

Blossom Valley Times - Focus on Faith - October 12th 2007

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Thankfully the CAIR – Ramadan – Open House 2007 was a great event for the community. The following is an article published by Blossom Valley Times about the event, the article is republished with the permission of Blossom Valley Times.

October 12, 2007
Focus on Faith:

Blossom Valley Muslim Community Center

BVMCC celebrates Ramadan with interfaith open house

By Jeanne Carbone Lewis

Staff Writer

The Blossom Valley Muslim Community Center [BVMCC] on Santa Teresa Boulevard invited the community Sept. 24 to celebrate a Ramadan iftar [fast breaking], meet their Muslim neighbors and learn about the Islam faith.

When prayers start at the BVMCC, devout men and women divide in separate rows before kneeling on the floor facing Mecca.

Ramadan is the Islamic religious observance that takes place during the ninth month of their calendar year in celebration of when the Quran [Muslim holy book] was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad 1,400 years ago. Muslims observe a month of enlightenment with fasting, prayer and service to others.

“I will try my best tonight to give you basic information about Islam,” said Imam [religious leader] Allaedin Ezzedin. “We want the community to meet us and build a bridge with them.”

Imam Ezzedin presented fundamental information at the open house regarding the Muslim religion, which includes a billion and a half people worldwide. Their six components of belief is in Allah [God], angels, the book of God [Quran], prophets, a day of judgment and a divine destiny. The pillars of Islam are a declaration of faith, prayer, Ramadan fasting, charity and a pilgrimage to Mecca where Muhammad [the last prophet] was born.

During the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from food, water, avoid impatience and harsh words and sexual relations from sunrise to sunset. They pray five times a day and break the fast at sundown. The fasting serves as both a spiritual and physical cleansing of the mind and body. It is a time for reflection and greater spirituality, sacrifice and generosity, devotion and self-control.

After the presentation by Imam Ezzedin and group prayers facings Mecca, the visitors were given time to ask questions.

The children sing a prayer after the presentation at BVMCC. Left: Aya Abugharbieh, Anushka Sikdar, Lina Abushaaban and BVMCC brother Saleem Mohammad.

“In many countries, the women are covered,” asked one man in the audience. “Is this a custom or a religious requirement?”

“It is a religious requirement to cover her face and body and wear modest clothing,” answered Imam Ezzedin. “God doesn’t discriminate between men and women. If a man doesn’t respect his wife he is not a man.”

Sister [BVMCC member] Monoara Begum said she doesn’t wear the veil outside the mosque but does dress modestly.

The questions continued outside where the Ramadan iftar was ended with an abundance of food; dates, chicken, beef, rice, soup, salad and dessert. The children play and the adults chat among themselves. BVMCC’s goal is to create a center where Islamic values of peace, mercy and forgiveness are taught and nurtured. They also organize events to foster a sense of community between Muslims and the community at-large like the recent open house.

“We moved here seven months ago from Washington D.C.,” said Doug Nelson who attended the event. “Our Arabic neighbors were the first to welcome us to the neighborhood.”

Blossom Valley Muslim

Community Center

Address: 5885 Santa Teresa Blvd., #113, San Jose

Web site: bvmcc.org

Services: Daily prayers

Imam: Allaedin Ezzedin

Congregants: 100+

The BVMCC was founded by a group of Muslim families in Blossom Valley in 2002. Many in the congregation attended the Muslim Community Association in Santa Clara previously before the founding of BVMCC since they desired a center closer to where they live. They offer prayer service, teachings of Islam, fundraising and community events. BVMCC sponsors fundraisers for Islamic University, Islamic Relief and others. But they

also enjoy girl's night out for mothers and daughters, community events at Santa Teresa Clubhouse and celebrations at Almaden Lake Park.

BVMCC's interfaith initiative as well as the other eight Bay Area mosques' open houses on Sept. 29 were co-sponsored by the Council on American-Islamic Relations [CAIR]. CAIR's mission is to enhance understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

"This is our first open house at BVMCC," said BVMCC brother Saleem Mohammad. "I am grateful to live in this part of the world. Every day I meet people from different cultures and religions. There are so many things we can learn from each other."

For more information visit <http://bvmcc.org>.

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