundreds of young people will learn the morals and ethics of Islam, the needful will seek refuge and the troubled will find help, Insha'Allah.

First, it was our belief in Allah SW, then our team-work, dedication and positive attitude that enabled us to fulfill our dream and make ICR one of the most active organizations serving the needs of Muslims from all backgrounds.

Now, united together we are reaching for our goals to have at ICR: A resident Imam, NY State certified Islamic Elementary and Middle school, Day Care Center for Muslim Children, Muslim Youth Sports and Recreational Facility, Guidance Council of multi-disciplined professionals to help youth and new Muslims achieve better understanding of Islam.

United we were in building the Center, United we are in making the Center one of the most active Muslim Organizations in the area, and United we will be to achieve our goals and hand over the ICR flag to the next generation to advance it further.

**-Ezz Hamza President of ICR**

I would like to take this opportunity and thank Allah (swt) and all of you for continued support for the ICR Masjid project. After a long struggle, but with the help of Allah (swt) and our dedicated community we are able to confirm the success of a promise we made long ago; our Masjid is fully functioning and operating at a successful level with Prayer services 5x/day, weekend adult Quran class as well as Sunday school classes for students aged 4-18+. Now the second phase of our struggle starts, we need to ensure the ICR Masjid remains fully operational; this can be done by diversifying programs we are offering and increasing our involvement in both Muslim and non-Muslim community activities (Blood Drives, Food Drive, Clothing Donation, Interfaith meetings etc). We are very humbled and grateful for all the support you have shown in the past. We ask that you and your families please continue this show of support and make this a team effort. This cause is greater than just you or I, it is to please Allah and make this house of Allah (swt) a successful and thriving one for our future generations to come. May Allah (swt) bless you and your family. (Ameen).

I would like to congratulate all the dedicated individuals for the hard work they have done to be able to deliver this great news to the ICR community. May Allah (swt) continue to bless them and reward them in this world and hereafter. (Ameen). We all look forward to working with you on upcoming projects for the continued growth and success of the Islamic Center of Rockland.

**-Mohammad Ziaullah Chairman of the Board of Trustees of RMT**

Welcome all to the very first issue of ICR Newsletter.

Once a dream ...of our own mosque along with a community center came to life last Ramadan, after 25 years of hard work and determination, with the help of generous contributions from early Rockland resident to our relatively new members. My sincere gratification to all the generous contributors from early 80's up until now. ICR is fully functional from holding daily prayers to Sunday Islamic school, my very special thanks to our ICR Principal Brother Meherban Syed and Vice-Principal sister Seema Jamal.

I would like to commend previous and present ICR management teams for their selflessness, highest degree of integrity in providing coordinated accommodations to all schools of thought.

Reminder ...please save the date for ICR Fund Raiser on Saturday May 16<sup>th</sup> at Holiday Inn Suffern. Bring family and friends to a memorable evening of Islamic entertainment, donate generously and enjoy wide variety of food.

Need of the time: To propagate progressive Islam without modifying the fundamentals.

Thank you to all who responded and offered feedback. This information is helpful in understanding our progress in creating a culture that promotes tolerance and harmony.

**-Naila Uddin Chair of the Communication Committee**

## ICR—School

*"Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who created, Created man from clots. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who taught by the pen. He taught man that which he did not know" - (Sura 96 Al-Alaq, Ayats 1-5)*

*My Lord! Increase me in knowledge. (Sura 20 Ta-Ha, Ayat 114)*

The ICR School has been in operation for a number of years in rented facilities in Rockland County. However, effective September 2008, we have started the school classes on Sundays at ICR, 481 Mountainview Avenue, Valley Cottage, NY. Classes begin at 11 am after a *Dua* and end by 1:30 pm as Zuhar prayer start. A total of 125 students ranging from age 3 to 17 are enrolled. The annual registration fee is \$500 per family. During the enrollment period, all students are tested in their basic understanding of Arabic and Urdu Languages, Qur'an recital and Islamic religious studies. Based on the test results, students are divided into four categories:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Level</u>
Elementary	Level 1, 2, 3
Junior	Level 1, 2
Senior	Level 1, 2
Advanced	Level 1, 2

Currently, the following courses are offered for all four categories:

Languages – Arabic and Urdu

Quranic Studies

Islamic Studies

ICR School staff includes 15 Regular Teachers and 5 Student Teachers. All teachers devote their time and energy *Fee Sabeel Allah*. Br. Meherban Syed and Sr. Seema Kibria are the Principal and Vice Principal respectively.

A list of Teachers is as follows:

### Regular Teachers

Syeda Ayesha Abubaker, Qosia Ahmed, Shirin Ahmed, Mohamed Bhana, Azeem Farooki, Saba Farooq, Gami Mostafa, Safia Hamza, Azra Khan, Seema Kibria, Fozia Mujahid, Shabana Qureshi, Meherban Syed, Naila Uddin, Abida Naz.

### Student Teachers

Saima Ahmed, Danish Chawala, Komel Mian, Salman Mian, Mona Ziaullah



## \$\$ Annual ICR Fundraising Event \$\$

The annual ICR Fund Raising event is scheduled on Saturday May 16, 2009 at the Holiday Inn, Suffern, New York. Sheikh Moutaz Charaf is the guest speaker. This is a significant event for ICR as the history of this event shows that donations provided by the attendees during the evening enabled ICR to start and almost complete the entire construction of the ICR Mosque without borrowing any monies from financial institutions and thus avoiding incurring **Ribah** or interest. As of today, ICR owes \$361,150 to individuals for their **Qarz Hasna** to the Mosque.

Donating money, time and resources to build a Mosque is one of the most rewarding ways of earning *Sadaqah Jariah* which is the source of continuous good deeds till the end of time. When we donate to build a Mosque, we get reward for every thing that happens at that Mosque. For example: we get *Sawab* – blessings - when anyone who performs prayers and recites Qur'an at that Mosque. This reward multiplies if a person who learned at the Mosque will teach other people. It is indeed an everlasting multiplication of earning rewards

and good deeds.

ICR is offering – a prayer spot – Mus-salla - for a \$1000 donation to Muslim families to earn *Sadaqah Jaria* - the blessings. So far, 140 prayer spots are taken. You can have more than one prayer spot in the name of parents, siblings, or self. Some congregation members have donated for several prayer spots for family members. The belief is anyone who prays at your donated spot will get *Sadaqah Jaria* for as long as the Mosque exists and this particular ICR Mosque located on the highest elevation in Rockland County next to the tallest Police Communications Tower will be standing forever for generations to come, Insha'Allah.

The Qur'an reminds us:

*"The likeness of the ones who expend their riches in the way of Allah is as the likeness of a grain that grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. (Sura 2 Al-Baqarah, Ayat 261)*

*"In houses that Allah has permitted to be raised up and His Name to be mentioned, glorify Him therein in the morning and in the evening. Men who are not diverted by trade or commerce from remembrance of Allah, and from establishing prayers and paying the Zakat fear a Day when hearts and eyes shall be turned about". (Sura 24 An-Nur, Ayats 36-37)*

Prophet Mohammed (PBBUH) said:

*"Whoever helps build a Masjid, Allah will build him a house in Paradise".*

*"The prayer is the pillar of Islam, whoever keeps it builds the religion, and whoever forgets it destroys the religion".*

*"Do not prevent female Muslims from coming to the Mosques".*

ICR humbly thanks everyone for their ongoing support and urges everyone to please, *Donate Generously*.

*May Allah accept. Ameen.*

## Importance of Prayers

"Do you not realize that to Allah prostrates everyone in the heavens and the earth, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the mountains, and the trees, and the animals, and many people?" (Sura 22 Al-Hajj, Ayat 18)

"Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book, and keep up the prayer. Surely prayer keeps one from the great sins and evil deeds" (Sura 29 Al-Ankabut, Ayat 45).

The Prophet Mohammed (PBBUH) said: The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating himself. What lies between a man and atheism is abandoning prayer.

Prayer is the second pillar of Islam and in fact is the only **ibadat** that was directly given by Allah to Prophet Moham-

med (PBBUH) during his journey of **Isra** and **Mairaj**. Remember, it is the first thing you will be asked on the Day of Judgment - if prayer is accepted then all good deeds are accepted and if prayer is not accepted then nothing is accepted.

Prayer gives us a direct connection to Allah and reminds us of the purpose of our creation. Prayer purifies the heart and helps us attain spiritual devotion and moral high ground to achieve patience, humility and sincerity. Prayer is the means of repentance and keeps us away from sinful acts.

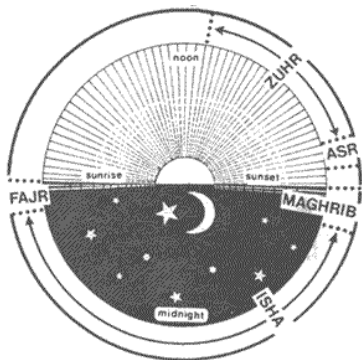


### Daily prayers are offered at ICR:

Fajr	5:00 AM*
Zuhar	1.30 PM
Asr	6:00 PM*
Maghrib	8:00 PM*
Isha	9:30 PM*

\*Times subject to change

-AZEEM FAROOKI



1. The Morning Prayer (**SALAT-UL-FAJR**) It can be performed at any time between the breaking of the dawn till just before sunrise.
2. The Noon Prayer (**SALAT-UL-ZUHAR**) Its time begins after the sun declines from its zenith until it is about mid-afternoon.
3. The Afternoon Prayer (**SALAT-UL-ASR**) Its time begins soon after the time for Zuhar prayer ends and extends to just before sunset.
4. The Evening Prayer (**SALAT-UL-MAGHRIB**) Its time begins just after sunset and extends to a period of an hour and a half.
5. The Night Prayer (**SALAT-UL-ISHA**) Its time begins about an hour and a half after sunset and extends to dawn.

ISLAMIC CENTER OF ROCKLAND										
481 MOUNTAINVIEW AVE, VALLEY COTTAGE, NY 10989 <a href="http://www.icrmuslim.org">HTTP://WWW.ICRMUSLIM.ORG</a>										
MAY, 2009			LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	JURISTIC METHOD:					
JUMADA AL-AWWAL/JUMADA AL-AKHIRAH			41.1240	73.9362	STANDARD & HANAFI					
DAY	MAY	HIJRI	FAJR	SUNRISE	ZUHAR	ASR (STANDARD)	ASR (HANAFI)	MAGHRIB	ISHA	
FRI	1	6/5	4:27	5:53	12:53	4:45	5:50	7:54	9:20	
SAT	2	7/5	4:25	5:52	12:53	4:46	5:50	7:55	9:21	
SUN	3	8/5	4:23	5:50	12:53	4:46	5:51	7:56	9:23	
MON	4	9/5	4:22	5:49	12:53	4:46	5:51	7:57	9:24	
TUE	5	10/5	4:20	5:48	12:53	4:46	5:52	7:58	9:26	
WED	6	11/5	4:19	5:47	12:53	4:47	5:53	7:59	9:27	
THU	7	12/5	4:17	5:45	12:53	4:47	5:53	8:00	9:28	
FRI	8	13/5	4:16	5:44	12:53	4:47	5:54	8:01	9:30	
SAT	9	14/5	4:14	5:43	12:53	4:48	5:54	8:02	9:31	
SUN	10	15/5	4:13	5:42	12:53	4:48	5:55	8:03	9:33	
MON	11	16/5	4:11	5:41	12:53	4:48	5:56	8:04	9:34	
TUE	12	17/5	4:10	5:40	12:53	4:48	5:56	8:05	9:36	
WED	13	18/5	4:08	5:39	12:53	4:49	5:57	8:06	9:37	
THU	14	19/5	4:07	5:38	12:53	4:49	5:57	8:07	9:38	
FRI	15	20/5	4:05	5:37	12:53	4:49	5:58	8:08	9:40	
SAT	16	21/5	4:04	5:36	12:53	4:50	5:58	8:09	9:41	
SUN	17	22/5	4:03	5:35	12:53	4:50	5:59	8:10	9:42	
MON	18	23/5	4:02	5:34	12:53	4:50	5:59	8:11	9:44	
TUE	19	24/5	4:00	5:33	12:53	4:50	6:00	8:12	9:45	
WED	20	25/5	3:59	5:32	12:53	4:51	6:00	8:13	9:46	
THU	21	26/5	3:58	5:32	12:53	4:51	6:01	8:14	9:48	
FRI	22	27/5	3:57	5:31	12:53	4:51	6:02	8:14	9:49	
SAT	23	28/5	3:56	5:30	12:53	4:52	6:02	8:15	9:50	
SUN	24	29/5	3:55	5:29	12:53	4:52	6:03	8:16	9:52	
MON	25	1/6	3:54	5:29	12:53	4:52	6:03	8:17	9:53	
TUE	26	2/6	3:53	5:28	12:53	4:52	6:04	8:18	9:54	
WED	27	3/6	3:52	5:28	12:53	4:53	6:04	8:19	9:55	
THU	28	4/6	3:51	5:27	12:54	4:53	6:05	8:20	9:56	
FRI	29	5/6	3:50	5:26	12:54	4:53	6:05	8:20	9:58	
SAT	30	6/6	3:49	5:26	12:54	4:54	6:06	8:21	9:59	
SUN	31	7/6	3:48	5:25	12:54	4:54	6:06	8:22	10:00	

## ICR Working Committee's

### Building Management

A great deal of routine maintenance and upgrade is regularly performed by members of the Building Management team saving significant expense to ICR. Several Security Cameras are installed in and around the perimeter of the building and monitored (24/7) round the clock. Audio and video facilities are fully operational inside the Mosque. Dedicated telephone lines provide direct connections to the local Fire and Police Departments.

### Mosque and Religious Affairs Committee

The Committee is diligent and responsive in distributing Zakat, Fitra, Sadaqah monies collected by ICR to eligible individuals and organizations. As mentioned earlier, we do not have a permanent *Imam* identified for the Mosque yet. Therefore for Friday prayers, we request congregation members and various people within community at-large to devote their time and come to ICR Mosque to lead the prayers. Alhamdulillah, so far we have scheduled an Imam through the end of September 2009. We owe especial gratitude to Br. Gami Mostafa who has agreed to lead Friday prayers once a month by regularly taking time off from his work.

Hafiz Habeebur Rehman and his wife, also a Hafiz, will teach recitation and memorization of the Holy Qur'an for \$100 per person per month. Starting In May, a new class is offered on weekends from 2:30 – 4:30 pm to the congregation for the Recitation and Memorization of the Holy Qur'an. The class will focus on learning the correct pronunciation and rules of Tajweed. To enroll in this class please contact Br. Meherban Syed (845 429 0876) or Br. Gami Mostafa (845 639 9155).

Tajweed and Hadees Halaqas are held every weekend at the ICR Mosque after Fajr prayers. Br. Ezz Hamza is giving the **Tajweed Halaqa** on Saturday and Br. Gami Mostafa is giving the **Hadees Halaqa** on Sunday. Attendance is increasing and significant improvement in recital and pronunciation is evident. Attendees also enjoy a sumptuous breakfast provided at the Mosque.

### Education Committee

ICR School Mid-Term exams were held during March and April. After the exams, the Parents-Teacher meetings for the school year 2009 were conducted. Comments and recommendations received from parents are being evaluated for potential changes and implementation.

### Fund Raising Committee

As indicated earlier, the annual ICR Fund Raising event is scheduled on Saturday May 16, 2009 at the Holiday Inn, Suffern, New York.

### Social Activities and Food Management

On Sundays, light refreshment (snacks, juices and tea) is provided at no cost to students. Lunch if available is also provided with an optional \$5 donation.

### Funeral and Cemetery Committee

ICR Funeral services are available for the community. Currently, ICR has a designated area (off of Rt. 303, south of the Palisades Mall) located at the Rockland Cemetery in Sparkill, NY.

### Event Planning Committee

On Sunday, April 5, 2009 a Barbeque was held at the Mosque for a community get together as well as to generate revenues for the Mosque. It was attended by several families and turned out to be a very successful event. Based on the positive feedback, the Committee plans to schedule this event frequently during the summer months.

### Youth Group

ICR Mosque grounds require periodic maintenance and cleaning. On bright sunny days several young members actively participate under supervision to complete these tasks cheerfully. See recent photograph—right. →

### Library and Newsletter Committee

The first ICR Newsletter of 2009 is being issued on May 16 2009 coinciding with 21 Jamadi Awwal 1430.

### Family Social Services Committee

Members are actively participating in meetings to review various topics of concern. A questionnaire is being prepared to survey the community priorities concerning their needs in this important area of service to adults and teenagers. The Committee is planning to invite professionals as guest speakers to provide guidance and share their expertise with the congregation members.

### Finance and Record Keeping

The Committee maintains accurate financial records. Receipts are promptly issued for donations received by checks and funds are deposited in the appropriate ICR account. Monthly income and expenses are meticulously recorded and relevant reports are provided on a monthly basis to the Board.

### Interfaith and Dawa Committee

The mission of ICR Interfaith and Dawa Committee is to promote understanding of Islam through education, communication and dialogue with other faiths.

In pursuit of this goal, a congratulatory note was sent to the newly appointed Archbishop of New York. Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan responded by letter and on April 15th at his inauguration speech at St Peter's Cathedral in New York City elegantly referenced Islamic Community and its importance.

Correspondence on Page 6...



'continued from Interfaith and Dawa Committee

March 16, 2009

His Excellency, Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan  
The Archbishop of New York  
1011 1st Avenue  
N.Y. N.Y 10022

Your Excellency,

On behalf of Interfaith and Dawa Committee of the Islamic Center of Rockland, New York, I welcome your arrival to New York.

Our mission at ICR Interfaith and Dawa Committee is to promote understanding of Islam through education, communication and dialogue thereby achieving harmony, understanding and relationship between people of all faiths.

I believe your spiritual support is highly needed and cherished by all New Yorkers facing stress and anxiety especially during these economic turbulent times.

With deepest regards and respect,

Azeem Farooki  
Chairman, Interfaith & Dawa Committee, Islamic Center of Rockland, New York



April 1, 2009  
Year of St. Paul

Mr. Azeem Farooki  
1 Kohut Street  
Pomona, NY 10970

Dear Mr. Farooki:

Thank you most sincerely for your letter of March 16, 2009, congratulating me on the occasion of my appointment as Archbishop of New York and introducing me to the ICR Interfaith and Dawa Committee. Your thoughtfulness is deeply appreciated. Be assured, Mr. Farooki, that I look forward to working with the Islamic community upon my arrival in New York.

With prayerful best wishes, may I am,

Faithfully,

Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan  
Archbishop of Milwaukee  
Archbishop-designate of New York

### The Importance of *ILM* (Knowledge)

Our religion Islam has great importance on learning and acquiring *ILM* – knowledge. No other religion places so much emphasis on learning. The very first word Prophet (PBBUH) was asked to speak was *IQRA* – Read.

**In the Holy Qur’an there are: 704 references on KNOWLEDGE; 230 references on BOOK; 319 references on WRITING.**

The Qur’an reminds us:

*Just as We have sent among you a Messenger of yourselves, to recite Our Ayat to you, and to cleanse you, and to teach you the Book and the Wisdom, and to teach you that which you did not know. (Sura 2 Al-Baqarah, Ayat 151)*

*He has enumerated everything in numbers. (Sura 72 Al-Jinn, Ayat 28)*

*And that those who have been given knowledge may know that it is the truth from your Lord, so that they may believe therein and their hearts may submit humbly to Him. Surely! Allah is guiding those who believe to a right path. (Sura 22 Al-Hajj, Ayat 54)*

*Surely the right number of months in the sight of God is 12 in a year – so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are sacred. (Sura 9 At-Taubah, Ayat 36)*

*It is not permitted for the Sun to overtake the Moon nor does the night outstrip the day. They float each other in an orbit. (Sura 36 Ya-Sin, Ayat 39)*

The Prophet (PBBUH) said:

*“He who leaves home in search of knowledge walks in the path of Allah.”*

*“The men of knowledge are the inheritors of the prophets”.*

*“The acquisition of knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim.”*

*“Seek knowledge even if you have to go to China”.*

*“Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave”.*

Islamic civilization has always emphasized and cherished acquiring knowledge. In the past, every Muslim city had libraries and the scholar has always been held in the highest esteem. In 830, Caliph al-Mamun established the famous House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Hikma) in Baghdad. The House of Wisdom consisted of an extensive library, an academy, a translation bureau and several astronomical observatories. All manuscripts from the House of Wisdom were later on translated from Arabic into Latin (English) and also in Hebrew thus providing the fundamental knowledge in philosophy and science to European scholars. In the tenth century Baghdad was considered the intellectual center of the world. In recognition to the Caliph al-Mamun’s contributions to astronomy, one of the craters on Moon is named **al-Mamun**. One of the most famous scholars at the House of Wisdom was Mohammad Ibn Musa al-

Khwarizmi born in Khiva, also known as Khorezm, Uzbekistan. In recognition to his contributions to astronomy and geography, another crater on Moon is named **al-Khwarizmi**. Also, a stamp was issued by the Soviet Union in honor of his birthday 1200 years ago. According to **Michael Hamilton Morgan** in his latest book **“Lost History – Tareeq Zayey”** **“al- Khwarizmi showed the way of not only building of 100 story towers and mile long bridges but the very essence of designing the modern computers; calculating the point at which a space ship will intersect with the orbit of Jupiter’s moon; the reactions of nuclear physics; the cellular processes of biotechnology; pharmaceutical and marketing research; the calculus of global economy; the language and intelligence of computer software and the confidentiality of modern phone conversations”**. What



Mohammad Ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, an extremely religious Muslim, did was indeed a super human effort. ICR is looking forward to honoring likes of al-Khwarizmi from the young Muslim generation of Rockland County, Insha'Allah.

-AZEEM FAROOKI

### “Woww”

"Time to get up" called my mother. It was Sunday! Time to go to the new Mosque! I was so excited! I got out of bed and got dressed. Then I ate my breakfast. Finally it was time to go. We piled into the car and were off!

We drove for fifteen minutes. The mosque is located at Valley Cottage, NY 10989. We call it the ICR (Islamic Center of Rockland). Fifteen minutes seemed like a long time. It always does. Finally we were there.

"Woww!" I gasped as I stepped out of the car. It was beautiful! It was as colorful as a rainbow. The windows were as smooth as ice. The landscaping looked beautiful too. There were plants everywhere. We went inside. I walked into the Prayer hall.....it looked amazing. I was standing on a soft green carpet. It's called a Prayer rug. It looked probably 20 sq. yards. Two sections (men and women) were being separated by a velvety green curtain. There were small book shelves filled with the Holy books and the translations (Qur'an). I went downstairs. It was completely different. It had a white, black, and grey marble floor. There was a kitchen (for food on every Sunday and special occasions), a couple of classrooms, two staircases for men and women each and a boiler room.

We had a lot of fun. We played and prayed all day. But then we had to go home. "I can't wait until I come back tomorrow." I whispered over my shoulder.

**(The above article is written by Fatima Farooq, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade student and she won a First Prize in literature “Reflections” at Elmwood Elementary School on 10/09/2008)**



## Community News

First, we like to point out the joyous events celebrating **Ameen** – completing the recital of Holy Qur'an - that were recently held for two young students:

**Fatima Farooq**, 10 years old completed her Qur'an recital in March 09.

**Aleena Dar**, 12 years old completed her Qur'an recital in April 09.

Second, we are extremely pleased to announce the accomplishments of the following students **during the academic year 2008-2009**:

Mishal Aminullah, from Clarkstown High School South is placed on the Principal's High Honor Roll. She is a recipient of: Social Studies Excellence Award; Academic Excellence Award and Certificate of Excellence for Outstanding Achievement in American Sign Language. She was also honored at "Celebration of Academic Excellence" ceremony.

Maimuna Rashid, from North Rockland High School is placed on the Principal's List and on the Honor Roll.

Syeda Sundus Mujahid, from North Rockland High School is placed on Principal's List and has been inducted into the National Honor Society as well as the Mathematics Honor Society and Science Honor Society.

Labiqa Mujahid has been inducted into the National Junior Honor Society at Fieldstone Secondary School.

Adeel Dar has been accepted into the Mentor Talented Student Honors Program at RCC.

Bari Dar is placed on the Honor Roll at Nanuet High School.

Shahrukh Ajazuddin is enrolled in Honor Classes at Clarkstown High School North.

Sara Beg has been inducted in the National Honor Society at Pascack Hills High School.

Zoha Mian is enrolled in Honor Classes at Pearl River High School.

Mona Ziaullah has been inducted into the Science Honor society, Foreign Language Honor Society, English Honor Society, Social Studies Honor Society, and on the Principal's List., also accepted into the Mentor Talented Student Honors Program at RCC (early admit).

Usman Ahmed from Nanuet High School has been inducted into the National Honor Society.

Mohsin Ahmed from Nanuet High School has been inducted into the National Honor Society.

Saima Ahmed from Nanuet High School has been inducted into the National Honor Society.

Danish Chawala received the Academic Awards at North High School.

Sofia Chawala received Academic Awards at North High School.

Gia Chawala is enrolled in Honor Classes, recipient of Star Wars and participant in the National History Day at State level.

ICR is very proud of our young and talented congregation members and their outstanding academic accomplishments. We congratulate them as well as their parents for their diligence, patience and perseverance in motivating their children in following the teachings of Prophet Mohammed (PBBUH) and accomplish the goals. May Allah bestow His Blessings upon them and may the Holy Qur'an be their guidance in life leading them always on a **Sirate Mustaqeem. Ameen.**



In other news, Dr. Alima Farooki participated in a Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment at The Rosa Park Human Rights Center. She represented **Islamic Culture** on Women's Panel Discussion and was a recipient of **Heroes of Humanity Award** from Rockland County Commission on Human Rights.

Alhamdulillah, in the month of March 2009, the first **Shahada** at the ICR Mosque was taken by Br. James. In addition, Br. Luqman and Br. Abdul Rehman

also received their **Shahada** at the Spring Valley Mosque location.

Masha' Allah.





### Classified Ads

The following advertisements reflect the respect and affection towards ICR organization by local professionals. Please note that the entire cost of printing the ICR Newsletter is paid by the following professionals and business establishments in Rockland County. We certainly appreciate their support and hope that you will recognize them and use their services when needed.

#### Healthcare:

Office Hours By Appointment      Phone: (845) 623-4180

**MUHAMMAD AMINULLAH, M.D.**  
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274 S. Middletown Rd.      Nanuet, NY 10954

Office Hours By Appointment      Phone: (914) 623-4180

**FAYYAZ A. SHEIKH, M.D., F.A.G.S.**  
*Internal Medicine, Geriatrics*

274 S. Middletown Rd.      Nanuet, NY 10954

Phone: (845) 369-8671      Fax: (845) 369-8673


**GHOUSIA. J. PASHA, MD.**  
Board Certified Internist

12-A North Airmont Road, Suffern NY 10901

Phone: (845) 369-8671      Fax: (845) 369-8673

**MOHAMMAD HAFEEZ, MD**  
Board Certified Internist

12-A North Airmont Road, Suffern NY 10901



**ALIMA B. FAROOKI, M.D.**  
*Diplomate American Board of  
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Continued on next

### Classified Ads—continued'

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Continued on next page...

**Classified Ads—Continued...**

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**VALERO CAR WASH CONVENIENCE STORE**

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118 ROUTE 9W  
HAVERSTRAW NY 10927  
845-269-3666  
[accarwash@hotmail.com](mailto:accarwash@hotmail.com)



**Editor: Azeem Farooki**

**This brief note is to express my gratitude for the opportunity to compose the first issue of ICR Newsletter. I sincerely hope that we can continue this effort by receiving ongoing support from our congregation members, especially the young students by their contribution of new ideas and interesting articles for the forthcoming publications. I am grateful to Br. Gami Mustafa and Br. Ezz Hamza for their guidance in my selection of Ayats from the Holy Qur'an.**

**-Azeem Farooki-**

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