

**Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem**  
**In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful**

## Joint Executive Committee Newsletter Fall 2007

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### WHERE'D THE SUMMER GO?

Sometimes it's hard to remember where those two short summer months went, especially on the first school day of the year, when you're either struggling to get yourself out of bed to get to classes or struggling to get your kids ready for school to start a new year. And even if you're not in school or have school-aged children, if those summer months are times to rest, now's a perfect time to think about re-focussing yourself—professionally, personally, and spiritually. We've all got great ideas we may have put on the back burner and half-completed projects that require that extra push to get finished, and with the distractions of summer behind us, we've got a great opportunity, with our colleagues back at work after vacations, our minds and bodies rested, to put that focus back into our lives and bring some of these great initiatives to fruition.

Think now about your relationship with the Az Zahraa community as well. We know our community has a massive amount of talent, and we're excited to get access to that talent as part of our shared vision. So let us know who you are. Have a great idea for fundraising? Why not tell our Leader of Fundraising, Br. **Mohamed R. N. Dewji**. A great idea for a spiritually engaging program? Bring it to Br. **Usama Al Atar**, our Leader of Spirituality or to Br. **Hussein Bhojani**, the Director of Religious and Cultural Affairs. Some useful advice for our web site? Take it to Br. **Michael Symons**, our Director of Public Relations. Volunteering your time and energy toward helping the Az Zahraa community is a great gift to us, but it's also a great gift to you. It's rewarding in so many ways, to so many people, especially you.

If you'd like to volunteer, please visit our web site at [www.az-zahraa.org](http://www.az-zahraa.org) and look for the relevant committee member or community leader's contact information. If you have trouble finding it, or if you just want to let us know you're here to help, please contact Br. Michael Symons at [public-relations@az-zahraa.org](mailto:public-relations@az-zahraa.org).

### GETTING READY FOR RAMADHAN

*"O people! A month has approached you laden with blessings, mercy, and forgiveness; it is a month which God regards as the best of all months. Its days, in the sight of God, are the best of days; its nights are the best of nights; its hours are the best of hours. It is a month in which you are invited to be the guests of God, and you are regarded during it as worthy of enjoying God's grace. Your breathing in it praises the Almighty, and your sleeping adores Him."*  
--The Holy Prophet Muhammad (sawws)

Alhamdulillah, we're just about at Ramadhan again! The Az Zahraa Islamic Centre is looking forward to serving your spirit with inspiring programs. We've published a schedule for the entire month Ramadhan, which you can find at [www.az-zahraa.org](http://www.az-zahraa.org). The Ladies' Management Committee has also done great work in

organising a potluck Iftaar menu for the first two weeks again available at our web site. All dates are, of course, subject to moonsighting—we'll update the web site as soon as we know when the month has arrived.

During the month, the ladies will be holding their own Dua Program every Monday, Tuesday and Saturday nights at the same time as the men at the Az-Zahraa Islamic Centre. The Ramadhan Duas will be recited on each of these nights and in addition, Dua-e-Tawwasul will be recited on Tuesdays. Any women, youth or children wishing to recite on these nights should contact Sr. Tanvir Batlawala (email: [lmsecretary@az-zahraa.org](mailto:lmsecretary@az-zahraa.org)).

We're also very pleased to announce that Sheikh Abbas Jaffer from London is joining us, insha'allah, for the final two weeks of Ramadhan. We want to focus this time on creating an invigorating environment for everyone in our community, particularly for our younger brothers and sisters, so make sure you free your calendar for these nights. We'll be running contests with exciting prizes for young people aged 8-10, 11-14, and 15-18, and we'll announce more details about this as the time approaches.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us for volunteering opportunities during this sacred month. Contact Br. **Mehboob Khaku** or Sis. **Shila Dewji** and let them know your availability.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING

Over the summer, our community was busy with activity. Here are some of the highlights:

- **New Committees and Appointments**—The Az Zahraa Islamic Centre/SMCBC was very pleased to begin working toward a Shared Vision by engaging a new group of Presidential Appointments in a variety of Leadership capacities, like Health and Wellness, Spirituality, Fundraising, and Volunteering. The full list of appointments is available on our web site at [www.az-zahraa.org](http://www.az-zahraa.org). For more information, or to get details on contributing to the community, please contact [public-relations@az-zahraa.org](mailto:public-relations@az-zahraa.org).
- **Discovering Me!**, a weekend camp for young Muslim sisters embarking on their journey to Bulough, gave our younger sisters an excellent opportunity to spend quality time with some role models while learning how to cope with the changes they're facing. The sisters who dedicated themselves to this event as volunteers all deserve our respect for the great work they did in putting on a first-rate event for our young sisters, and in helping to share this event with the world—nation-wide attention, from the Vancouver Sun to the Council on American-Islamic Relations to CBC's Arabic service in Montreal, focussed on this story as one of the real successes of Islamic communities in North America.
- The **Lady Fatima's Hands** event, held to mark the birthday of the inimitable Bibi Fatima (as), was an enormous success. Showcasing two top sisters as speakers, joined by our Leader of Spirituality Br. Usama al Atar, the program shattered the traditional image of the cloistered Muslim woman and brought new visitors, particularly women, to our centre. This was an awesome opportunity to share the beautiful spirit of our community with our neighbours while bringing top-notch female speakers to enlighten us.
- The community was happy to launch **The University of the Ahl-ul-Bayt**, an Urdu language program held on the weekends by our own resident Aalim Syed Javed Jafri. Featuring Islamic history, including the history of the Holy House, Tafsir of the Holy Qu'ran, Du'as, and poetry, this ongoing program provides a clear window into the Household of the Prophet in the tradition-rich Urdu language. The program commences at 12:00PM at Az Zahraa Islamic Centre every Saturday. If you haven't had a chance, please make an effort to attend.
- The **Imam Ali (as) Endowment Fund** is a bold new initiative, launched on the occasion of the wilaadat of our first imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as), designed to help foster our community towards financial sustainability for future generations. As the Holy Month approaches, please consider giving generously to the Imam Ali (as) Endowment Fund. Contact Br. Mohamed R. N. Dewji, Br. Zuheir Merali, Br. Ali Pirbhai, Sis. Shahin Virji, or Sis. Kaniz Jetha for more information.

## NOTES FROM THE LMC

Since the election of the new 2007/8 Ladies Management Committee (LMC), members of the LMC have been working hard to ensure a smooth transition. We have spent a great deal of time developing new and exciting ways of delivering various programs and services at our Centre as well as nurturing those that have been the pillar of our Centre. Thank you for your confidence and patience in us during this exciting and challenging time.

### Az-Zahraa Volunteers:

The LMC has created 8 volunteer teams who assist in weekly clean-up during functions at our Centre. We would like to thank these 8 NEW teams and their leaders for committing their time over the next year. The team leaders for each volunteer group are:

Sr. Maher Rashid	Sr. Tanvir Batlawala
Sr. Shabnam Dewji	Sr. Abida Merali
Sr. Zahra Jaffer	Sr. Shahnaaz Dharamsi
Sr. Anis Visram	Sr. Shahin Virji

Attached to this newsletter is a schedule of LMC committees, including the Ghul & Kafan Committee, the Siala & Ziarat Niyaz Committee, and the Cooking Committee, and each section highlights the appropriate contact for information or volunteering.

The LMC is also looking for volunteers to join the Serving Committee which includes assisting during dinners at the Centre. If you are interested in joining the Serving Committee OR one of the 8 volunteer teams above, please contact Sr. Sheila Dewji (Volunteer Services Director) at 604-540-7001 or Sr. Minaz Bhatti (Assistant Director) at 604-507-8180 OR e-mail us at [LMCVolunteerServices@az-zahraa.org](mailto:LMCVolunteerServices@az-zahraa.org)

### DONATIONS OF EXTRA BELONGINGS TO THE CENTRE

The Az-Zahraa Islamic Centre is very appreciative of the generosity of individuals who have donated, Mohr, Tasbi, Namaz Chadars, Dua books and Ziyarat books in the past. However, the Centre now has enough of these resources and materials and is not in need of donations of this sort at this time. Therefore, you are respectfully asked not to leave these items at the Centre. There are other centers that may be in need of these materials and thus would appreciate these donations. Thank you for your support and understanding.

### Good Practices at the Az-Zahraa Islamic Centre

- Young children should not be left unaccompanied at any time. Please ensure that your child is always with you or an appointed guardian during Salaat, Majalis and at all other times (including Tabarruk).
- Young children should always be accompanied by a parent or guardian to the washroom. This will help to reinforce the child on the rules of Najasat as well as to ensure the safety of that child.
- For their well being and safety, please ensure that children do not enter the kitchen unaccompanied.
- No food or beverages should be taken into the Masjid and Mezzanine areas.
- Please ensure that the entrance ways are not blocked in the Imambargha at any time.
- Cell phones should be turned off or put on silent mode during any given function.

### KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING!

The LMC is committed to serving the community through various programs and services and we can only achieve success in these areas with good communication. *"Keeping Connected"* is a new weekly online newswire developed and maintained by the Centre's Program Director, Br. Mohamedhusein Meghji. All LMC programs are posted on this newswire and emailed to all members on the email list each Monday. By *"Keeping Connected"*, you can be sure to receive the most up-to-date information on the various events happening at the Az-Zahraa Islamic Centre.

If you are not already receiving the *"Keeping Connected"* newswire through your email, please visit our website ([www.az-zahraa.org](http://www.az-zahraa.org)) and email Br. Mohamedhusein Ladak to add you to the email list.

In addition, we hope to create a database for the ladies section for special mailings; if you would like to receive information about upcoming ladies events and programs please email Shahzia Rashid at [assistantsecretary@az-zahraa.org](mailto:assistantsecretary@az-zahraa.org).

### **KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING!**

- *"Keeping Connected"* Newswire
- Az-Zahraa Islamic Centre's Website: [www.az-zahraa.org](http://www.az-zahraa.org)
- Telephone Recording Service: (604) 279-1535
- Bulletin Boards at the Centre

### Bulletin Boards – Ladies Side

The bulletin boards at the Center are about to have a face lift! If you wish to post anything on the board, please contact Sister Minaz Bhatti at 604.507.8180 or Sister Shahzia Rashid at 604.278.9266.

### RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The Director and Assistant Director of Religious and Cultural Affairs would like to invite all ladies to provide feedback and suggestions about the past and current programs held at Az-Zahraa Islamic Center as well as programs they would like to see happen in the future.

If you would like to make a presentation or recite during a ladies function, please contact Sis. Tanvir Batlawala at 604-517-1386 or Sis. Nargis Rehmtulla

### LMC - MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

Becoming a member of the SMCBC (Ladies Section) will initiate progress and a healthier democratic environment. The cost of becoming a member on the Ladies Section is only \$50 per year. Some of the advantages of becoming a member include:

- You can hold a position on the Ladies Management Committee and serve your Community in a different way.
- You can vote in the Ladies Annual General Meeting and other special meetings – you now have a voice.
- Any announcements in the Ladies Jamaat can be made at a reduced rate.
- You can get a table to sell / advertise your product at a reduced rate.
- Your subscription will go towards the running of this complex – which means you will be rewarded in the hereafter.

To obtain a copy of the guidelines and application form, please visit [www.az-zahraa.org](http://www.az-zahraa.org). For further information, please contact the Membership Committee (Sr. Shazia Rashid, Sr. Shamim Jagani or Sr. Zehra Moledina).

*Become a member now and be a part of the democratic process to make a difference!*