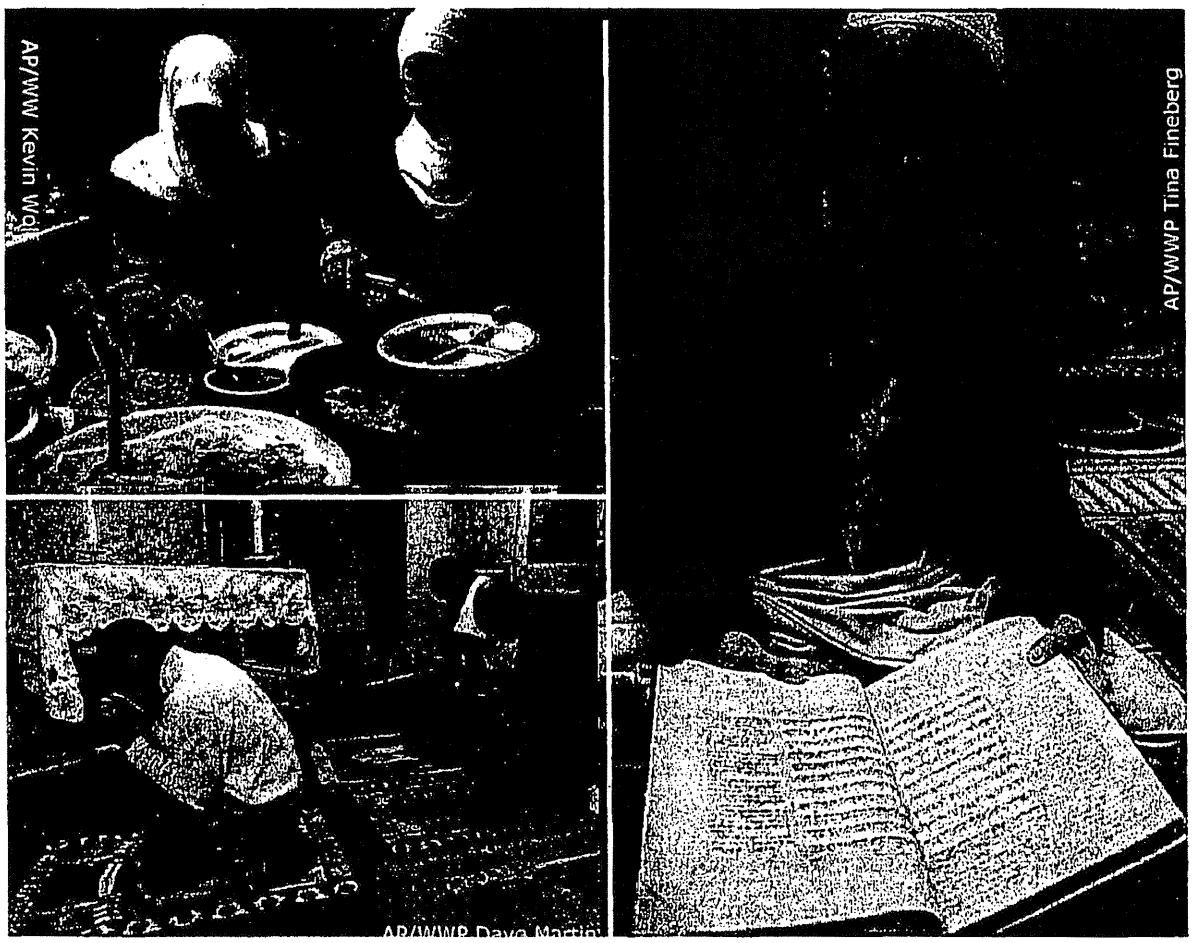


Ramadan Publicity Kit 2004

CAIR
Council on American-Islamic Relations
453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

n the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations
453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003
Tel: (202) 488-8787
Fax: (202) 488-0833
E-mail: cair@cair-net.org
http://www.cair-net.org

As-salaamu alaykum. Peace to you.

Every year an estimated 10,000 American Muslims prepare to embark on a pilgrimage to Islam's holiest sites in Mecca and Medina, in Saudi Arabia, later this month. They will join an estimated one to two million Muslim pilgrims from all over the world. The pilgrimage, or hajj, slated to take place from about February 20-25, is determined by a lunar calendar.

The hajj is a duty that every Muslim is expected to make at least once in his or her lifetime, provided the person has the financial means and physical health to do so.

Ramadan is a special time for the Muslim community. As the most blessed month of the year, it is a time for reflection, prayer and renewal of faith. Muslims worldwide fast from dawn to sunset, abstaining from food, drink, and other sensual pleasures to complete one of the five pillars of Islam and to achieve greater self-discipline, self-purification, and compassion for those less fortunate.

Each year the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) publishes a Ramadan publicity kit in the hopes that the Muslim community will use it to educate others about this holy month and its traditions. This resource kit has been developed to assist your community in publicizing Ramadan events and activities. It contains media relations tips, information about Ramadan, news release templates, and creative ideas for Ramadan events.

Last year, community leaders and activists from around the country downloaded this publicity kit. Some held community-wide *iftars,* inviting Muslims and non-Muslims alike to share the breaking of the fast. Others saw Ramadan as an opportunity to teach others about Islam by organizing open houses and presentations for colleagues and classmates.

Whatever your effort, we here at CAIR hope that this kit will help you generate media coverage of your Ramadan events and inspire you to come up with new and creative ways to teach others about Islam. Be sure to send us any success stories or Ramadan ideas that you might have. You can email them to us at rahmed@cair-net.org.

How to use this Resource Kit

The Ramadan publicity kit is designed to provide you with the materials you need for a successful publicity campaign. But before you venture on, please take a few minutes to read the tips below to guarantee that you get the most out of this resource kit. Remember, the more media attention you generate, the more people you educate about Islam!

Read through this kit. In it, you will find a variety of Ramadan event ideas and ways to publicize them. Select the ones that best fit your community and resources. You might not always get the coverage you're looking for, but don't be discouraged. If you're persistent and patient, you will succeed.

Photocopy pages such as "Ramadan Facts" and "Islam Facts." These pages can be distributed in the materials you send to the media and handed out at open houses. The announcement for Ramadan will be sent to national and regional media by CAIR, but the local communities should make contact with local media.

Re-type the "Media Advisory" and the "Public Service Announcement" on your group's letterhead and make any necessary changes to fit your local community.

Distribute your announcements to the media no later than TWO WEEKS before any event.

Make phone calls to follow up with editors, producers, talk show hosts, etc.

Call CAIR if you have any questions, or if you do not understand any part of the Resource Kit.

Clip news articles and record TV items. Send originals of newspaper clips and clear video copies to the Communications department at CAIR.

Inside this kit:

Getting Started	*4*
Ramadan Publicity Ideas	*5-6*
Media Tips: Talking Points/Sample Script	*7*
Media Tips: Sample Press Release	*8*
Media Tips: Sample Media Advisories	9-10
Media Tips: Sample PSA Announcements	11
Ramadan Facts	12-13
Appendix A: Islam Facts	*14-15*
Appendix B: Mosques	*16-18*

CAIR
Council on American-Islamic Relations
453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

designed by Shazia Pappa
spappa@email.unc.edu

Getting Started . . .

1. Form a local committee to handle publicity for Ramadan activities if your local mosque does not already have one. Make sure to include representatives from all local communities. This will insure that all communities are aware of each others events and there will be no overlap. Also make sure to choose a coordinator and include people who are willing to do the work.

2. Pick a formal name for the committee that is friendly and reflects the area and goal of the committee, such as Seattle Ramadan Information Committee.

3. Decide which activities your community will undertake. Some suggestions are organizing a moon-sighting event, Ramadan "Taste of Islam" open house at the Islamic Center and an Eid Bazaar (see page 5 for more Ramadan ideas).

4. Publicize these events. By modifying the attached materials, you can issue press releases and media advisories custom-fit for your own organization's use. To find the phone and fax numbers for various media outlets, just call the media outlet in question and ask. You may also call CAIR at 202-488-8787 to ask for a customized local media list with the names, addresses and phone numbers of the media in your area. Use the "talking points" listed when communicating with the media.

5. TIMING - Don't wait until Ramadan to start calling, faxing and mailing materials to the media. Calendar editors need at least two weeks lead time to publish an item. Feature editors and others need at least that long to develop and schedule stories. Public service announcements also need time to be approved and scheduled. Make initial contact as soon as you can and then follow up with phone calls to the same people a couple of days before each activity. When you make calls close to the day of any event, focus on the television news assignment editors and newspaper city and photo editors.

6. IMPORTANT - Make sure you send a copy of all your announcements and news releases to the Associated Press "Daybook" editor at the Associated Press office in your area or in the nearest large city.

7. Clip copies of any news articles and tape any broadcast reports. Send copies of these to CAIR.

Ramadan Publicity Ideas

Newspapers

- Contact the feature or religion editor and ask him or her to do a feature article on the Muslim community during Ramadan.
- Compile some recipes for popular Ramadan dishes and submit it to the food editor of your local newspaper.
- Make sure the person in charge of your newspaper's community calendar is aware of any open houses or community *iftars* your mosque might be having.
- Ramadan and Eid events make for great picture opportunities! Invite the local newspaper photographer or take some pictures of your own and submit them with your press releases or press kits.

Television

- Contact your local station's news assignment editor and pitch the idea of Ramadan story. Offer to help the reporter arrange interviews with local Muslims, a visit to the mosque, or access to *iftars* at people's homes.
- If you are planning food/clothing drives or planning to work at a local soup kitchen, let the editors at the station know in advance. These events go along well with themes of thanksgiving and charity during this time of year.
- Contact your local pubic access station and ask to do a show on the essence of Ramadan and Eid.
- Ask local TV stations to issue a "Ramadan Greetings" message.
- Contact the public service director and arrange for announcements to be made for the beginning of Ramadan and the daily announcements for the time of sunset.

Libraries

- Reserve display cases and install a Ramadan display. Include Islamic artifacts (Quran, textiles, cultural items), books on Islam, etc.
- Ask the children's librarian to display Ramadan and Eid books during the entire month.
- Organize a children's book reading for a Ramadan or Eid book.
- Submit a Book Purchase Request at your local library for children's books like *Zaki's Ramadhan Fast*, *Magid Fasts for Ramadan*, *One Night*, etc. if your library does not own them. Requests are usually honored. Or ask if they will accept books donated to the library on behalf of the Muslim community.

Radio

- Contact the show producer and pitch the idea of a Ramadan story. Arrange appearances by community leaders discussing Ramadan and Islam.
- Or contact the producer and request that they do a Public Service Announcements (free announcements by radio station) of Ramadan activities.

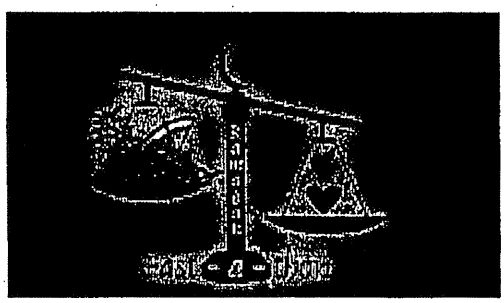
Schools/ Universities

- Organize lectures on Ramadan in religion and social studies classes.
- University students should organize *iftars* for students living on campus
- Bring Eid treats to co-workers and classmates.
- Request school administrators to allow Muslim students to take the first day of Eid off or adjust exam dates.
- Visit the sick. Muslims should discuss Ramadan needs of Muslim patients with health care administrators.

Ramadan Publicity Ideas

Fast-A-Thon

Muslim students across the US and Canada will be sharing their fasting experience and the consciousness it raises with their non-Muslim peers by hosting Ramadan Fast-a-Thon initiatives on their campuses. Based on an event originally conceived by the MSA at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, local MSA chapters will encourage non-Muslim students at their respective universities to fast on November 13th. For each student that participates, local businesses will donate at least $1 to an emergency food provider in their area. At the conclusion of the fast, participating students will be invited to share a meal prepared by the MSA and the local Muslim community.



For more information about the Ramadan Fast-A-Thon, visit www.fast-a-thon.com.

Eid Stamp

"Eid Mubarak" or "May your religious holiday be blessed," is the message on the Eid stamp, honoring Muslim feast days known as Eid. The U.S. Postal Service first issued the stamp on Sept. 1, 2001 and it was reissued Oct. 10, 2002. Today, Muslims nationwide are being asked to contact their local post office and request that they keep this stamp available for the public to purchase.

Food Drives

Deliver *iftar* and *suhoor* meals to the homeless like Muslims in Ohio. Or organize Ramadan/Thanksgiving Turkey drives like Muslims in Illinois. Every year, Muslims in Chicago donate 200 turkeys to inner city families. They have been doing this for three years.

Pitch these story ideas...

- Chronicle a child fasting for the first time
- Families shopping for Eid clothes and gifts for family and friends. What are the traditions and popular gift ideas?
- Therapeutic effects of Ramadan
- *Zakat-ul-fitr* and its collection. What is its significance?
- Write a story on a refugee family's first Ramadan in the U.S.

Media Tips: Talking Points

Now that you have your committee and Ramadan events picked, its time to publicize! publicize! publicize! The media is a great source to educate others about Islam. Here are some talking points to consider when talking to the media about your Ramadan events:

- Muslims are a growing segment of American society. According to some estimates, it is the fastest growing religion in the world (second largest to Christianity); there are about 7 million Muslims in America and 1.2 billion in the world.
- Post 9/11, American's interest in learning about Islam is unprecedented. It is important for the media to satisfy this interest and show the positive sides of Muslim life. The media can capture glimpses of how the millions of Muslims in the United States celebrate their holy month.
- As Christians prepare for Christmas festivities and Jews celebrate Hanukkah, millions of U.S. Muslims begin to look forward to Eid Al-Fitr, one of Islam's most important holidays, which comes at the end of Ramadan.
- This event is an example of Muslims reaching out to people of other faiths to help them better understand the Islamic community in America.
- Islamic fasting has two key elements: abstaining from food, drink and sexual relations and making fast with the proper intentions.
- During Ramadan many Muslims will re-read the entire Qur'an individually and/or communally with other Muslims in nightly prayers at the mosque. Charity and other acts of kindness also increase.
- In the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "The blessed month has come to you. Allah has made fasting during it obligatory to you. During it, the gates to Paradise are opened and the gates to hellfire are locked and the devils are chained. There is a night during this month that is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its good is really deprived of something great."

Sample Telephone Script

You speaking to receptionist at newspaper:
"HELLO...COULD I HAVE THE NAME AND DIRECT PHONE NUMBER OF THE FOOD EDITOR (OR RELIGION EDITOR, ASSIGNMENT EDITOR, ETC.)?
Operator:
"YES THE FOOD EDITOR'S NAME IS MARY SMITH...HER DIRECT LINE IS 543-1234...WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO CONNECT YOU?
You:
"YES"
Food Editor:
"THIS IS MARY SMITH...
You:
"YES...MY NAME IS ANISA ABDULLAH...I AM A MEMBER OF THE SEATTLE RAMADAN INFORMATION COMMITTEE...OUR COMMITTEE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN DOING A STORY ABOUT THE SPECIAL FOODS MUSLIMS ENJOY DURING THE UPCOMING MONTH OF RAMADAN...ARE YOU AWARE OF WHAT RAMADAN IS?
Food Editor:
"YES...I KNOW A LITTLE ABOUT THE FAST OF RAMADAN AND MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN DOING SOMETHING WITH IT...CAN YOU SEND ME SOME INFORMATION?"
You:
"YES...I HAVE FACT SHEETS AND BACKGROUND MATERIAL DEALING WITH RAMADAN...I CAN ALSO PUT YOU IN TOUCH WITH MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WHO COULD PROVIDE RECIPES FOR RAMADAN SPECIALTIES FROM AROUND THE MUSLIM WORLD.
Food Editor:
"THAT'S GREAT...SEND ME THE MATERIAL AND I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO"
You:
"I'll SEND IT OUT TODAY...OR I COULD FAX IT TO YOU IF YOU WOULD PREFER...I'LL ALSO CALL BACK IN ABOUT A WEEK TO SEE WHAT YOU THINK OF THE MATERIALS...

CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations
453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003
Tel: 202-488-8787 Fax: 202-488-0833
E-mail: cair@cair-net.org
URL: http://www.cair-net.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSLIM FAST OF RAMADAN BEGINS OCTOBER 26

Month offers opportunity to learn more about Islam and Muslims

(WASHINGTON, D.C., 10/8/2002) - On **October 26, 2003,*** the Muslim community in America and around the world will begin the month-long fast of Ramadan (rom-a-don). Ramadan is the month on the Islamic lunar calendar during which Muslims abstain from food, drink and other sensual pleasures from break of dawn to sunset. (*NOTE: Because the beginning of Islamic lunar months depends on the actual sighting of the new moon, the start and end dates for Ramadan may vary. Consult local Islamic centers.)

The fast is performed to learn discipline, self-restraint and generosity, while obeying God's commandments. Fasting (along with the declaration of faith, daily prayers, charity, and pilgrimage to Mecca) is one of the "five pillars" of Islam. Because Ramadan is a lunar month, it begins about eleven days earlier each year. The end of Ramadan will be marked by communal prayers called "Eid ul-Fitr," or Feast of the Fast-Breaking, on **November 25, 2003.***

"This year, Ramadan will not only be a time of spiritual reflection and renewal, but also a time to reach out to people of other faiths to educate them about Islam and the American Muslim community," said Omar Ahmad, board chairman of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic civil rights and advocacy group.

The Quran, Islam's revealed text, states: *"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint...Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Quran, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting..."* (Chapter 2, verses 183 and 185)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) told his companions: "God has said: 'Fasting is like a shield. A person who fasts experiences two joys. He is joyful when he breaks his fast, and he is joyful when he meets his Lord.'" (Hadith Qudsi 10) The Prophet also said: "In (Ramadan) the gates of Heaven are opened (and) the gates of (Hell) are locked." (Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 611)

CAIR, America's largest Islamic civil liberties group, is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has 16 offices nationwide and in Canada.

-END-

CONTACT: Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-744-7726, E-Mail: cair@cair-net.org; Rabiah Ahmed, 202-488-8787 or 202-439-1441, E-Mail: rahmed@cair-net.org

NOTE: CAIR offers an e-mail list designed to be a journalist's window to the American Muslim community. Subscribers to the list, called **ISLAM-INFONET**, receive news releases and other materials dealing with American Muslim positions on issues of importance to our society.
To **SUBSCRIBE** to **ISLAM-INFONET**, go to: http://cair.biglist.com/islam-infonet/

CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations
453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003
Tel: 202-488-8787
Fax: 202-488-0833
E-mail: cair@cair-net.org
URL: http://www.cair-net.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

----- MEDIA ADVISORY -----

AMERICAN MUSLIMS CELEBRATE END OF RAMADAN FAST WITH COMMUNAL PRAYERS

What: On **November 25, 2003*** (date may vary, see below), the Muslim community in America will celebrate the end of the month-long fast of Ramadan with communal prayers in locations around the country. Ramadan is the month on the Islamic lunar calendar during which Muslims abstain from food, drink and other sensual pleasures from break of dawn to sunset. The prayers mark the beginning of the ***Eid ul-Fitr*** (eed-al-fitter), or "feast of fast breaking" holiday, in which Muslims exchange social visits and seek to strengthen bonds of brotherhood in the community. During this holiday, Muslims greet each other by saying "Eid mubarak" (eed-moo-bar-ak), meaning "blessed Eid," and "taqabbalallah ta'atakum," or "may God accept your deeds." Many communities hold bazaars following the prayers.

(**Note** - *Eid ul-Fitr* is the first of the two major Muslim holidays. The second holiday comes at the end of the *Hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca. Demographers say Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in this country and around the world. There are an estimated 7 million Muslims in America and some 1.2 billion worldwide.)

When: November 25, 2003 (*Because Ramadan is a lunar month, the actual date is governed by sighting of the new moon. The exact date for Eid may vary.) Prayers are held early in the morning. Ask local coordinators for exact dates and times.

Where: The Eid prayers are held either in local mosques or in public facilities designed to accommodate large gatherings. Call local community representatives for details.

Contact: Call local Muslim organizations for details about Eid celebrations. If there are no known contacts in local communities, call CAIR at 202-488-8787 to obtain phone numbers.

Photo Opportunity: Each year, Muslims from America and many different countries come to the prayers in colorful dress. The prayers themselves are quite visual, with worshipers arranged in neat rows and bowing in prayer in unison. Participants exchange embraces at the conclusion of the prayers.

Note: Because this is a religious service, reporters and photographers of both sexes should dress modestly. That means no shorts for men or short skirts for women. Some communities may ask female reporters and photographers to put a scarf over their hair while in the actual prayer area. Photographers should arrive early to get into position for the best shots. Photographers are also advised not to step directly in front of worshipers and to seek permission for close-up shots. Shots of shoes removed for prayer, and rear-angle shots of prostrating worshipers are considered inappropriate.

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

(Insert Your Local Organization Name and Address Here)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

----- MEDIA ADVISORY -----

Local Muslims Celebrate End of Month-Long Fast with Prayers and Multicultural Bazaar

What: On December 6, 2003 (date may vary), the Muslim community in _____ will celebrate the end of the month-long fast of Ramadan with communal prayers and a multicultural bazaar. Ramadan is the month on the Islamic lunar calendar during which Muslims abstain from food, drink and other sensual pleasures from break-of-dawn to sunset. The prayers mark the beginning of the three-day ***Eid ul-Fitr*** (eed-al-fitter) holiday, in which Muslims exchange social visits and seek to strengthen bonds of brotherhood in the community. During this holiday, Muslims greet each other by saying "Eid mubarak" (eed-moo-bar-ak), or "blessed Eid." The multicultural bazaar will feature games for children, Islamic books and clothing, and foods from around the Muslim world. The bazaar is free and open to the public. People of all faiths are encouraged to attend and sample the diversity of Islamic culture. (**Note** - Islam is the fastest growing religion in this country and around the world. There are _____ Muslims in _____ and some 1.2 billion worldwide.)

When: December 6, 2003 (date may vary)
Community gathers at ____ a.m.
Prayers begin at ____ a.m.
Bazaar opens at ____ a.m. and lasts until ____ p.m.

Where: Prayers - Address:
Bazaar - Address:

Contact: For more information, call _____ at _____ (not for publication), or call _____ at _____ (for publication).

Photo Opportunity: Each year, Muslims from America and many different countries come to the prayers in the colorful dress. The prayers themselves are quite visual, with worshipers arranged in neat rows and bowing in prayer in unison. Participants exchange embraces at the conclusion of the prayers.

Note: Because this is a religious service, reporters and photographers of both sexes should dress modestly. That means no shorts for men or short skirts for women. Some communities may ask female reporters and photographers to put a scarf over their hair while in the actual prayer area. Photographers should arrive early to get into position for the best shots. Photographers are also advised not to step directly in front of worshipers and to seek permission for close-up shots. Shots of shoes removed for prayer, and rear-angle shots of prostrating worshipers are considered inappropriate.

- END -

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

(Insert Your Local Organization Name and Address Here)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

--- PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT ---

Local Muslim Community Holds Mosque Open House

"A Taste of Islam" organizers seek to increase understanding between faiths

What: On November ___, the Muslim community in _____ will hold an open house offering people of other faiths an introduction to Islamic culture. The free event, called **"A TASTE OF ISLAM,"** will feature displays of Islamic handicrafts, clothing and books as well as samples of foods from around the Muslim world. The open house is designed to help people of all faiths gain a better understanding of the positive role Islam plays in American society.

Demographers now say Islam is the fastest growing religion in this country and around the world. There are _____ Muslims in _____ and some 1.2 billion worldwide.)

When: **November ___**
6-9 p.m.

Where: Location:
Address:
Directions:

Contact: For more information, call _____.

-END-

Ramadan Facts

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How did the fast during Ramadan become obligatory for Muslims?
A: The revelations from God to the Prophet Muhammad that would eventually be compiled as the Quran began during Ramadan in the year 610 A.D., but the fast of Ramadan did not become a religious obligation for Muslims until the year 624. The obligation to fast is explained in the second chapter of the Quran:
"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint...Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Quran, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting..." (Chapter 2, verses 183 and 185)

Q: What do Muslims believe they gain from fasting?
A: One of the main benefits of Ramadan is an increased compassion for those in need of the necessities of life, a sense of self-purification and reflection and a renewed focus on spirituality. Muslims also appreciate the feeling of togetherness shared by family and friends throughout the month. Perhaps the greatest practical benefit is the yearly lesson in self-restraint and discipline that can carry forward to other aspects of a Muslim's life such as work and education.

Q: Why does Ramadan begin on a different day each year?
A: Because Ramadan is a lunar month, it begins about eleven days earlier each year. Throughout a Muslim's lifetime, Ramadan will fall both during winter months, when the days are short, and summer months, when the days are long and the fast is more difficult. In this way, the difficulty of the fast is evenly distributed between Muslims living in the northern and southern hemispheres.

Q: Who Must Fast?
A: Fasting is compulsory for those who are mentally and physically fit, past the age of puberty, in a settled situation (not traveling), and are sure fasting is unlikely to cause real physical or mental injury.
Exemptions from Fasting (some exemptions are optional)

- Children under the age of puberty
- People who are mentally incapacitated or not responsible for their actions
- The elderly
- The sick
- Travelers who are on journeys of more than about fifty miles
- Pregnant women and nursing mothers
- Women who are menstruating (days missed are made up later)
- Those who are temporarily unable to fast must make up the missed days at another time or feed the poor.

Ramadan Buzzwords

Taraweeh: Special prayers, called *taraweeh*, are performed after the daily nighttime prayer.

Lailat ul-Qadr ("Night of Power" or "Night of Destiny"): This night marks the anniversary of the night on which the Prophet Muhammad first began receiving revelations from God, through the angel Gabriel. Muslims believe *Lailat ul-Qadr* is one of the last odd-numbered nights of Ramadan.

Eid ul-Fitr : It is the festival of breaking fast. Eid begins with special morning prayers on the first day of Shawwal, the month following Ramadan on the Islamic lunar calendar. It is forbidden to perform an optional fast during Eid because it is a time for relaxation.

Zakat-ul-Fitr: a certain amount of money, fixed in amount according to the average cost of a meal, given to the poor. It is an obligation for the head of the household to pay this amount on behalf of every immediate family member before Eid prayers.

Ramadan Facts

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is it difficult to perform the fast in America?
A: In many ways, fasting in American society is easier than fasting in areas where the climate is extremely hot. This year at least, the number of daylight hours will be less than when Ramadan occurs during the spring or summer. In Muslim countries, most people are observing the fast, so there are fewer temptations such as luncheon meetings, daytime celebrations and offers of food from friends. Many American Muslims would prefer a daytime work shift during Ramadan so that they may break the fast with their families and attend evening prayers.

Q: How can non-Muslim co-workers and friends help someone who is fasting?
A: Employers, co-workers and teachers can help by understanding the significance of Ramadan and by showing a willingness to make minor allowances for its physical demands. Special consideration can be given to such things as requests for vacation time, the need for flexible early morning or evening work schedules and lighter homework assignments. It is also very important that Muslim workers and students be given time to attend Eid prayers at the end of Ramadan. Eid is as important to Muslims as Christmas and Yom Kippur are to Christians and Jews. A small token such as a card (there are Eid cards available from Muslim bookstores) or baked goods given to a Muslim co-worker during *Eid ul-Fitr* would also be greatly appreciated. Hospital workers should be aware that injections and oral medications might break the fast. Patients should be given the opportunity to decide whether or not their condition exempts them from fasting.

Q: Do people normally lose weight during Ramadan? Is fasting something that is healthy?
A: Some people do lose weight, but others may not. It is recommended that meals eaten during Ramadan be light, but most people can't resist sampling special sweets and foods associated with Ramadan. If done properly, fasting can also rid one's body from physical impurities and toxins, according to many health studies.

Q. What are some of the traditional practices of Ramadan?
- Breaking the daily fast with a drink of water and dates
- Reading the entire Quran during Ramadan
- Social visits are encouraged.

Ramadan Buzzwords

Iftar: the traditional sundown meal that breaks the Ramadan fast observed by Muslims around the world this month. The event began with a call to the maghreb (evening) prayers by a local imam, followed by a prayer in an adjacent room.

Ramadan Mubarak: Arabic for "May your Ramadan be blessed." Some may say "Ramadan Kareem."

Sahoor: The meal one eats in the early hours of the morning before starting one's fast.

taqabbalallah ta'atakum: During Eid Muslims greet each other with this phrase. It is translated into "May God accept your deeds."

Eid Mubarak: A greeting pronounced (eed-moobar-ak), meaning "May you have a blessed Eid."