

Interfaith Action of Evanston

Muhammad Saiduzzaman Gives IA a Muslim Perspective

Muhammad Saiduzzaman, from Dar-Us-Sunnah Masjid (Mosque) and Community Center, has enthusiastically agreed to make the keynote address at Interfaith Action's Vision Keepers Dinner. Muhammad represents a new community of faith and service in Evanston that is renovating a former church property at 2045 Brown.

At present, the property is owned by the Bangladesh Islamic Community of Greater Chicago, who have been using the basement of an apartment building for monthly worship and religious services. When development of the building is completed, there will be services for the Bangladeshis, in their own language, but the entire Muslim community will be welcomed for all Islamic prayer and services.

Mr. Saiduzzaman has been an American resident for 26 years and a citizen for over 18 years. He came to this country to attend Roosevelt University, where he was a student in industrial engineering. He later received his M.B.A. from Lake Forest School of Management. This translated into a good job with a



Muhammad Saiduzzaman

small, multinational electronic manufacturing company, where he is Director of Operations and Quality. Muhammad, his wife, and teenage son reside in northern Chicago.

Muhammad is optimistic about good relations between his faith community and faith-based organizations in Evanston, especially Interfaith Action. He actively seeks to make connections and became aware of IA's activities when he and former president Lois Carlson talked at a Church Women United meeting. Under his leadership, the Bangladesh Islamic Community Center of Greater Chicago has been instrumental in humanitarian food, clothing, and relief drives.

Vision Keepers to Be Honored

The Interfaith Action of Evanston Annual Vision Keepers Dinner will be held at the Hotel Orrington on Sunday, February 24, 2008. This major fundraiser allows faith communities to celebrate common bonds in faith as well as service goals. At this dinner, each congregation publicly honors one individual as a *Vision Keeper*, who embodies values that positively impact both the faith community and the larger community.

The evening begins with refreshments at 5:30 P.M.,

followed by dinner at 6:30 P.M. The keynote speaker is Muhammad Saiduzzaman, from Dar-Us-Sunnah Masjid and Community Center, Evanston. Tickets are \$65 per person. Tables of 10 may be reserved for \$650. Each faith community should include the *Vision Keeper's* ticket in their head count.

In early January, faith organizations will receive a nomination form and dinner reservation form. Please RSVP by February 4, via the forms, or call the Interfaith Action office at 847-475-1150.

..to bring together communities of faith and spirit to serve people who are hungry and homeless and to express our shared values through action and interfaith dialogue..

Interfaith Action of Evanston
Purpose Statement

Seasons of Faith

More than 50 people gathered Saturday morning, July 28, at Clark Street Beach for a peace meditation service led by Polly Liontis, who teaches therapeutic yoga classes for Evanston Hospital. Participants were invited to focus on the suffering in their own lives and in the world, and to cultivate love and kindness to overcome violence. This was the first of planned annual mid-summer gatherings.

For the second time, IA coordinated Evanston's annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, November 18, at Northwestern University's Alice Millar Chapel. Representatives of seven faith traditions offered blessings, and the Rev. Dirk Ficca, executive director of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, spoke about the significance of interreligious dialogue and cooperative action. New Revelation Community Choir and Purple Haze, a Northwestern a capella group, sang. Over 200 enjoyed the hospitality of Alice Millar, and IA is grateful for that support.

Patty Baker



Rev. Dirk Ficca of the Council for a Parliament of World Religions speaks at the Thanksgiving service.

Evanston and Global Warming

In April 2001, Erik Sten, City Commissioner, Portland, Oregon, stated that "No other issue threatens our planet with such dramatic, far-reaching impacts, and no other issue is so clearly a worldwide problem. At the same time, many of the most promising solutions to global warming are local initiatives that we can control." Evanston held two events to address this.

On April 29, the Network for Evanston's Future sponsored an event at Beth Emet the Free Synagogue, "Can Our Grandkids Trust Us? Evanston and Global Warming." IA was one of the 70 co-sponsors of this Earth Month event. Dave Cieslewicz, Mayor

of Madison, Wisconsin spoke about how his city had gone about "greening up" and creating a sustainable community based upon Portland's plan. Other speakers were Julia Carroll, Julie Hamos, and Carolyn Collopy, Evanston's first Sustainability Programs Coordinator. Among award recipients was The Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation for outstanding sustainability efforts for their work in progress in building an all-green synagogue. All co-sponsors were asked to sign a pledge to help support Evanston's commitment to do what they can to counter global warming.

A follow up event, "Your Chance to Shape

Evanston's Future," was held at the Evanston Civic Center on November 13, jointly presented by the City of Evanston and the Network for Evanston's Future. The purpose was to begin developing the City Climate Action Plan through a citizen-based process, outlining a wide range of measures and policies to reduce Evanston's greenhouse gas emissions. Over 130 persons attended. The City and the Network propose to present a draft of the plan at the May, 2008 Earth Day event. For more information contact Carolyn Collopy at sustainability@cityofevanston.org or 847-448-8069.

Jane Jeffery

Hospitality Center

Normally, Hospitality Director Susan Murphy writes Hospitality News in this space. For once, we pre-empted her report to feature a story about her.

Fall, 2007

I just returned from a visit to the Hospitality Center that was supposed to take five minutes. First, I spent some time talking to the doorkeeper, who is scheduled for hip surgery. (At this time, I can report both the success of the volunteer's surgery and the way other volunteers came forward to fill the missing times!) There went the five minutes. Then I made a little social talk with Sue, but she jumped up mid-sentence to handle an

escalating quarrel. With some calm commands, she was able to defuse the problem in a few minutes and separate the combatants. A regular Thursday volunteer, Ms. Carlson, complimented the way Sue regularly handles these crisis.

After peace was restored, we all went into the guests' room to admire an eye glasses chain that Marcia Rosen-Kemp, our job counselor, had made for one of the guests. The atmosphere was almost like a birthday party, and the guest glowed.

Since writing that e-mail to the board, I

heard reports from Sue about the success of the job counseling program. Many guests secured permanent positions last year. Most recently, Beth Emet hired a guest to do the clean-up after their Wednesday night soup kitchen.

Late in the year, the Hospitality Center guests presented Sue with a plaque designating that she presided over "Sue's Place."

Diane Currano



Volunteers Provide Services and Donations

Cary Zakon donated many hours to the remodeling of our Web site. He helped IA move to a comprehensive portrayal of our services to the community. He says the work gives him "strength and grounding." If you've not looked lately, go to interfaithactionofevanston.org.

Two of our Hospitality Center volunteers decided that they had enough things to dust. At

their birthday party, they asked guests to make a donation to IA instead of buying gifts. The party guests donated \$1,500.

Another of our Hospitality Center volunteers does the food shopping every week and picks up the tab. She often buys foods more nutritious than our budget would allow. Her generosity allows the budgeted food money to be spent on other things.

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of The United Methodist Church is another of our special angels. For several years, the Board has printed the large program book for the Vision Keepers Dinner at no charge. This year, they volunteered the additional service of printing these newsletters. Again, the money saved can be put into direct services.



Cary Zakon



Manny and William from the Pension Board print the IA newsletter.

Faith Communities and IA Supply Food and Warmth

People who are hungry or homeless can receive food and warmth in the network created by Interfaith Action and several faith communities.

Services include IA's Hospitality Center, at least one meal every day except Fridays, and warming centers each weekday afternoon, November to March.

For a complete chart of locations and services, visit IA's web site.

Monday:

12:00 Lunch
Second Baptist*

Warming Centers:
1:00-3:30 St. Paul's
3:30-7:00
First Presbyterian *

Tuesday:

12:00 Lunch
Second Baptist

Warming Center:
1:00-7:00
Bethany Baptist*

Wednesday :

Warming Center:
1:00-4:00 St. Mary's

6:00 Dinner
Beth Emet

Thursday:

11:30 Lunch
Ebenezer A.M.E.
Warming Center:
1:00-5:30
First Congregational*

6:00 Dinner
First United Methodist*

Friday:

Warming Center :
1:00-5:30 Sojourner*

Saturday:

11:30 Lunch
First Presbyterian

Sunday:

3:00 Lunch
Hemenway Methodist*

*Indicates a service sponsored by Interfaith Action



Your donation will be used for the soup kitchens, warming centers, the Hospitality Center, and job counseling services that Interfaith Action of Evanston sponsors.

*Here's my donation
In support of Interfaith Action's work*

\$25 _____ \$100 _____ \$1,000 _____ Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

Please make all checks payable to Interfaith Action of Evanston and mail to Interfaith Action of Evanston, P.O. Box 1414, Evanston IL 60204.

Breakfast Is Served



It all began eight or ten years ago when Annie Boyle and her husband Skip volunteered to help out Annie's friend Peggy, a volunteer at Hilda's

Place from Sheil Catholic Center. They went along to help prepare breakfasts. They soon realized the importance of nutritious and substantial breakfasts for people whose days are spent out of doors seeking work and shelter. Now, the meals have evolved to bacon, oatmeal, waffles and the like. In time, Annie and her husband expanded their

efforts, and now Friday at the Hospitality Center means "Pancakes." Skip makes up extra pancakes at Hilda's Place, they load up their car, and Annie delivers the welcome meal to the guests at the Hospitality Center.

When I thanked Annie for all she and Skip do, she replied, "We have so much, how can we not give back?"

Marge Bradford

Seasons of Faith

Interfaith Choral Festival

Save the date:

April 27, 2008, 3:00 P.M.

**Jewish Reconstructionist
Congregation, 303 Dodge**

Come and hear the choirs.

Come and see JRC's "green" building

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