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**Inside this issue:**

- LOVE THY NEIGHBOR – HUMANITARIAN DAY **2**
- FROM THE SEERAH OF OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH) **2**
- HOW TO BE HEALTHY SPIRITUALLY, PHYSICALLY, AND MENTALLY **3**

## Dar-us-Sunnah (DUS) Masjid and Community Center Newsletter

### KEEPING A TRADITION ALIVE – CELEBRATING 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SEERAT-UN-NABI PROGRAM

By the mercy of Allah (SWT), members of the community came together on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2011 to conduct a program to learn and reflect upon the life and works of our beloved Prophet (PBUH) – for the 20<sup>th</sup> straight year.

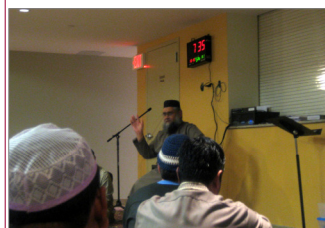
The program started with a recitation from the Holy Quran by Hafiz Marzuk. This was followed by a quiz competition for two grade groups – 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades and 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The contest was conducted in a written format with participants randomly selecting 5 questions from a bank of 180 questions. The bank of 180 questions along with answers were made available to all participants prior to the event to encourage learning about our beloved Prophet (PBUH), Quran, and Islam. A speech contest followed the quiz competition. This event was open to middle school, high school, and college students. Candidates were allowed to speak on a topic of their choosing for 3 minutes. Members of the community helped judge the event. The final part of the children’s program was the chorus presentation of young children between Kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. They beautifully sang “Balaghal Ulaa Bikamalihi” which allowed everyone in attendance to understand

the importance of saying blessings upon the Messenger (PBUH) of Allah (SWT).



**Dr. Bara Sarraj giving his talk on the character of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)**

The second part of the program started with a talk by Dr. Bara Sarraj, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. His talk was from the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and focused specifically on the character of our beloved Prophet (PBUH). Dr. Sarraj’s talk was followed by a keynote address by Shaykh Mohammed Amin Kholwadia of Darul



**Shaykh Amin delivering his keynote address**

Qasim. Shaykh Amin spoke about the need to realize that Islam is a living religion and that the only way to keep Islam alive is by practicing the religion the way it was re-

vealed by Allah (SWT) in the Quran, taught by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and practiced by his companions (may Allah be pleased with them).

At this point in the evening, all that was left was the announcement of winners and the distribution of awards and certificates. Certificates were distributed to those who participated and trophies were awarded to all those who participated in the children’s chorus in addition to the top three finishers in the quiz and speech contests. Amina Islam and Ahsana Islam won the quiz contests in the middle and high school groups respectively. Sajid Ahmed, Ahsana Islam, and Faraz Saiduzzaman won the speech contests in the middle school, high school, and university groups respectively.

The program was concluded with Dua followed by dinner.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**7th APRIL 2012**

**DAR-US-SUNNAH**

**FUNDRAISING DINNER**

**HOLIDAY INN, SKOKIE, IL**

**6:00 PM**



**Serving humanity – one bag at a time**

Ever since the conceptualization of a Masjid by the name of Dar-us-Sunnah in Evanston, members of the community have been volunteering their time and resources to serve the neighbors.

This year was no exception. Dar-us-Sunnah held a Humanitarian Day on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2011. Over 300 bags of dry food were prepared by volunteers (made possible by the generous donation of members and friends) and about half of them were



**Bags of dry food ready for pick up**

distributed that day. The remaining bags were placed in the pantry to allow area residents to collect dry food on an ongoing basis. Each bag contained a combination of items such as cans of soup, noodles/pasta, beans, greens, corn, and meat/fish. In addition to collecting bags of food, guests were also able

to select from a wide collection of pre-owned laundered winter wears such as jackets, coats, and sweaters.



**Our physicians pose for BARTA before getting started**



**Gently used laundered winter wear waiting for a new owner**

What separated this year's Humanitarian Day from years past was the operation of a free clinic

the entire day for area residents. Doctors from the greater Chicago area volunteered their time and supplies to provide wellness screenings (that included blood pressure and blood glucose measurement), administer flu vaccines, provide consult for different ailments, and provide physiotherapy to address common joint and



**Handing out instructions to volunteers at the clinic**

muscular aches and pains. Conducting the clinic with the assistance of volunteers were Dr. Zafar Ahmed (MD), Dr. Khaled Khorshid (DC), Dr. Khalil Rahaman (DN), and Dr. Mohammad Razzaque (MD). By the grace of Allah (SWT) the event was deemed a tremendous success. This would not have been possible without the tireless effort of our volunteers. While the majority of the volunteers were from within our community, a special thanks goes out to the students of Northwestern University who decided to spend their Saturday with Dar-us-Sunnah serving those in need and thus contributing to the overall success of the day.



**Volunteers from Northwestern University braving the cold**

**FROM THE SEERAH OF OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH) – DR. BARA SARRAJ**

In the name of Allah, praise is to Him and His mercy and prayers are to His messenger, Muhammad. In the context of talking about the Meccan era and associated calamities that inflicted the prophet and companions, scholar Mubarakfuri, the author of the Sealed Nectar discussed the factors that were behind the patience and steadfastness the companions showed over the years. He specified six factors that I will rearrange in importance.

1. The belief in Allah. Muhammad, peace be upon him, spent 13 years over the Meccan period teaching the companions the tenets of Islam, Iman and Ihsan.
2. The belief in the Day of Judgment.
3. The Quran.
4. The leadership of Muhammad, peace be upon him.
5. The promised good news of future triumph in this life and afterlife.
6. The high sense of accountability on the part of the companions.

They were a unique generation that felt the importance of the message of Islam, believed fully in Allah, his messenger and the day of judgment, acted upon the orders in Quran and Sunnah, and deserved the Quranic description in Al Imran " you are the best of nations produced to humanity, you order the good, forbid the bad and believe in Allah". This acquired status as the "best of nations" is neither free nor unconditional. The three conditions are believing in Allah, ordering the good and forbidding the bad. Did they meet these conditions? The answer comes years later when Allah re-described Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions in Alfath "He made them adhere to the word of Taqwa and they were ones to deserve it and be shaped by it".

Let's screen ourselves against their great characteristics and see where we are compared to them.

At work, during a religious discussion, my boss asked me about my religious references. I told him about the Holy Quran, the only true book for mankind, revealed by God through angel Gabriel to our last Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), 1400 years ago. He asked me, "Why is it true?" I replied, "Nobody can write any single verse like the Holy Quran." Then he asked me, "Did you read Veda, Puran? Those books are more than 5000 years old. Why are those not true? People cannot write anything like them. Read some comparative studies; open your mind." My very limited knowledge told me to stop and not argue.

On another day, he asked me, "Did you read the poem, *Rather Mela*?" I replied, "Yes, written by Rabindranath Thakur." He said, "People are so funny. They are trying to touch the Rath, to be blessed, but the Antarjami (who knows the heart) was laughing looking at the ignorant people's actions." I told him this is Iman and thought to myself, the verse of the song, *Colors of Islam* (by Dawud Wharansby): "Qur'an will be your paint, and your brush will be Iman, so fill the world with color, every color of Islam." I prayed for him. Quran and Iman are the travelling expenses for your journey in this world, so use them as your spiritual guidelines in all matters.

On a physical level, health is the most important *Ni'mah* (Gift) to people from God. If you are fit, you can praise your Lord better.

God gave you the body and the mind. It is your duty to maintain them. This begins from cleanliness. We all know the Hadith, "Cleanliness is half of Iman." (Saheeh Muslim). This does not just mean showering regularly, but cleaning your minds from all sorts of evil and bad thinking. Say *Astagfirullah* all the time.

To maintain a good body you have to work hard. Some tips are: 1) proper vaccination; 2) healthy eating; 3) regular exercise; 4) avoiding modifiable risk factors, like smoking and alcohol; 5) regular checkups; and 6) participation of recommended screenings. If needed, get some professional help.

Life is full of stresses, related to health, finance, relationships, job, emotions etc. To decrease these stresses and stay healthy mentally you should try: 1) Self-management, 2) Time management. Try to do today that which is important without making it most urgent later. I use a to-do list for all my jobs, and every time I finish something, I put a ✓ mark and feel a great sense of accomplishment, even when buying a gallon of milk.

Life is short and precise. You should not worry too much about anything. It is also well known that those who have no worry or are very stressed out cannot succeed. Moderate worry is the best.

Staying healthy also relates to the family. You have to always be thankful to God for family. You have to be loving, caring, respectful and fair towards your spouse. Feel for him or her. Tell him or her, "Thank you" even for the smallest things. Accept things; do not try to find mistakes. Maintain a proper attitude. Try to be forgiving. Cooking and cleaning are not very easy jobs, and neither is putting bread on the table.

Be dutiful towards parents, siblings, friends and family. Call and visit your mom and dad.

Try to solve their very simple basic needs. Go and sit down beside them. Hold them in your arms, talk, and look at their eyes. The dua you will get is the most needed thing for your entire journey.

Lastly, you have to be thankful for what you already have and enjoy it as much as possible. Be happy to have only what you really

need. Also, do not be judgmental. Only Allah (SWT) will judge people for their deeds and intentions. It is not your duty.

Imam Shaikh Kifah of Mosque Foundation, during a Faith class, once said "Be fair in relationships, 1) to Allah, 2) to yourself, and 3) to fellow people." To do that, you must always, 1) depend on Allah (Tawakalltu 'ala Allah), 2) follow up any unintentional bad actions immediately with good things, and 3) show your best manners towards other people.

So love, laugh, learn, listen, lead and live happily, be patient, and do good deeds, and Inshallah you will have a healthy lifestyle.

# Dar-us-Sunnah Masjid & Community Center

## Upcoming events:

2012/01/01: Dua Mahfil @ 03:00 PM

2012/01/07: Tafseer ul Quran and Dars e Hadith Program (Bangla) @ 06:00 PM

2012/01/21: History of Islam Program and Story Time for Children (English) @ 06:00 PM

2012/02/04: Tafseer ul Quran and Dars e Hadith Program (Bangla) @ 06:00 PM

2012/02/18: History of Islam Program and Story Time for Children (English) @ 06:00 PM

2012/03/03: Tafseer ul Quran and Dars e Hadith Program (Bangla) @ 06:00 PM

2012/03/17: History of Islam Program and Story Time for Children (English) @ 06:00 PM

To donate, please visit:

<http://www.darussunnah.org/>

Start Date	Fajr	Zuhr	Jumma	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
1/1/2012	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	3:15 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
1/8/2012	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	3:30 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
1/22/2012	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	3:45 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
2/1/2012	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	3:45 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
2/5/2012	6:00 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:00 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
2/19/2012	6:00 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:15 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
2/26/2012	5:45 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:15 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
3/1/2012	5:45 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:15 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
3/4/2012	5:30 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:30 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
3/11/2012	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	5:30 PM	Sunset	9:00 PM
3/18/2012	6:00 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	5:45 PM	Sunset	9:00 PM
3/25/2012	5:45 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	5:45 PM	Sunset	9:00 PM

## Disclaimer:

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