

V 2.1, Issue 2 –
2008

DRUZE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

The Voice of the Druze



AL FAJR - THE DAWN

الفجر صوت الدروز

STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL!

YOUTH Grounded In Druze Roots

AUSTRALIA Big Druze Weekend!

The SEX Talk

LEBANON - Al Tawhid

A Positive Life!

FRANCE

Languages Included:

English
Arabic

عربي

**Kamal Jumblat
Distinguished Druze**



بني معروف

يا آل معروف هذي ذمتي ويدي رهينة الود عن أبناء قحطانا
أنتم ملوك الوغي والبيض ناطقة وذي عمائمكم في ... الهول

تيجانا

*Love does not cost anything.
Kind words and deeds do not
cost anything. The real beauty
of the world is equal for
everyone to see. It was given
by God equally to all, without
restrictions.*

www.Druzeworldwide.com

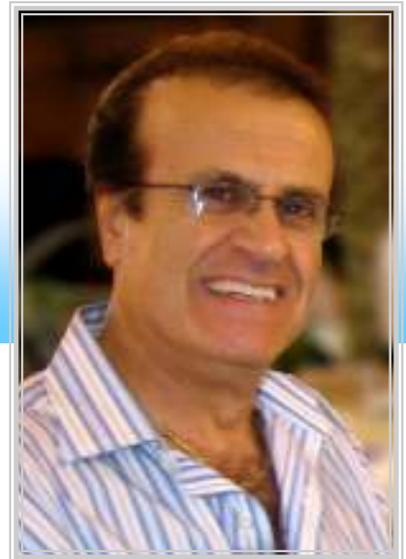
*“I shall pass through this life but once. Any good therefore that
I can do, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it.
For I shall never pass this way again”*



THE EDITOR'S DESK

Shauki Halime, USA

*Life can be understood only looking behind,
but can be lived only by looking ahead.*



My Beloved Druze Society,

In this ever-changing and media rich culture it's not easy to reach the age of 10 without having acquired a sense of skepticism. Nothing seems to be straightforward as we have all learned to question everything around us, from what's in the news to what in our hearts, we all have our doubts, and from time to time we all lose our way. But to be fully human is to believe in something or someone, to know that it's possible to make a difference - to each other and to ourselves.

This time we're looking for a sense of purpose, a few terrific reasons to keep moving forward when it can be so much easier to stay frozen where we are. In other words, we're taking a highly pragmatic approach to the highly ethereal topic of faith. The 20th century brought forward huge advances & changes, with the 21st century there will be untold more, yet the Druze faith remains largely unchanged & hidden, shrouded in secrecy from even those born into it.

When will we be ready to open up and talk about "Al Tawhid" to our own & to others? This is a question put out to all of us by **Lina Shehayeb** in her outstanding article. **Ghassan Saab** is very candid in his article on Struggle for Survival, a powerful read. From Lebanon, France, Australia, Brazil, Venezuela, Canada, etc. - young & old, topics focus on the pride in their Druze Heritage. We are also introducing a regular Legal column by **Haitham Ballout**, a very experienced lawyer & everyone is encouraged to submit a legal question for him.

Kamal Jumblat was an outstanding leader and very distinguished Druze personality. A shining example of exemplifying what it means to be Druze and follow your principles. We honor his memory in our Distinguished Druze section and you will also see some of his exceptional quotes at the bottom of the pages throughout the magazine.

In the US it is exciting to see the numerous chapter activities focusing on unity, fun and growth. With great pleasure we welcome 2 new chapters: Seattle, Washington, headed by **Mr. Naji Ghazel**, and Raleigh, North Carolina

headed by **Mr. Majid Al-Awar**, to our big ADS family. We now have 20 chapters and growing. Upcoming Druze gatherings are the Canada Convention in Montreal on May 16-19, the 2008 ADS National in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Houston, Texas is hosting the Thanksgiving Mini Convention in November and the 2009 ADS National Convention will be held in Washington, DC.

Sisters & Brothers, from our **Syrian Druze, Jordanian, Palestinian, Lebanese, & Druze** all around the world, we are all connected. Like Dr. Anis Obeid outlined in his outstanding book ***The Druze & Their Faith in Tawhid*** "It is virtually certain that any Druze individual can establish some sort of family connection with any other Druze individual, sometimes directly and at other times through intermediary families."

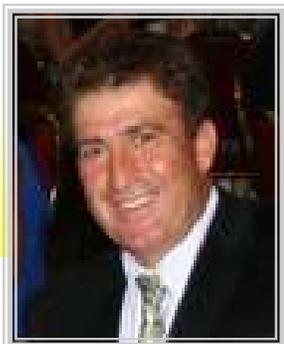
With pride & pleasure we have reached the majority of **Al-Muwahhidun**, and **Al-Muwahhidun** responded back with joy & enthusiasm, AL FAJR-THE DAWN is our **bridge** for reaching each other & it belongs to you, to each one of you. This is the 2nd issue of Al Fajr-The Dawn, if you didn't see the first one, don't miss it, check it out on the website: www.Druzeworldwide.com under Magazines.

I am thankful to everyone in our society & to all the Brothers & Sisters who enrich AL FAJR-THE DAWN with their valuable articles. Special thanks to **Dr. Anis Obeid** for his kindness & assistance and to the gentlemen who post AL FAJR on their websites & MAKE IT EASY FOR EVERYONE TO REACH. I am grateful, to **Dr. Akram Bou-Ghannam**, ADS National President, **Mr. Sean Ghaoui**, Houston Chapter President, **Mr. Chris Basheer**, South Australian YDP committee, **Mr. Bashar Bou-Diab**, President of Ottawa Chapter, Canada, **Mr. Nahed Jawhari**, Vice-President Ohio chapter for all their efforts and contributions. Finally to my partner & lovely wife **Sarah** to whom I owe a dept of gratitude, for her advice, suggestions & Design and for her sincere love for our Druze society, without her I wouldn't be able to make it. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart! ❖

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ADS National President's Welcome



**By Dr. Akram Bou-Ghannam
ADS National President**

Has been actively involved with the ADS for many years. Was a driving force in getting the Druze Educational Curriculum developed and on the internet. He is an avid tennis player & currently resides in Florida with his wife and children.

Dear Fellow Druze all over the world,

On behalf of the entire American Druze Society (ADS) and on my behalf, it is an honor and a pleasure to extend to you a special invitation to attend the 62nd Annual ADS National Convention. This wonderful convention will be held from June 29th to July 6th 2008 in beautiful Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Preparations to this great event are well underway. The ADS in general & the Druze community in Florida in particular, are very happy & excited to welcome you and to host all of our dear Druze guests.

The ADS is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to the enhancement of fellowship among Druze, & the perpetuation of the teachings of the Druze faith. Druze people from all over the world participate in the annual national convention, to share their experiences, & to celebrate their heritage with fellow Druze.

The ADS prides itself on maintaining links of communication with Druze all over the world. **I know that through our Druze Ambassador & Editor of Al Fajr-The Dawn Magazine, Shauki Halime, you will hear my voice.**

The theme of this year's convention is **"Our Children - Our Future"**. The convention will address the important challenges that are facing Druze immigrants all over the world and specifically the challenge of losing their identity and culture. The convention program delivers a week of fun-filled

convention program.

We encourage you to make your reservations as soon as you can as the rooms are going quickly at this beautiful resort. The ADS has negotiated a great deal of \$129.00 a night at this magnificent four star beach front resort. The ADS has reserved a limited room block at this low rate that is available on a first come first serve basis. The ADS and the resort can not guarantee this rate once all the rooms in the room block have been reserved. Please make your reservations early to guarantee your low rate.

We are honored to have you, and we are inspired by your participation and support. We look forward to a memorable and wonderful convention event.

**The theme of this year's
Annual ADS convention is
"Our Children - Our Future".**

activities along with educational and cultural workshops and seminars. We invite you to visit the ADS web site at www.druze.com to view the entire

With best wishes,
Akram Bou-Ghannam
Dr. Akram Bou-Ghannam,
ADS National President ❖

7 new WONDERS of the World vs Blunders



By Hala Abu-Hamdan

Resides in Michigan with her family

The new human built 7 wonders were elected by over 100 million votes cast by citizens from around the world. They were announced in Lisbon on July 7, 2007. In order they are:

1. The Taj Mahal, India
2. Christ the Redeemer, Brazil
3. Chichen Itza, Mexico
4. Great Wall, China
5. Petra, Jordan
6. Machu Picchu, Peru
7. The Colosseum, Italy

The Seven Blunders of the World is a list that Mahatma Gandhi gave to his grandson Arun Gandhi, not long before his assassination. The seven blunders are:

1. Wealth without work
2. Pleasure without conscience
3. Knowledge without character
4. Commerce without morality
5. Science without humanity
6. Worship without sacrifice
7. Politics without principle

This was from Gandhi's search for the roots of violence. He called these acts of passive violence. Preventing these is the best way to prevent oneself or one's society from reaching a point of violence. To this list, Arun Gandhi added an eighth blunder:

8. Rights without responsibilities ❖





Al-Fajr The Dawn Premier Issue

Your Opinions

The reviews are in! Here's what a few of our readers said about our 1st Issue

Al-Fajr came out not as a "newsletter", since it is definitely *much* more; it is more of a "**magazine**" that includes a newsletter within its numerous pages. You have included news from the ADS chapters as well as Druze Societies abroad. Thus, you are on the way of accomplishing something we had struggled for decades to achieve; connecting the diaspora Druze so that we may start discussing the issues we have been facing outside our countries of origin on a continuous and interactive basis. I was happy to read messages from Druze youth who attended the convention for the first time and their impressions. I could feel the joyous energetic experiences they had. An excellent vehicle for interaction between Druze worldwide.

Dr. Nadim Kassem, New Jersey, USA

What a great pioneering masterpiece!!

My hearty congratulations for this unique breakthrough. God bless you and all that pitched into making this project come through. Being deeply impressed is an understatement. Thank you and please accept my best wishes and high personal regards.

**Dr. Abdallah Najjar,
Druze Foundation
Georgia, USA**

I am impressed with the quality of professional work that went into it. The presentation is excellent and the content is interesting. I am sure it will bring our community closer together. On behalf of the Canadian Druze Society - Ottawa Chapter, I thank you for your love and dedication to our community.

**Bashar Bou-Diab,
Chapter President
Ottawa, CANADA**

With pride and admiration I congratulate you, your lovely wife and the team who worked on Al Fajr newsletter. What an input and variety of information and what an interesting paper to read!

**Zouheir Jaber,
Former Rotary Club President,
LEBANON**

Congratulations for the new Druze International Newsletter, a very nice idea, lovely step! Hope god be with you all. Thanks a lot for your hard work!

Souriana A. Khalek, UAE. Dubai

What joy when I read your newsletter!

Lina Bou Saleh, Alberta, CANADA



I would like to express my sincere gratitude and thanks for your pioneer & great work of establishing Al-Fajr Newsletter. It is really a very important and benevolent act on your behalf and it comes at a time when we as Druze really need anything that brings us closer.

Rawad Hani, Washington, USA

I thank for this well designed and informative Newsletter. I enjoyed reading it. I am anxious for the next issue. BRAVO! I am forwarding it to friends and relatives. God bless you both. Your are asset to the our community.

Sahar Muakasa, New York, USA

This is a major service to the community!! I want to thank you and your lovely wife for all the time and effort that you spend on behalf of the Druze communities' worldwide by providing a major communication channel.

Dr. Anis Obeid, New York, USA

Congratulates on the wonderful issue of Al Fajr news magazine. I really like it, as it has all needed information about the Druze faith as well as the Druze community's around the world. Although my family and I have lived outside Lebanon since 1982, we have kept up with the motherland. My children managed to engulf the Lebanese culture as well as the culture they live within which is wonderful as there is no better way to be open minded and love the follow human being no matter what religion or race they are. Please keep up the good work.

**Captain Samir Eleid, Air India,
UAE**

In my personal name and in the name of The Rotary Club of Aley, Congratulations on your first issue of "Al Fajr". What a great idea to have such an informative, interesting and fun magazine for the Druze community around the world. The Druze faith cannot any longer be shrouded in secrecy and passed down through religious men alone. Our new generation's should know that "Al Tawhid" faith holds answers to the most important questions about Human existence. It is also such a joyful feeling to see the happy and beautiful faces of our American Druze family.

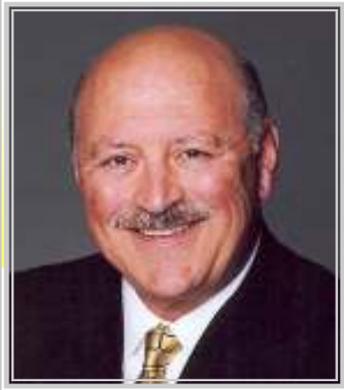
Congratulations again & please do not hesitate to ask for any assistance from us, The Rotary Club of Aley & also from the American Druze living in Lebanon.

**Lina Shehayeb, LEBANON
President - The Rotary Club of Aley
President-"Sponsor a Child"- Partner
program with DOCO**

(Continued on page 11)



Struggle for Survival



By Ghassan M. Saab

Born in the town of Shweifat, Lebanon, he graduated from the American University of Beirut with a degree in Engineering, accepted a job with the Michigan based Sorensen Gross Construction Company & moved to the USA. Ultimately became sole owner and president of one of Michigan's most respected companies. Ghassan is a generous contributor to our Society and currently serves on the Board of the American Druze Foundation whose aim is to preserve the culture and religious tenets of the Druze faith. Ghassan is a very strong benefactor for the Druze Society. He resides in Michigan with his family.

Not since its founding years, has the Druze community faced a challenge like it faces today in its struggle for survival and preservation of its heritage and identity. The adversary may not be violent, but the outcome is no more assured.

Mobility, Modernity and Demographic Changes are combining to deprive the Druze of their historic immunity to dissolution into larger societies with their seductive offerings to young and old alike. As a small minority, in even their native lands, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine (now Israel), the survival of this proud community is threatened by marriage outside the faith, conversion and the "modern ways". Survival in the long term will only be assured by reconciling Druze faith, culture and traditions with the "modern ways" and/or vice versa.

Do our philosophy, teachings and values provide for it? Most certainly! Will we do it? This is the big question.

To take up the first question on why I believe our philosophy and teachings have well equipped us to face these challenges, all I have to cite is our claim to being the "Creed of Reason"; a very well justified claim given where "Al-Akl", to which the human mind humbly relates, is placed in the heavenly order of things. If this attribute cannot help us solve a problem as worldly as our surviving and adjusting to Modernity, Mobility and Demographic Change, it would mean that we have lost our path; a course correction

will be in order. Another example is that a faith that decreed *gender equality one thousand years before the "modern" world took up this worthy cause, should not be challenged by Modernity.*

As to the second and more difficult question on whether we'll make the needed adjustments to survive and thrive in today's modern world; I believe the signs to date are very mixed and not favoring success.

Mobility, Modernity and Demographic Changes are combining to deprive the Druze of their historic immunity to dissolution into larger societies with their seductive offerings to young and old alike.

We exist today in many societies that can act as laboratories to test this issue, Druze communities in the United States, Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, Canada, Australia and many other countries can be such laboratories. The creation of the State of Israel, apart from the politics of the Druze community in the Jewish state, is another example of particular interest where some of the threatening forces we are discussing have rapidly combined to bear down on the small Palestinian Druze community. What happens to the Druze communities in these societies is most likely a precursor of what will happen to the Druze communities in our native lands in the longer term.

Judging by our track record in the United States where I am most familiar; the prospects have not been promising. Rarely do Druze immigrants remain Druze beyond two or three generations. Today with a new influx of immigrants the needed critical mass is enhanced; with the establishment of Druze Centers in three states and with stronger emphasis on "preserving the heritage", the prospects of long term survival have been given a boost.

Several things however remain sorely lacking. First among them is to make available to our youth, in a user friendly format, the essence of the Druze doctrine, both on faith and social/moral conduct that can be attractive to Young Druze whether growing up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Baakline, Lebanon or Perth, Australia. We are so justifiably proud of the Tenets of our Faith and of our Moral code of conduct; I see no reason to deprive our youth of an easy and structured access to them.

Another missing ingredient is the absence of credible Druze institutions, whether religious, academic or social; that seriously address all these challenges, first by asking the tough questions, and then by attempting to answer them.

There are other missing ingredients that logically follow once such discussion earnestly gets underway. Until such time that these minimum ingredients become available; I'm afraid that Modernity, Mobility and Demographic Change will continue to be a threat to Druze existence as we've known it. ❖





LEBANON

AL TAWHID



By Lina Shehayeb

Lebanese American who lived & worked twenty years in New York City, 12 years on Wall St. Lina has always been a proactive person & through the years joined many organizations & volunteered in others. Moved back to Lebanon in 2002 where she continues working on making a positive change within the Lebanese and Druze community. Founder of the "Sponsor Child" program & the president elect of the Rotary Club of Aley (2008-2009). Has been a guest speaker on many occasions & was interviewed several times & appeared on many TV stations such as "Al Hurra" & "Future TV". Mother of Malek (Senior at Bard College) and Tamer Rasamny (High school).

While I did encounter some resistance from various conservative Druze while writing this article, I decided to go ahead with what I had set-up to write. This article is just a personal opinion, coming from the personal freedom of thinking & expression that I believe in so much, and the knowledge that no harm will be done since I myself am a true believer & defender of our faith & have always been.

When will we be ready to open up and talk about "Al Tawhid" to our own & to others?

Nadwa is a pleasant and energetic mother of three teen-age daughters. Although her father and husband are both Druze and she has lived and worked among Druze families all her life, Nadwa and her two daughters are not accepted into the Druze faith and will never be regarded as Druze. Nadwa is one of many individuals that were forced out of their spiritual choice of the Druze faith and not given their biological rights to claim their ancestors' faith.

Like thousands of people that are the fruit of a mixed marriage or have entered a mixed marriage they are shunned and rejected from a faith and a society, one that will not accept anyone who is not a

Druze into its religion, neither by marriage nor by conversion. In the United States where religion is viewed as a choice and a birth certificate does not include religious registration it is easier to integrate children from mixed marriages. However even the uncontested Druze children for whom both parents are Druze, are left in the dark about their religion and remain ignorant of the faith and its teachings because of the secrecy that it is shrouded with. Since the books of Wisdom "Al Hekmeh" are not allowed to most Druze, we are only left with books written about the Druze. These books that are sold in bookstores do shed a light mostly on our history and overall believes but often fail to portray the faith in a clear and sincere way.

itself in secrecy and be reluctant in accepting more people within the ranks of its believers.

The only difference is that all the others, from the Sufis to even the Alawis that were once very strict about such matters, reopened the door to welcome whomever wanted sincerely to accept their faith. Although these fears leading to secrecy and the intense protection of religious beliefs were justified at the time, in view of the terrible and bloody oppression that was inflicted on the Druze due to the refusal of other religions to accept them and their teachings, this is certainly no longer the case in the 21st century. The world is getting closer and closer together and all human beings are claiming their rights for equality regardless of color, religion or nationality.

The "Tawhid" faith believes in all monotheistic religions going back as early as Akhenaton the Egyptian pharaoh, going through the Greek philosophers (especially Socrates and Plato), moving on

to proclaim Abraham, Jeremiah, Daniel and many other Jewish prophets as their own, also believing in Jesus Christ and the Christian saints and finally accepting the Koran and its claim: "There is no God but God and Mohammed is his prophet". The Druze faith carries the name of

In this century where the internet has invaded every home and every school, and where all religions have taken pride in promoting and glorifying their beliefs, we the Druze find ourselves forbidden to learn or to talk about one of the most important, truthful and sincere faiths, leaving room only for ignorance and speculation to settle in.

How could have such an open minded, avant-garde and spiritual religion stay so closed in on itself when other sects or religious movements have decided to accept and adapt to the new times. The Tawhid was not the only offshoot faith from Islam that decided over 600 years ago to shroud

(Continued on page 13)

"In a day, when you don't come across any problems – you can be sure that you are traveling in a wrong path"



Enjoying Moments Together!



Oklahoma



Australia



Houston, Texas



Illinois



Florida



Houston, Texas



Arizona



Oklahoma

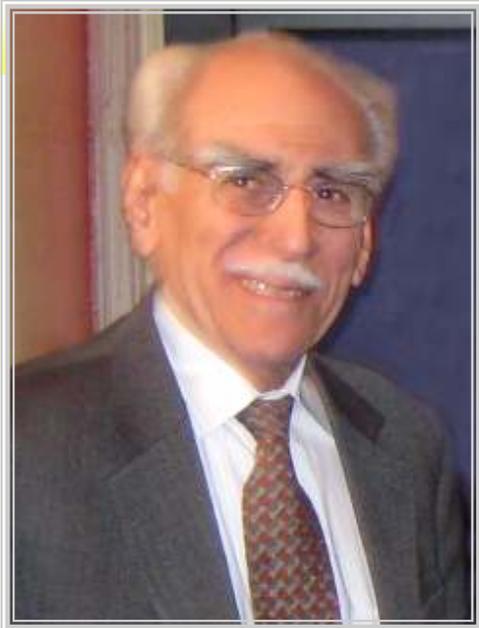


Michigan





ADS 2008 Man Of The Year



Dr. Nadim Kassem

Congratulations!

The votes are in and Dr. Nadim Kassem has been voted as this year's recipient of the:

ADS Man of the Year 2008 Award.

He is held in high regard by many in the Society for his devotion & service to the community. Dr. Kassem's contributions to the ADS, and the ADF are numerous and substantive. He served as National President of the ADS and was active on many committees including CORA and CORR.

By Shauki Halime

His intellectual honesty is matched by a sharp and logical frame of thinking and an eye for accuracy and consistency in writing and reviews. We have all benefitted from many of the constructive criticisms that he has voiced during our meetings and in personal communications over the years. We treasure his friendship & dedication.

The decision to honor him by the ADS is most fitting and long overdue.

Thank you, Dr. Kassem, for your sincere contributions and lifelong love & support of our Druze Society.

Congratulations again & God Bless you and keep you always in good health. ❖

Druze International Symposium Washington, DC

February, 2008

The following is a summary of the recent symposium at the Library of Congress.

The Symposium was a one day jointly sponsored program by the Library of Congress (LOC) & the American Druze Foundation (ADF) held in Washington, DC.

The subject was: ***"The Druze Heritage: Roots, Development, and The Challenges of Modernity"***.

The program was basically an academic exercise in researching the development of Tawhid in both its Islamic and pre-Islamic roots. It was full day with many scholars from the U.S., Canada, Lebanon and Europe. The papers were mostly directed to researchers in the field rather the

general public. Yet they are relevant to discussions on the current status of the Druze communities, the challenges they face and their attempt at reform.

The program was video taped by the Library of Congress (LOC) for possible future viewing. The attendance was limited to approximately 100 people by the size of the Jefferson Room at the (LOC).

Scholars participating in the symposium included American University of Beirut; Majid Fakhri, Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University; Abbas Hamdani, Wisconsin University; Linda Clarke, Concordia University; Sumaiya Hamdani, George Mason University; Erlendur Haraldsson, University of Iceland; Intisar Azzam, Lebanese American University in Beirut; Kais M. Firro, Haifa University; and Dr. Anis Obeid, State University of New York, Upstate Medical University. ❖



"Poetry and the best of it is poetry that sheds the light on the essence of life, i.e., on the reality and beauty of existence."



AUSTRALIA

Big Druze Weekend

By Denice Daou



Denice Daou was born in Adelaide, South Australia. Her grandfather migrated to South Australia in the late 1800's. Denice has raised 2 children on her own, while also working full time and studying part time. Denice holds a BA (Communication Studies) and two post-graduate degrees, including a recently completed Master of International Studies. As part of her studies, she undertook a thesis which investigated the maintenance of core cultural values and identity among the Druze community in South Australia. She has a strong spiritual connection with being Druze, and is very proud of her Druze heritage.

International Report

From 25-28 January 2008, over the Australia Day long weekend, Adelaide, South Australia hosted the BDW (Big Druze Weekend) 2008. This annual Druze convention brought together local, national & international delegates.

Adelaide's BDW 2008 was highly successful, full of activities, knowledge, networking and stacks of fun! The weekend commenced with a welcome reception with some fun ice-breaking activities which included line dancing lessons and demonstrations. Along with Brazilian dancing lessons and demonstrations, followed by Arabic dancing. The delicious smorgasbord supper was provided by the Druze Ladies Auxiliary.

On Saturday there were a number of workshops, many which focused essentially on the Druze faith, with speakers including Dr Adnan Kasamani. I also made a presentation which gave an



insight into the history of the Druze in South Australia, addressing a social and cultural perspective. South Australia was the first state in Australia in which Druze members migrated in the late 1800s, and it still maintains the highest number of Druze members in Australia. My presentation included information on early Druze migrants and why they migrated to South Australia, settlement and work of early Druze settlers, and the establishment of infrastructure such as the Druze Association, the Druze Hall (the first built outside the middle-east), and the Druze cemeteries. I also presented a sample of high profile Druze members, past and present, and highlighted the contribution of these Druze members in supporting the community in which they live. This is a trait in which Druze people hold, adapting to the community in which they live. **No matter which country one lives one is still able to retain their Druze identity.**

Back to the BDW. On the Saturday evening a formal gala

dinner was held at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom with live entertainment provided. On Sunday BDW delegates were treated to a luxury coach trip experiencing some of South Australia's beautiful scenic tourist destinations. It incorporated the unique and mysterious Whispering Wall, some beautiful and famous South Australian wineries and a fabulous lunch. On



Sunday evening delegates were able to glamour themselves up and party at a glorious roof-top Cocktail Party overlooking Adelaide's East End.

On Monday morning a final faith forum was presented, followed by an Australia Day Community barbeque and picnic. This was an opportunity for all Druze members, young and old, to spend time together in a relaxed informal atmosphere. The event was fantastic, well organised, great weather, great location, with warm & welcoming South Australian Druze.

Many thanks and congratulations to the Australian Druze Community of South Australia, the Australian Druze Ladies Auxiliary and the Young Druze Professionals of South Australia for their outstanding organisation and to the many members of the Druze community for supporting such a fabulous event.



Next year's BDW 2009 will be hosted in Melbourne, Australia.



Your Opinions—Continued*(Continued from page 5)*

Thank you very much for all the time & efforts that you & your lovely wife have invested to create such a nice newsletter. Congratulations for a job well done. Great job!

Riad Al-Awar, Michigan, USA

Congratulations on a fantastic inaugural issue of Al Fajr. I found myself having a hard time putting it down, and would like to commend you on a job well done. I would like to contribute an article.

Shadde Gharzeddine, Michigan, USA

I am sending you this note to congratulate you on your wonderful contribution to the Druze's worldwide. **This newsletter is a treasure!** I saw pictures of so many people that I know. I know with your commitment, you will do many more newsletters. I will save mine forever, and I will look at it again and again.

Julia Mullin Makarem,

Former ADS National President, Michigan, USA

I am so impressed with your first edition of Al Fajr. I appreciate the richness of its contents, and can only guess how much hard work and love it took to produce. Please keep it up, and the Druze will forever be richer with your good publication.

*Haitham Ballout, Attorney at Law
California, USA*

Congratulations! We are so impressed with your amazing accomplishment. I'm sure Druze all over the world, just like us, can truly appreciate your hard work that will connect us all through the internet. We are so proud of you!

Amira & Gholam Toulabi, Illinois, USA

I am 25 years old, born & raised in Canada. I am a very strong believer in my Druze Faith & this Newsletter is the best thing that anyone could ever do! The more knowledge you feed to our newer generations, the longer the Druze Faith will stay alive. Of all places in the world, I choose to have my Honeymoon in Lebanon & have dreams on raising my child back home in the future. I am Very Proud to call myself Druze & Good Job to everyone who took part in making this Newsletter happen!

Adale Seifeddine, Edmonton, CANADA

Wishing you the very best & looking forward for more from all over the world.

Hanni Al-Mehtar, Nantes, FRANCE



What a bang you started this magazine with, I have to tell you that the name "AlFajr-The Dawn" is so perfect, it embodies the moment for the Druze everywhere. The material, the articles, the pictures! And most importantly the idea and the path you carved will ignite the energy and the spirit of every Druze. Now our voice will be heard.

I couldn't stop the tears of joy when I started reading and scrolling down the pages. The love and the pride is felt throughout. Shauki, you have started something big. May God Bless you and Bless the ADS.

Dr. Mark Boukzam, Florida, USA

Congratulations on your first issue of Al-Fajr news magazine. It is truly a great production. You are one of the most active Druze. Your vision is wide and bright. Your participation with Sarah in every Convention and function is a sign of your great concern and emotional involvements in the activity of the Druze. Your generosity in your networking system is due to your great concern in the welfare and the future of the Druze communities all over the world. Your friendship is true and your care is sincere. That is why you are loved and respected by us and everyone else. May God bless you and keep you steadfast in the service of our Community.

Moustafa F. Moukarim, Texas, USA

I want to commend you and Sarah for the great work and effort you've put in to make the Al-Fajr newsletter. It is very professional, diverse, and covers different views, opinions and education to our community in general, and to our youth in particular.

Khaled, Diana & Jad Amro, DC, USA

What's Your Opinion?

Please send your comments to us at:

Druze@Druzeworldwide.com

Please include your name, address, (including Country) and phone number. Comments chosen for publication may be edited for length, clarity, content & space.

Congratulations for a job very well done. You are a great asset to our society. God bless you!

Kabalan Ahmadiéh, California, USA

Your premier issue of Al-Fajr is a great one, it is a fantastic newsletter.

Dr. Foazi Barouki, Via E-mail

Thank you so much for your "labor of love". I cannot imagine the time that went into this. It is beautiful!!!! Thank you both for all you do for the ADS. You are a wonderful loving couple.

Delores Abouhosen, Pennsylvania, USA

The newsletter is incredible!! Its organization & presentation is inviting, applicable to a wide audience & will inevitably open many doors. I praise you for your proactive approach & success in this first edition. By providing this wonderful opportunity, you have inspired me to contribute to our community.

Hana Khzam, California, USA

I'm 30 years-old, I would like to congratulate you all for the Newsletter. I received the first edition from a friend from Canada and I liked it very much. I'm a medical doctor, not a writer, and English is my second language, but I would make myself available for contributing to the Newsletter.

Dr. Mirna Alameddine, BRAZIL

I am speechless. Your newsletter is amazing! Congratulations on this marvel you have created. You have a great spirit and a great message, and you have done a **FANTASTIC** job.

Kathy Jaber Stephenson, California, USA

Well done on putting together such a comprehensive newsletter!! Good luck with future editions! If there's anything the YDPSA (young Druze professionals of south Australia) can help with please let us know.

Heba Najjar, AUSTRALIA

I wish you all the best of luck in this interesting communication tool. I hope we can always improve our community and enhance communication among us.

Read H Rayes, KUWAIT

I loved the format & layout, it is easy to read & informative. It will bring us closer together.

Salim Zaytoun, Chapter President, DC, USA

(Continued on page 18)



FRANCE

Perspective

By Said Obeid



Said is the youngest of six children by Ibrahim and Salma Obeid, born and raised in Aley Lebanon. He graduated American University of Beirut with a Master of Science degree in 1976. He and his family have been in France for the last 15 years. Said is currently marketing manager for Dow agribusiness for the Middle East, Eastern Europe and most of Africa. His wife of more than 30 years is Nawal Abul Hosn and they have three children, 2 girls and one boy. Maha is in Pharmacy, Rulla in dentistry, and Marwan just about to finish medical school. In addition to a successful career abroad Said remained dedicated to Lebanon, to Aley and to our community all over. He shares our concerns, trials and tribulations.

THE AMERICAN DRUZE CONVENTION FROM A FRENCH DRUZE EYE

Is belonging an essential need ?? To me, the answer is **YES**, and more so under the ever changing life style, temptations of the Western Societies and life obligations in the twenty first century.

Belonging and social life are , among others, two features that distinguished Man from Animal. Having a forum to rejuvenate one's roots is for sure a privilege that our fellow Druzes in the USA have. During the last convention, I voiced this conviction, and I am happy to have been given the chance through **AL FAJR-THE DAWN** to re-emphasize that to our fellow Druzes, namely the new generation. No matter how effective the parental mentoring is, it may not be enough to address the very many questions and queries that the new generation may have.

It has to be noted that the absence of rituals in the Druze faith do not help at all binding the new generation to the faith of their parents. This loop hole, if not filled by knowledgeable mentors and on

regular basis, could lead to a loss of the identity. To avoid this end, all incentives should be made to secure the participation, specially of the new generation in the Druze convention.

On the other hand, it is believed that **AL FAJR** will enforce the bonds among Druzes, and for that we extend our appreciation and gratitude for the founders and all those who are contributing to its success and spread out.

It is with regret that in France, where we have been based as of July 1990, we do not have this privilege. The community is small and scattered. An attempt was made to create a mini ADS.

In spite of the small success, gratitude should go to those who tried to light a candle instead of cursing darkness. The drive behind my call to keep lighting candles is not blind bigotry , but an attempt to keep the identity and a faith of which we are proud, since it gives answers to highly complex philosophical and religious questions. ❖





LEBANON - Al Tawhid

(Continued from page 7)

"Nashtakin Al Darazi", who was only one of many messengers that were sent around the world to spread the new faith. A faith that is an offshoot of Islam, born during the Fatimid caliphate of Egypt that claimed for its caliphs' descent from the Prophet Mohamed's daughter Fatima.

The Fatimid Caliphate founded and built the city of Cairo and at its peak controlled from its power base in Egypt, North Africa, Sicily, Palestine, Syria and both shores of the Red Sea. When the Calling to Unification (Da3wa ila Altw7id) was spread around the world, many messengers were dispatched to travel and spread the news of the new faith. They were dispatched to Persia, North Africa (Bilad Al Magreb), Constantinople (Eastern Europe, Russia and Turkey), South East Asia (Bilad Al Hind) and the Middle-East (Bilad Al Sham). Our religious sheikhs are never reluctant to talk about the fact that there are "Mouwahiddin" from different cultures all around the world. Do we know what has become of them? What we know for certain is that there are people of the "Tawhid" Faith just like the Druze, everywhere in the world and by claiming that the Druze are the only "Mowahiddin" we are contradicting our beliefs.

The Druze belief in reincarnation and the cycle of death and rebirth is not a new theory that the Druze have come out with. This philosophy existed long before the Druze faith was born and is nowadays talked about and discussed within many societies, colleges and philosophies. It has become recently in a way, a fashionable and accepted topic of conversation among many religions, among younger people all over the world as well as among the more open and international societies out there.

We can in no way be under the illusion that the Druze are the only ones to reincarnate and evolve and that the rest of humanity will not experience or benefit from reincarnation of the soul. The Druze believe that Al Hakim was the last and most perfect of ten successive reincarnations proving that he himself

belonged to different religions. By being so secretive about our religion we are creating the possibilities of false speculations and lies about the truth of our wonderful faith.

People over the years have asked me countless bizarre questions about the Druze faith, sometimes even challenging me to prove them wrong. When I defend our faith and laugh at their odd stories, I can never rely on written proof or invite them to discuss their views with religious authorities.

What is even more frightening is that our children are left out in the dark sometimes trying to figure out by themselves what their faith is all about. In this century where the internet has invaded every home and every school, and where all religions have taken pride in promoting and glorifying their beliefs, we the Druze find ourselves forbidden to learn or to talk about one of the most important, truthful and sincere faiths, leaving room only for ignorance and speculation to settle in. By refusing to open up to the world, to communicate and integrate ourselves with the rest of the humanity, and by continuously opening the exit door for our most educated, smart and skilled younger generation by not educating them on their faith and sometimes not accepting their families within our religious family, we are definitely not doing justice to a faith we are so proud of.

How can we accept that an avant-garde, open minded, spiritual, philosophical religion such as ours, one that should be a guiding light to all humans, be an uncompromising religion, the one and only religion in the world that will not accept anyone from outside the faith and will not even teach it to the ones that belong to it. I hope that, while trying not to offend anyone by writing these words, I was able perhaps to reach the more open minded and cultured Druze and raise a candid unanswered question that many of us all to often wonder about.



*In the sweetness of
friendship let there be
laughter, and sharing
of pleasures.
For in the dew of little
things the heart finds
its morning and is
refreshed.*

~ Kahlil Gibran

*Live
Simply.*

*Love
Generously.*

*Care
Deeply.*

Speak Kindly.

*Leave the Rest
to God.*

*Happiness keeps You
Sweet,*

*Trials keep You
Strong,*

*Sorrows keep You
Human,*

*Failures keep You
Humble,*

*Success keeps You
Glowing,*

*But God keeps You
Going!*



Good Times!



Houston



Australia



Houston



Lebanon



Houston



Florida



Houston



Houston



Oklahoma



South California





Youth Grounded in Druze Roots

Cyrus Toulabi

By

Is a and



sixteen year old young man currently a junior in high school. He enjoys passing time with family and friends plans to pursue film making in college. Cyrus lives in the Chicago area with his family.

The junior year of high school is notorious for its challenges and expectations. From beginning to look at colleges to taking four-hour standardize tests like the ACTs to teachers who believe that adding to your homework load is a pleasurable activity, you are asked of a lot more than you ever have been before. One of which is determining your own future. At as young as sixteen years-old, you are asked to decide what you want to do with your life. **However, how can you decide your future while, as every other teenager does, you are still trying to figure out who you are right now?** This hits even closer to home to a child of Middle Eastern ancestry.

As soon as I walked through the doors of my high school, I was asked to plan out the next four years of my life. As all other freshmen, I did as I was told and created a four-year plan that would be perfect for my future. For example, if you are planning on going into a science related profession, it is recommended to fill your next four years with tons-and-tons of science and math classes. Of course, with my family background, I was raised to believe that being a doctor was what I was meant to be. As much as I thought I knew what I wanted to do with my life, the truth is, I had no idea. I'd be lying if I said that I haven't deviated from that plan at all since I wrote it.

Unfortunately, since I had thought I knew exactly what I needed to do in high school to reach my future profession of choice, I left no room for other "distracting" opportunities. Realizing this mistake as my first year in high school came to an end, I walked into my sophomore year with a new philosophy of "taking the bull by the horns" and living life moment-to-moment. Through this, I

took a chance that most people would never take. I began to think, **What do I have to offer?** I immediately thought of my out-going personality and my determination. I attribute these two qualities to growing up learning my parents' Middle Eastern values and regularly attending ADS conventions—where if you have attended, you know that if you don't have these traits, you're likely to disappear and become just another flower in the flower patch. Additionally, I also thought of another quality — my love of television.

All I know is that I wouldn't be the person that I am today, a healthy mix of American custom with Middle Eastern, without the help of my parents

Just like that, I thought of the idea to make a series that reviews television shows that would air weekly at my school during the daily video announcements. Immediately, I contacted the teachers in charge and started this ambitious project by writing a script, starring-in, filming, and editing my first episode to air—all in a matter of three days.

Soon, the episodes began to roll-out week after week during the school year. In January of last year, the teachers in charge of the media center and the daily announcements approached me about a national competition for students, and they were interested in entering my series in the competition. The award for this competition is known as The National Student Television Award for Excellence by the



Chicago, I returned back to school and to a semi-normal life.

NATAS, also known as a Student Emmy. In April, I was told that I won **two** Chicago/Midwest awards for the writing category and the arts and entertainment category. This was an accomplishment that has never been achieved before. Not only had I learned this, but I was also told that I had won the national award for arts and entertainment as well. I was ecstatic. After accepting the award in New York City and

Currently, I wish to pursue a career in film making, but maybe in a few months that will change. All I know is that I wouldn't be the person that I am today, a healthy mix of American custom with Middle Eastern, without the help of my parents and my culture.

My parents, as many parents of the Druze faith, were able to assimilate our family into the American culture, without losing theirs. Nearly every summer, we fly to the ADS National Convention and have the time of our lives being around people with similar backgrounds, including family and friends. And most breaks from school, you can find us in Florida, spending every day with family, no matter how distant on the family tree they may reside.

Whether I be among the Druze in Lebanon or among my family and friends here, I know that I will never lose the values and customs instilled in my heart from an out-going personality that the ADS helps build through frequent social gatherings, to a determination and a thirst for success as our ancestors have had before us. ❖



Develop Your Personal Strengths



By Rajaa Nadim Halabi

Rajaa' Nadim Halabi was born in Bchamoon, Lebanon and currently resides in New Jersey with her family. She is a nineteen-year-old sophomore in college and is pursuing a double major in business finance along with economics. She intends to continue her education and receive the highest degree offered in her field of study.

“Custom has furnished the only basis which ethics have ever had, and there is no conceivable human action which custom has not at one time justified and at another condemned”

-Joseph Wood Krutch

Growing up Druze in an American society and maintaining your sense of culture is a difficult task. The morals, intellect, and principles that we follow are of great significance and allow us to be the highly regarded culture that we are. Being a young Druze has its upsets and there is nothing I or anyone else could do or say to make it easier. We just have to believe in our hearts that it is a better way of life that we were privileged enough to be born into.

A certain issue that troubles me, and I am sure I am not alone, is the concept of marriage within the Druze community. From what I have noticed, many families are caught up on the notion of marriage so much so that they are blind to more important issues, such as, well-being, education, and personal achievement.

I am in no way oblivious to the importance of marriage, however, being raised by parents who are strong believers in education, self-satisfaction, and having the power to stand alone I cannot help but entertain the idea of

pursuing your own personal goals above all else. “So, have you found yourself a husband yet?” Such a simple question leads to such a wider horizon. A horizon in which people would rather see someone married with a false sense of security rather than being a single successful individual.

I have always tried to achieve the highest standard of living for myself and with the guidance of my parents, I have emerged from my childhood as an independent self-sufficient woman. I wish only that other youths would follow such a path.

We just have to believe in our hearts that it is a better way of life that we were privileged enough to be born into.

I am not preaching nor am I trying to instill my morals onto anybody else. I am simply encouraging every Druze youth to set high goals for themselves and achieve the most they can without considering marriage as a gateway into security.

After attending my first Druze convention in Arizona, I was able to put into perspective what I have been taught throughout my life. The convention



broadened my scope in the sense that for the first time in my life I was surrounded by people who comprise of the same background, beliefs, and up bringing. I was able to learn so much from so many different people, which allowed me to walk away with a higher understanding of my religion along with a more distinguished sense of pride for the culture that I am blessed to be a part of.

At the same time, it was discouraging to know that people were at this convention for the sole intent to marry. Although marriage is a great outcome and a lovely possibility, the convention should be regarded as something higher. It should be regarded as a time to become acquainted with others within the community and further explore such a divine culture.

After never being exposed to such an atmosphere, I felt overwhelmed with feelings about being Druze. Luckily, I was fortunate enough to realize how much my culture has and will forever affect my life and everything that I do. ❖





Legal Corner

Introduction

By Haitham Ballout, Juris Doctor

He currently resides in the San Francisco, California area with his wife and 4 children.



The

addition of the Legal Corner to Al Fajr is intended to be interactive in nature, allowing readers to ask legal questions on general U.S. laws. The questions selected will be published along with my answers. Certainly the names of the writers will not be published to protect your privacy. The primary goal of this interactive approach is to provide free and easy access to an experienced lawyer on general U.S. legal issues, while educating our community on the legal concerns raised. I firmly believe in the necessity to conduct one's affairs within the law, in order to be afforded the protection of the law.

My name is Haitham Salem Ballout. I am the son of Salem & Afaf Ballout, from Bmariam, Lebanon. My father, or mother may have taught few of you from the Metr

I will strive to expand on the Al Fajr's goals to connect and at the same time educate our community.

region, as both of my parents were teachers for many years. I was born in Bmariam, and in 1976, at the age of 14, I joined my brother Hisham in San Francisco, California. My good brother sent for me - and raised me - after reading my detailed (horrific) letter about the war in Lebanon. I am forever indebted to him.

Having endured the Lebanese war, I was soon facing another challenge - a chance at realizing the American dream! I completed my high school education at the age of 16, then continued on, earning an Engineering Degree at the age of 20, followed by a Juris Doctorate Degree in Law from Golden Gate University in San Francisco, California.

Since 1990, I have been practicing law, and I established my own law firm in San Francisco in 1992. My practice focuses primarily on all forms of Personal Injury, Employment Discrimination, Deportation Defense, Family & Business Immigration, and General Civil State and Federal Practice.

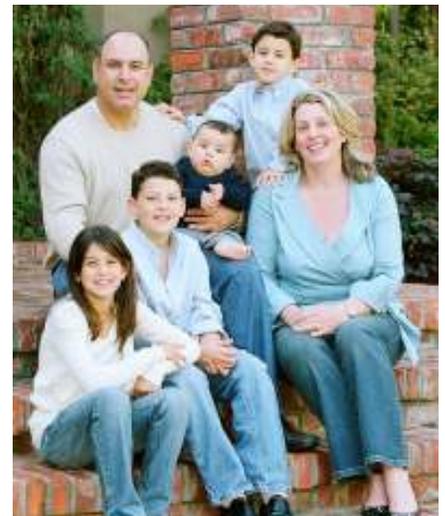
In the last 17 years, on behalf of my good clients, I brought suits against giant corporations such Starbucks, Home Depot, and against public entities such as the State of California, and the U.S. Government, to name few. I had the honor to serve on the Plaintiffs' Committee of the Swiss Air Crash where I represented the families of the victims of this horrible accident in the federal court in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

I am privileged to be admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, and to have filed few U.S. Supreme Court cases. I am also a member of the California Bar, California Consumers Attorneys, and American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). I look forward to serve as a resource for my community by addressing your legal questions, using my extensive civil litigation and immigration experience.

I will strive to expand on the Al Fajr's goals to *connect* and at the same time

educate our community. For that the Druze worldwide are forever indebted to Shauki and Sarah Halime.

I wish to dedicate this Legal Corner to my wife Linda, and young & energetic children, who inspire me to do more.



I look forward to contributing to this first of its kind and great publication, and I personally invite you to e-mail me your questions on any U.S. legal issue. ❖

Please send all questions and comments to Al Fajr's e-mail:

Druze@DruzeWorldwide.com

Please state in the "subject" of your e-mail "Legal Corner, Att: Mr. Ballout." Remember, no name is required, & your name will never be mentioned., However please let me know the State in which you live for better accuracy in my reply.



Your Opinions—Continued

(Continued from page 11)

Thank you! Allow us to thank you first for all your contribution to the community. Your amazing work made a big difference & helped keep the community together. Thank you & may all your dreams come true!!

Giath & Rola Hamdan, Toronto, CANADA

This newsletter is amazing! At the end you feel that you are associated with every Druze around the world separated only by distance. I sent it to my family and friends in Lebanon and everywhere. In time this will reach all Druze. You and your wife Sarah should be proud of this accomplishment that for the first time unites all of us and delivers information instantly. I am looking forward to the next issue.

**Ameen Halabi,, Chapter President
Oklahoma, USA**

I had the pleasure reading the first issue of Al Fajr The Dawn. What a great informative magazine that lets you know about Druze chapters all over the world. Thank you very kindly for your time & effort for putting it together.

**Yehia Aboukahl, ADS Chapter President
Illinois , USA**

I was pleasantly surprised when I received the first issue of Al-Fajr. I was delighted & extremely impressed to say the least. It is wonderful & professional. I wish you the best going forward. I hope to see you at the ADS Center in Michigan to offer my congratulations & support in person.

Osama Abihana, Michigan, USA

Well done! It really exceeded my expectations. Please keep it up!

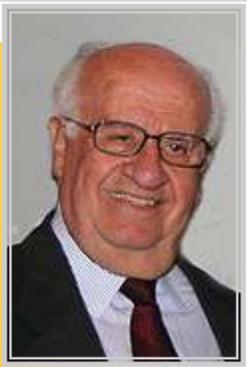
**Walid Shaban, Chapter President
North Carolina, USA**

Congratulations on the first issue of "Al-Fajr Druze International Newsletter" a great idea that was long overdue! You have done a great job and I thank everyone involved in it's publication. Keep it coming please.

Akram Abi Saada, Alberta, CANADA

Awesome, Awesome Newsletter! I love it, I am very excited, the contents are beautiful, meaningful and educational. Love them. Great Job! Thank you for all the photos that you put up, I appreciate all that you did! Job, very well done!

Hala Abu-Hamdan, Michigan, USA



Poetry

Beirut

By: Dr. Anis Obeid

*Convoluted the road
Of history.
The road we traveled
Time and time again
Before I was born and reborn, and before
Pulsations from your rocks exhumed
My life,
And before
Your waves splintered
My sins on that alter
Magnificent blue.*

*How shall I describe you?
Ageless, perhaps, but for grooves of
A merciless plow, the plunderer that links
Expanding the universe to osteoporosis.
Of beauty and beast I shall not dwell
You know them well
You represent them well.
It is in your stuff
Man and man made, the soup we call
Reality.*

*Wicked you are not
Nor virtue's morsel
To which you fake homage
Before you dine,
And feast, and get drunk. The wary bride
Elopes with phantoms, all phantoms.
You have long forgone virginity,
It is love that you worship, and life, and
the soup
Reality.*

*Vitality, always; a thousand wells
You got your name,
Your identity from a thousand wells.
The spice, instilled in a thousand wells
And a thousand veins keep it flowing
The spice, and the blue dye
And a thousand masts that ply
The great blue,
And the white beard. Towering heights,
Make sure you do not sleep.*

I have seen you suffer,

*I have seen you laugh
I have seen you cry, and devour
Blood, red blood
And crave suffering, where
Neither angels, nor devils
Endure.
Blast them that try in vain
My displacement.
I am he that suffering exalts, and she
That suffering brings.
Full term in cyclical rhythm
I am your bosom.*

*Many a night the sky inverts itself
And lands, I am a witness.
A million gems bubble and twinkle
And fill the Towering heights with awe
A world standing still
Peaceful intoxication.*

*How many times doom swirled
And sucked vitality and grace
Combatants slew and inhaled
The blind fury of death and destruction.
Then came back
To cups of coffee, and water pipe, and
poetry
Intrigue you are second to none.
And I and we are all in it
The dance of death
Only the stones it seems remained
to testify.
Endurance.*

*Empires thrive and die
Armies, ask Alexander, and Darius, and
the great Caesar
Ask them all and more
Who triumphs in the end.
The boot of conquerors, nay
The soil that patiently exhales
Their doom.
You shall not taste slavery.
No you shall not.*





VENEZUELA

- Caracas -

2008 Druze Convention

Reported By Anwar Suki



Lives in Caracas with his wife Ghada Salha. Has 2 children. Their daughter Grace is studying architecture, and their son Jalal is studying electronic engineering in Caracas.

Summary of the 22nd SCDV Druze Convention at The Hotel Alba (ex-Hilton) Caracas, capital of Venezuela, held between

Jan 2 and Jan 5, 2008.

January 2:

- ★ 7:00 pm Inauguration of Convention.
- ★ 9:00 pm Welcome to Caracas Party .

January 3:

- ★ Tour to Avila Mountain by Cable car.
- ★ Tour to Children museum
- ★ 8:00 pm Dinner & Dance Party

January 4:

- ★ 10:00 am Lecture on Druze habits and traditions.
- ★ 2:00 pm General Assembly and election of the New BOD 2008-2010.
- ★ 4:00 pm Womens Meeting Plays & entertainment
- ★ 4:00 pm Taule, Tarnib and Domino' tournament.
- ★ 9:00 pm Party for the Youth. 15-28 years old.

January 5:

- ★ 9:00 pm – 4 am Final Party (Singer: Imad Dakdouk)

New Sociedad Cultural Druza de Venezuela directors are:

- ★ Secretary General : Mr Ghassan Noueihed
- ★ Vice Secretary Gen'l: Mr Mourcel Koteich
- ★ Secretary of Organization: Dr. Mounir El Masri
- ★ Directors:
 - ★ Mrs.GhadaYordi, Econ
 - ★ Asaad Souki
 - ★ Mr. Ghandi AbulHosn, Engr.
 - ★ Rima AbulHosn
 - ★ Mr. Waseem Chaaban



“In the peace of mind, there is a strange secret that works in all the feelings of the body, the colors of sentiments & epiphanies of the wits.”



South California

Building & Growing



By Rima Joumblat
ADS Chapter President, South California

Resides in California with her husband and two daughters.

It has been an honor and a privilege to be the President of the ADS Southern California Chapter. I was elected in June 2007 and would like to introduce myself, to those who don't know me and present our Chapter's agenda and vision for our board's two-year term.

My family and I moved to the US in 1983. I graduated from California State University, Long Beach, with Bachelors in Graphic Design & I now ply my profession on a freelance basis. I have been married for twenty years and we have two daughters, Natalie (16) and Tanya (9).

It is very important for our community to unite as Druze in our newly adopted homeland given we are small in number which leaves us no room for division.

As a family we owe a lot to the ADS. I met my husband, Bassam, at an ADS New Year's Eve party in late December 1986. We were married the following summer. My two sisters met their present husbands in the 1987 and 1988 ADS conventions. We have continually been active members of the ADS, attending almost all functions and conventions.

As a family, we try to show our appreciation by giving back to the ADS. My husband has been the ADS National Treasurer for about three years & on the National Board for two years. Before becoming Chapter President, I was the Ladies Auxiliary Chairwoman & a Board member of the Chapter. We both work hard & are in it for the servitude, benefit, and unification of the ADS.

In the past year uniting our California community has been my biggest, yet most important, challenge. After approximately six months after my election and by working directly with the community, we started witnessing an increase in participation & our community demonstrated the willingness to turn a new leaf and work as a team. It is very important for our community to unite as Druze in our newly adopted homeland given we are small in number which leaves us no room for division.

From the experiences and challenges as a board member and Ladies Auxiliary Chairwoman, it gave me new insights for my two-year term as the Chapter President. Some of the critical priorities we will need to address urgently:

1. **Southern California Center** is in such a state of disrepair. Our ultimate goal is to get the ADS building to a shape where we can market it & turn it into a profit center that generates revenue for our Chapter.
2. **Our youth** are the heart & soul of the ADS. They are our future. Attracting the youth is our biggest challenge, but we have been up to the task & are witnessing improvements.
3. **Our communication** system is another challenge. In addition to the existing system I'm personally



building a working web site for the Chapter. We are working on developing a schedule for the whole year, which we will post on the web site, once complete. We are also in the process of publishing a phone directory of the Druze in Southern California. We will also populate our web site with financial statements, schedules, and times of events.

I am committed to work hard & serve



the ADS. I know it takes a lot of determination & conviction to volunteer for this position, if one is to do it right. I know that if I want to achieve these goals and deliver on my promises, I need to rely on a lot of help from my board and community. It has been heart warming to work with a group of talented, honest, committed & hard working individuals from our community.

With the help & support of my board, dedicated ADS members and generous contributors, I strongly believe we have been making a difference. Remodeling the Center, getting our youth more involved, improving communications & bringing community unity has been a team effort.

I appreciate the confidence and trust our community has placed in me. God bless you all and bless the American Druze Society. ❖





A Positive Life!



By Peter Anthony Boukzam

National motivational speaker having received numerous recognitions including Youth motivator appreciation Award. Regional VP for the JM&A Group the 7th largest privately held company in the USA. Currently resides in Minnesota, USA with his wife and family.

In the midst of a time that truth has been clouded by the messengers of hate division & despair, more than ever the positive energy must be shared & communicated effectively to keep the truth from drowning in the ocean of darkness.

We can share so much more when ranks, titles, are not in the way of equality, after all it's said that God "Geometry Of Divinity" has created us all equal! It's our perception "the cloud" that makes us see each other as unequal and separated.

**You can't be a Mowahed without being positive!
So get up & affirm how beautiful you are, how healthy & thankful, how strong and prosperous our community is - with it's gifted people.**

It's our duty to be positive & that begins with ourselves & carried with us wherever we go, being positive is like a sword that cuts through the flesh of the negative energy that is trying to take hold of lives & make people hopeless about the future.

Being positive is like giving a sniff of rose water to someone that has become unconscious in negative energy, bringing a positive attitude wherever you go is as effective as giving medicine to illness. It wakes up the soul's energy to take dominion over the physical aspects of life, is the fuel that derives from our inner core of love.

We need to know that all labeling - be it in class, title or ranks - only labels the individual to separate them. Putting them in a class above or below others is a cloud over truth. Remove the title, you remove the cloud and you are able to communicate effectively with the truth that person holds.

It's said that creation in order to be equal had to have both a negative and positive, black & white, good & bad. **Every thing holds in the balance**, being positive is putting Good "Geometry Of Your Own Divinity" & spread the energy of positivity to insure the balance will not tip over. For if it ever does, we will all loose, we will loose our freedom, which is the basis of expression, we will loose our ability to become and that is the end of possibility and most of all we will lose the truth which is Taw-heed.

You can't be a Mowahed without being positive! So get up & affirm how beautiful you are, how healthy & thankful, how strong and prosperous our community is - with it's gifted people.

By affirming above you are affirming the truth, you are removing the clouds of doubt over reality, you are facilitating prosperity and therefore you are a brother keeper of the balance... ❖

Wish

By Hala Abdul-Baki



What's a wish
but a dreamer's muse,
A salvaged scrap of some fantasy?
How's a wish never to come true
If the dreamer pursued it ceaselessly?
For just as a painter's wish lives from brush
The writer's wish manifests in ink
And a sculpture is by its sculptor's touch
As dreams come to dreamers in a blink,
Just as music from musician's heart swells
So does the love of adventure in many
While miracles keep faith alive and well
Keep wishing to the very last penny.



Druze Leadership

By Bashar Bou-Diab



Born in Lebanon, Bashar is currently living in Ottawa, Canada with his wife Farah Al-Farraj. He has a sincere interest in Druze community development abroad. He has a Masters of Engineering degree in Technology Innovation Management.

In 2008, may we leverage the great teachings of our luminaries to further grow our knowledge and lead wonderful lives.

Our long trip away from home in the Middle East; to seek good education, rewarding careers, and safe living; has taken us far from the closely knit

The publishing of this quarterly magazine is another example showing how the leadership of a few builds global ties and creates unity in a harmonious way.

societies that served to bind us into a harmonious community and served to teach us the Unitarist faith. With the distance came the challenge to retain the virtues that were central to our faith and were once passed down from generation to the next.

Our "modern" way of life has left us little or no time to learn the teachings of our luminaries posing a threat to our faith and identity. Just think of how frequently we study the writings of Plato, Pythagoras, Jesus Christ, Hermes, Lukman, and Hamza; and we can see how far we have drifted. Unfortunately, the drift is growing with time and distance and its consequences on our small sect could be detrimental in the long term.

"How may we as a global community overcome our challenge and seek our Unitarian faith?" you may ask. Researching, learning, contemplating, and upholding the principles of our faith require strong initiative, especially without the help of

parents or organizations. We need to overcome the vast distances between us and instantiate mechanisms to help us learn about our Unitarian teachings and bond with each other.

We need you to put your leadership skills to create the needed value for our community in the name of charity and good will. The foresight, organizational skills, generosity, and leadership of a

few have been vital to the well-being of our community in North America.

The teams managing our Druze societies in various cities has selflessly served to build social bonds amongst us, to further our understanding of the Unitarist teachings, to grow our athletic and artistic talents, and to help those in need. The publishing of this quarterly magazine is another example showing how the leadership of a few builds global ties and creates unity in a harmonious way.



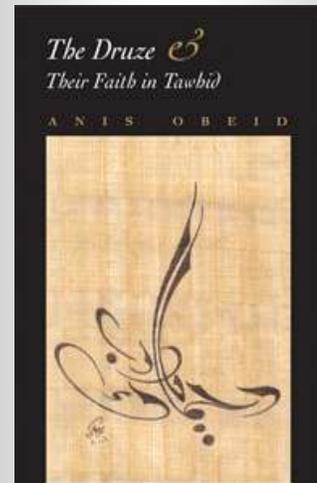
You are all invited to leverage your capabilities in service of our Unitarian beliefs and overcome our recent challenges. And I thank the many who have been contributing in a positive way. ❖

The Druze & Their Faith in Tawhid



We are receiving and continue to receive enquires as to where this book can be purchased. It is very popular & valuable book by Dr. Anis Obeid. A short introduction from it's front jacket is below:

"As a small sect that emerged from Islam more than a thousand years ago, the Druze have long sought to protect their religion and society through a tradition of secrecy. This secrecy, however, has left the Druze faith vulnerable to distortion, misunderstanding, and misrepresentation. In this book Dr. Anis Obeid, a Druze layman impelled by his desire to "explore his religious heritage" and attain "a clear view of the basic tenets of his faith," provides a penetrating analysis of Druze scriptures and beliefs (Tawhid). Presenting a chrono-



logical narrative of the foundation and development of the faith, he explains the historical conditions and religious rationale behind this closed religion."

Book is available by ordering online at:

www.SyracuseUniversityPress.syr.edu





Body Image & Identity



By Raina Nasab Halabi

Raina is fifteen years old and lives with her family in the town of Beamsville, Ontario, Canada. She has attended the Niagara Academy of Tennis for the past three years. Is hopeful in receiving an athletic scholarship to a university in the United States of America. She enjoys sciences and plans on pursuing a career in dentistry.

Teenaged girls often complain about how flawed their bodies are, and desire to be thinner, or weigh less. Moreover, young females continue to aspire to attain an unhealthy, unnatural, and abnormal self-image, such as being excessively skinny. Society forces teenaged girls to strive for an unrealistic body image.

Unfortunately, girls are taught from a young age that they key to success is beauty. Commercial media uses models like Naomi Campbell and Nikki Taylor, as well as other super models, to communicate a message. This message indicates that these women are what you should look like, and indirectly makes you strive for their image. To continue, the media unsurprisingly pushes the idea of weight-loss with unrealistic results onto young women.

Teenaged girls are constantly and falsely lead to believe they should be a certain weight or body shape. For instance, Hollywood movies usually show the attractive male setting his sights on the skinny, pretty, popular girl. An example of

this is in the movie High School Musical, when the main character Troy, the jock, goes after Gabrielle, the gorgeous new girl in town. Certainly, it's upsetting, but it's the reality of today that the media controls teens' thoughts on body image.

So how can this problem be changed? On the positive side, there could be more regular and plus size models in magazines and on television. Also, there could be less advertisements for diets that cause people to lose massive amounts of weight in a short period of time, only to gain it right back in return.



Not only does society encourage negative weight-loss, but it also pushes teenaged girls down the road of life-threatening eating disorders and a confused self-image.

As a result, girls resort to eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia to make them look the way they think they should. Many kids and teens successfully hide these disorders from their families for months or even years. While eating disorders result from a serious mental and behavioral health condition, they can lead to other serious physical health problems.

Anorexia may affect a child's growth, bone mass, cause puberty delays, an irregular heartbeat and blood pressure problems. The continuous vomiting involved in bulimia can cause tears and severe inflammation of the esophagus, in addition to gastric disturbances, blood pressure problems, and erosion of tooth enamel.

In summary, teenaged girls are living in a society that promotes an unrealistic body image. It seems clear that young girls are striving for bodies they generally can't have. They have a desire to become thinner, and unnaturally under-weight due to the unhealthy pressure of the media. Accepting who you are will allow you to be all you can be. ❖



The Lebanese Conflict



By Dr. Mark Boukzam

Born in Beirut Lebanon in 1952, and went to Bulgaria in 1975 and graduated from its dental college in 1982 with a degree in Stomatology and continued his dental studies in the USA from 1982 till 1985 and earned the degree of DMD becoming the first dentist ever that graduated from Bulgaria to earn his American degree. Married to Soha Boughannam and have three kids Natalie 20 years, Ryan 16 years & Andrew 14 years. They live in Delray Beach, Florida, and has a dental practice in Deerfield Beach. Active in the ADS since 1984. Served as board member for the ADS 1998-2002 and also as Vice President 2002-2004. Loves Druze history & proud to be a Druze.

In order to look at the present with an open mind, we need to look back at our past, specifically at the significant events that took place between 1919-1920—the point in time in which French Colonialism implemented a political system upon Lebanese soil that was based entirely on religious federal union.

religious groups within Lebanon makes a majority on its own, forming some kind of alliance with foreign countries in regards to implementing particular agendas has been commonly practiced by various groups, above all during the infamous time junctures of 1958, 1975, and 1999. Thus, the political system instilled by the French has never offered equality, prosperity, nor stability to the country.

religious teachings and find what is common among one another, and put aside their differences, in order to find what is unifying among their countrymen.

They need to elect their political leaders based on political affiliations and not religious bias.



Composed of various religions and sects who preserved all their differences and aspirations, the whole political system was unmistakably based on an unfair union. As a result, the natural political progress within the country came to a halt and segregation among the Lebanese took deeper roots, manifesting itself on all aspects of life—economical, political, and social.

Since none of the multiple reli-

Lebanon today needs to revolutionize itself by joining the ranks of nations that believe in Democracy and the preservation of human rights; a system that respects the rights of all of its people, which offers equal opportunities and demands equal contributions for each and every single citizen.

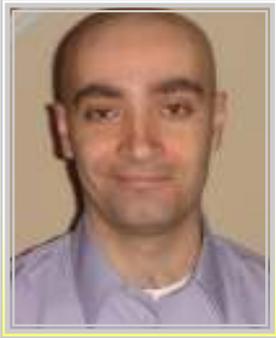
The Lebanese people need to build a country that is secular, built on constructive dialogue and mutual understandings based on progressive social principles. In order to even dare to attempt this, the Lebanese need to reach into each of their own



Even though the Druze at one time governed Lebanon for hundreds of years on their own terms, their control of the country was gradually lost. Through and through, they yet still look to be an active member in the Lebanese equation. Their role always has been based on their solid doctrine of Al-Tawhid (Unitarianism), giving their love and loyalty to their country, unconditionally.

They accepted their destiny and will always be a fair partner in the country that was once called “bilad al-dourouz”. ❖





The Sex Talk

By Dr. Marwan Jaber

Came to the USA when he was 10 as his family left Lebanon in 1982, in an attempt to get away during the war. Always wanted to be a doctor, from a very young age. Married to Rolla Abdul-Chalk, who shares the love of medicine. She is also a physician and has chosen dermatology as her field. They have two beautiful children, Kareem & Eva, and hopes to instill in them the same values, appreciation for life, and the same opportunities that our parents gave them. Currently lives in Virginia.

As an emergency room physician, I have treated so many types of problems. One particular scenario that I have seen time and time again is that of teenage pregnancy. This issue has always been a difficult one for me to deal with because of the fact that with some education and more involved parenting, so many of these situations could be avoided.

It is very easy to take the position that these issues affect only low income families or broken homes and think that, "This could never happen to me." However this is far from the truth. I remember treating a young woman who was fifteen years old who was brought into the emergency room by her middle class parents. She had been complaining of abdominal pain for five days.

After speaking to the child in private, I discovered that she had missed her period the month prior and surprisingly had been sexually active since the age of thirteen. She had not been using any protection, and had already had many episodes of sexually transmitted diseases that her parents were unaware of. My interactions with this young woman made it very evident to me that she was very immature in her thinking and her actions. In addition, she did not have much knowledge about birth control or about the consequences of having a sexual relationship with someone.

After examining her and completing a few studies, she was found to have an ectopic pregnancy. This is a condition in which a pregnancy begins outside of its normal location in the uterus and continues to grow there. It is a very serious condition, which almost always requires surgical intervention, and can lead to death if not treated soon enough. After speaking to the parents and child about the findings, everyone was obviously very distraught. I was so surprised to watch the interactions between this family and to learn that the

parents had not spent any time discussing anything about sex with their daughter.

At fifteen, they still thought that their little girl was too young for the "sex talk", but to their dismay, all of her friends and her had been having sex for years. She told her parents that her friends had all been having sex, too, and she didn't see what the big deal was. The mother appeared very aggravated about the situation and was yelling at her daughter stating that she got herself into this situation and that she needs to get herself out of it. The father was sitting on the side, without any emotion and completely uninvolved. Her medical situation required surgery to remove the ectopic pregnancy, but her treatment did not end there, for there would certainly be long lasting emotional and social repercussions.

The reason I tell this story, is that it brings up many issues that people, especially from our culture, are uncomfortable discussing with their children. They often feel it is socially unacceptable to talk to their kids about sex, or they are embarrassed to do so. Some may feel that if they talk to their kids about sex, their kids will be more likely to have sex. Others just assume that their kids are "good kids" and just won't have sex until they are married because that is what they are suppose to do.

My goal is to educate people that knowledge is good, and that ignorance leads to many problems. Study after study has shown that kids who feel that they can talk with their parents about sex are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors as teens than kids who do not

feel that they can talk with their parents about the subjects. They are less likely to have sexual intercourse as a teen, less likely to become pregnant or get someone pregnant, and more likely to talk to their parents about other important issues in their lives. In addition, our children need to know we will always be there for them no matter what! Teenagers and adults require personal maturity and a great amount of insight before venturing into sexual intercourse since the outcomes of a short period of gratification can result in very serious outcomes. The social, health, personal growth of the people directly and indirectly involved in these actions will be affected.

Study after study has shown that kids who feel that they can talk with their parents about sex are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors as teens than kids who do not feel that they can talk with their parents about the subjects.

I encourage parents to openly talk about these issues with their children. Kids are exposed to sexual issues at a very early age through the media, their school, and their friends. If we do not educate our kids on these matters, they will learn from someone else. We as parents cannot be with our children every second of the day.

Our job is not to make our kids scared of us, but to create a trusting and comfortable relationship. We have a responsibility to our children to teach them our values and ideals, but we also have a responsibility to educate them. At some point they will make their own decisions, and the more knowledge they have, the better decisions they will make. Instead of having sex be such a "taboo" subject in so many households, take the initiative to talk to your children and let them know they can come to you about anything. ❖



Entertainment and Fun!



Houston, Texas



Florida



Arizona



Brazil



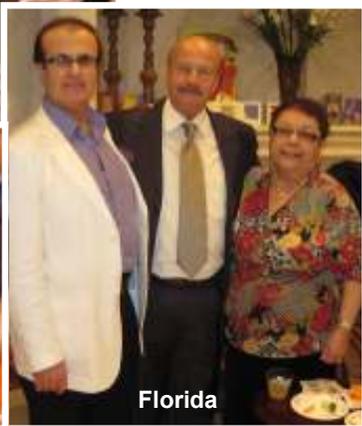
S. California



Venezuela



Virginia



Florida





What Is Druze?



By Maya Jaber Camou

She has a BA Interior Design-MA Design Management & currently works as a Sr Project Manager at an Interiors Firm. Immigrated to the USA from Lebanon at age of 7 & settled in Long Island, NY. Currently live and works in New York City with her husband and 2 children.

What is Druze?

I get that question all the time, as I am sure all of us do when we live outside the Middle East. I asked that same question when I was in my teens and it was very hard for me to get the answer. I did slowly piece together tidbits of information and understand some of our history. It is a great day that we live in now that technology has opened the world of information and sharing at our fingertips.

What is Druze?

I, as many others, moved here when I was very young and was raised with a strict hand. My parents feared I will lose my culture, religion, and heritage in this foreign land. I was taught to always strive for the best and learn all I can, never to lie, treat all people with respect and tolerance, accept what happens as it is God's will and take the good in all things. Most people would say Druze is a culture not a religion when it is explained to them. Druze is a way of life that is how we are taught.

What is Druze?

As I got older and started researching our religion (because it is a religion), the words Mowahhidun & Tawhid were introduced; With the more in depth details that were given to me, I began to understand, learn & comprehend Tawhid (I love to learn, you need to learn something everyday – be it big or small- it is a great feeling) and understand my way of life.

What is Druze / Muwahidoun?

It is in your mind, in your soul, from thoughts to actions, from acceptance of things that happen to things to come, from loving everyone and everything to showing it in your daily life. It becomes an everyday, every hour normalcy to existence – it becomes a way of life, a culture that starts out as a religion.

What is Muwahidoun?

As a culture we have hidden for centuries in fear of prosecution – it is a great time to be alive, to be able to have information, to share and learn about our heritage and faith in Tawhid. Even in time of persecution nobody could take our beliefs from us. It is embedded in us – in all of us – you just have to open your mind to see it.

What is Muwahidoun?

It is in our mind, in our soul, our actions, in our being and no matter what, nobody can take that away from you. Being surrounded by different types of people, different beliefs, and different environments will not make take away your faith in Tawhid. Our parents did not understand this. Educate your self about yourself, educate your children. Through knowledge, understanding and faith you build a solid foundation within you and them. No matter what road is traveled or what obstacles are faced - nobody can take away from you what is in you.

What is Muwahidoun?

It is me, it is my husband, it is my children, it is their children, it is our legacy. ❖



Being a Druze Girl in University

By Ghayda Hammad

Born in Ain Zhaltee, she immigrated to the US at age 1, currently resides in Beltsville, Maryland. A junior attending the University of Maryland, Majoring in Art-Studio/Concentration Graphic Design

I came to the United States when I was just a year old. You could say I have lived here my entire life. However, my heart is purely the heart of a young Druze girl. It was not until recently that I knew how much of an impact being a female Druze student had on my life. There are many daily difficulties associated with it. To begin, at Druze social gatherings, there is a heightened sense of belonging. While attending the University of Maryland, I have felt socially excluded because of my religion. I repeatedly get the same blank reaction from other students after telling them that I am Druze. This makes approaching fellow students difficult, & a good conversation is hard to come by.

Parents also set high expectations. I am surrounded by a population that they typically don't trust. If I had Druze schoolmates they would feel more secure, but that's not the case. At a University where I am the sole Druze student, it becomes a very taxing task insuring them that "everything is fine."

Connection is also a key issue that I have had to deal with. While at school it is difficult to discuss my faith. The lack of communication regarding the Druze religion has me feeling less connected to the community. Anyone outside the faith could never understand our philosophies, so aside from my parents... I don't get to talk to people about my religion.

Finding equilibrium between student life & Druze tradition is tough. It is wrong to confine who you are in order to please others. Who we are is important. Being a Druze girl in a large institution, I have learned that I am unique in comparison to the rest of the student body. It's what sets me apart. I am thankful to have friends who are supportive, along with a loving family, & most importantly Allah.

What is Druze?



Ohio Chapter Back on Track



By Nahed & Raya Jawhari

Nahed was born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1975, he is from the village of Aramoun and came to Ohio in 1976. His wife Raya was born in Germany & lived in Aramoun. They have two beautiful daughters Maya, age 5 and Gabriella, age 3. He has a degree in Information Technology Business Management. Raya achieved a BA in English from AUB. She believes the Druze community is an extended family & a separate entity. His motto is "Unification through technology" Nahed is currently the VP Ohio Chapter.

By Nahed:

I would like to extend my appreciation to all who worked hard to spark life into this initiative and bring the idea of the Ohio Chapter of the ADS into fruition. I will prove your confidence in me is well placed. These infant (yet formative) years, I believe, should be dedicated to consolidating and crystallizing the image and structure of this fledgling chapter of the ADS. We are small in number but we have motivated and spirited members who will make a difference.

I propose the following items to be our primary goals

1. Membership drives: By informing people of our purpose and drawing them in we can increase our members and strengthen our chapter. Our people are scattered across the State and need to stay informed on current events. Deciding on a specific quota would be one of the points of discussion at subsequent meetings.

2. Fundraisers: One cannot forget or deny the economic factor in making or breaking an organization. It is crucial that we have the capital to finance events and help realize our purpose. Again a specific number can be set as goal at future meetings.

3. Education: I think you will all agree with me that promoting family values, moral values, cultural values and knowledge of our native language is a basic goal to all of us. The earlier we instill a sense of morality and loyalty in our children the better off we will all be.

4. Creating a cohesive and close-knit

community:

Meeting new people and promoting a close-knit society creates a support system that may not exist at the moment. The family is backbone and nucleus of our support system but the family itself needs something bigger and stronger to fall back on in times of need.

To sum up, the coming year should be an opportunity to increase our members and build the capital, or fuel if you want, that will allow us to realize any project we take on and take us where we need to go. We should make an effort to create educational programs for both our children and our adults. Progress and education go hand in hand. We have a choice between being a stagnant pool of placid yet murky water or a boiling, powerful river. Individual hands may have a tough time changing a current but united we can do great and meaningful things. I will support our president in his plan of action and I do not think we can effectively do much of anything unless we lend an ear to all our members without discrimination. We come from a country where dissension and difference in agreement are the order of the day everyday, we should've learned our lesson long ago and strive to make accord and respect for each other's point of view the order of things in our community.

By Raya:

"To perpetuate the universal teachings of the Druze sect: to enhance and promote fellowship among the Druze through social activities; the advancement of the religious and cultural knowledge

through meaningful contribution to education and research; the betterment of the Druze people through charitable work; and to do any and all things legally and ethically proper and conducive to the attainment of the above goals and purposes." [1] This was the mission statement of the original founders of the Ohio Chapter of the American Druze Society.

On 01/24/08 the Ohio Chapter of the American Druze Society was infused with new vim by the selection of new leadership. In the spirit of the original founders of the first Druze Society, Albakaurat AlDirziyat, the society hopes to uphold the traditional Druze Arab cultural values, family loyalty, and purity of spirit, brotherhood and honesty. It will take time for the chapter to find its bearings and for the board members to gain the trust of the members but they have faith in the hard work of the members and the mutual desire to find the vehicle to express their commitment.

In this age of apathy is stronger than compassion and where self involvement is the central axis and there is strong temptation to abandon our values and our identity, a cohesive Druze community is indispensable. We must bolster the family unit so that it can prevail in the face of adversity. What is the Druze community but an extended family? Our country is experiencing troubled times of dissent and conflict; all the more reason to keep a united front and a show of solidarity.

None of this could not have taken place without the energy, motivation and generosity of Dr.'s Rima and Farid Muakkassa. Thank you. ❖





ADS

Our Heritage

Magazine



To Our Druze Family,

The Heritage Magazine is part of the American Druze Society's Communication Committee. Its main objective is to link our accomplished ADS community members with each other. The ADS community has a wealth of knowledge, experience in numerous fields, and rich in its Bani-Maarouf heritage. Our goal is to connect & inform all our members with timely cultural topics for all age groups.

Our mission & goal can be summarized as follows:

- ★ To serve the ADS community by providing information
- ★ To act as a channel in linking our members
- ★ To strengthen the bond between the National Board, Chapter Presidents, and the Membership
- ★ To reflect our Society's commitment and dedication to the preservation of our culture and heritage

The Heritage Magazine can facilitate the connecting of our members with each other by the simple sharing of their stories, their successes, their philanthropic ideals, their wisdom and personal experiences. As immigrants, our forefathers faced the challenges of a new homeland, of adversity, and of a language barrier. However, their pioneer spirits and Druze faith empowered them to face all challenges with a determination to succeed and to become good role models for their descendants as they founded our ADS. As American Druze, we need to continue to emulate our elders in dedicating quality time for our families, in working toward causes larger than ourselves, and in perpetuating our interconnectedness. Our Heritage Magazine intends to touch our readers with similar commitment to preserving our unique culture.

Our Heritage Magazine invites all our ADS members to consider participating in preserving our history and culture through submitting an entry of interest or on an area of expertise to the email addresses listed below for its next edition no later than April 30, 2008.

The ADS Heritage Magazine's Publishing Team will review all submissions for publishing approval. Please be advised that the ADS Communication Committee has the right to revise, edit, accept, or decline all contributions. All accepted submissions would be acknowledged in writing to the original author(s) via email.

Thank you in advance for considering writing a submission in the ADS Our Heritage Magazine and for all your volunteer efforts!

Sincerely,
 ADS Our Heritage Magazine Publishing Team
Mrs. S. Shauki Halime
 Editor-in-chief



Fun Times Together!



Australia



Virginia



Australia



Michigan



Florida



Illinois



Florida



South California



Australia –Sydney



San Francisco



Florida



Brazil





The Paradox of our Time

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider Freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor. We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things, but not better things.

We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from

cheer, to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom. A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete...

Remember; spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever. Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side.

Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent.

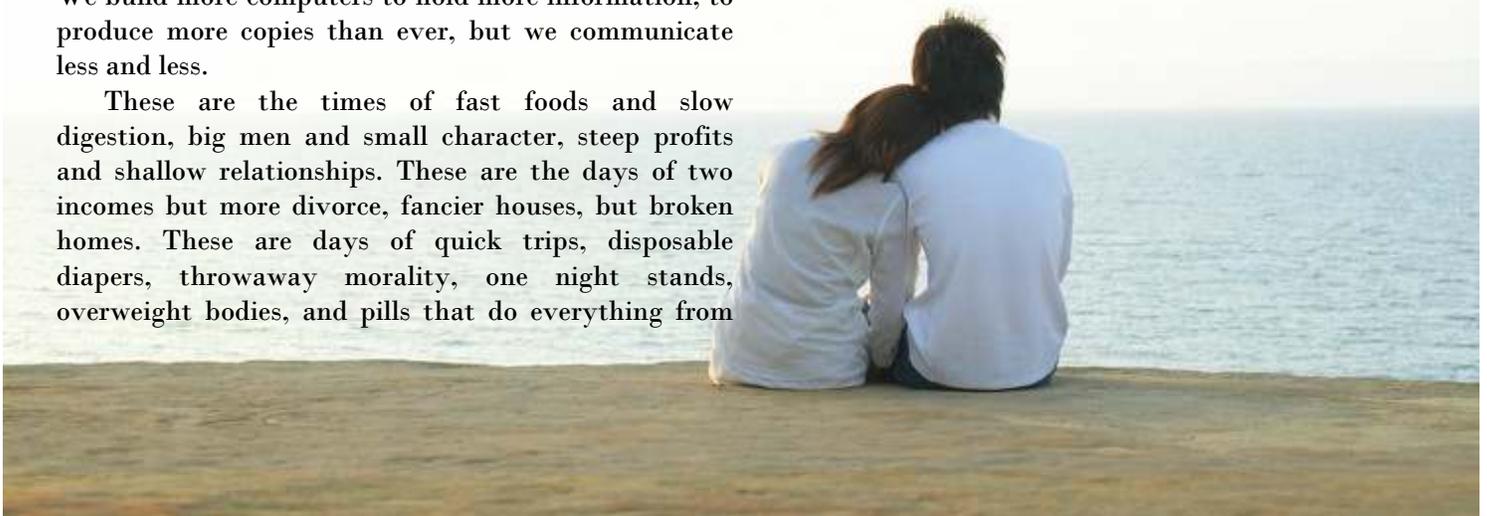
Remember, to say, 'I love you' to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you.

Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again.

Give time to love, give time to speak! And give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind.

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER:

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.



"A love-based marriage is a divine secret that leads the couple to unveil and appreciate the Sacred Beauty."



2008 ADS National Convention



The AMERICAN DRUZE SOCIETY cordially invites you to its 62nd Annual Convention in

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

From June 29th to July 6th 2008

Held at the Marriott's Harbor Beach Resort & Spa

www.marriottharborbeach.com

Come and join us in the beautiful Fort Lauderdale, where our friends of the South Florida Chapter are preparing themselves to welcoming everybody to this magnificent event at a fabulous resort to develop one week full of educational, cultural, fun and social activities for all ages, while showing us the true Druze hospitality of their Chapter and this year's Convention theme:

Our Children... Our Future!!!

★ ADS 62nd ANNUAL CONVENTION FEES ★

EARLY REGISTRATION FEE			LATE REGISTRATION FEE		
BY JUNE 10th	Paid ADS Members & International Attendees	Non-Paid Members	AFTER JUNE 10th	Paid ADS Members & International Attendees	Non-Paid Members
Husband & Wife	\$450.00	\$552.00	Husband & Wife	\$518.00	\$619.00
Individuals	\$254.00	\$310.00	Individuals	\$293.00	\$349.00
Student (13 and older)	\$214.00	\$259.00	Student (13 and older)	\$248.00	\$293.00
Children (3-12)	\$113.00	\$140.00	Children (3-12)	\$141.00	\$169.00

★ ADS 62nd ANNUAL CONVENTION SPONSORSHIP ★

Becoming an individual or business sponsor of the Annual ADS Conventions, you will be helping to further the great social programs of the American Druze Society. The ADS is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization (Tax ID # 237155194). All sponsorships are tax-deductible.

CONVENTION SPONSORSHIP

Sponsor	Description
Diamond \$25,000.00	25 Complimentary individual convention packages, free inside cover page in yearbook, Diamond level plaque of appreciation and complimentary limousine pick-up from the airport.
Platinum \$15,000.00	15 complimentary convention packages, free gold page ad in yearbook, and Platinum level plaque of appreciation.
Gold \$10,000.00	10 complimentary individual convention packages, free full page ad in yearbook, and a Gold level plaque of appreciation.
Silver \$5,000.00	5 complimentary individual convention packages, free full page ad in yearbook, and a Silver level plaque of appreciation.
Bronze \$3,000.00	3 complimentary individual convention packages, free full page ad in yearbook, and a Bronze level plaque of appreciation.

2008 YEARBOOK

Dimensions	Amount
BACK COVER	\$5,000.00
GOLD PAGE	\$2,000.00
SILVER PAGE	\$1,500.00
FULL PAGE	\$1,000.00
HALF PAGE	\$500.00
QUARTER PAGE	\$300.00

Thank you for your continued support to the American Druze Society

For more information, please visit www.druze.com or contact the ADS Nacional Office:

P.O. BOX 291437. Davie, Florida 33329-1437 / Phone: 1-877-ADS-7330 / Fax: 1-954-337-0995 / E-mail: americandruzesociety@yahoo.com

Please mark your calendars, reserve on time and get yourselves ready for a wonderful time.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING EVERYONE IN FLORIDA!!!





BRAZIL

LAR DRUZO BRASILEIRO

(THE BRAZILIAN DRUZE HOUSE)
SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

2nd. INTERNATIONAL DRUZE CONCLAVE &

1st. BRAZILIAN YOUTH CONVENTION

With great anticipation, the 2nd International Druze Conclave and the 1st Brazilian Youth Convention commenced on Thursday October 11, 2007. Diverse religious, diplomatic, and representatives of various associations were present at this event – the Grand Opening at LDB. People from different countries such as Lebanon, Canada, The United States of America, England, Africa and many states of Brazil participated in this memorable and huge convention.

The grand opening ceremony was kicked off with the National Anthems of Brazil and Lebanon, with more than 400 people present in the main banquet hall of LDB. The president of LDB Mr. Haissam Al Masri followed with his welcoming speech along with the Master of Ceremony Mr. Walid Ghoobar.





AUSTRALIA

VICTORIA

Our Community was established in Victoria in 1968 with only 30 families, This year we have an amazing 470 families. In September 2008 we celebrate our 40th anniversary ; lets set a goal to have our new Druze Centre ready for this monumental occasion and all occasions that follow. To be enjoyed for many generations to come . Please give generously.

مر على تأسيس الجمعية الخيرية الدرزية أربعون عاماً تقريباً، أنتهز هذه الفرصة لتقديم الشكر للذين أسسوا وعملوا على استمرار هذه الجمعية. أما قدر لنا لجنة نسائية أن نعمل تحت مظلة هذه الجمعية الحاضنة منذ ثلاثة أعوام ونيف، وعلنا متركز على النشاطات الاجتماعية التي تجمع أبناء الطائفة في مناسبات عدة، نعمل بدون ملل ولا آل نتحدث عن نجاح لقاءاتنا بفخر واعتزاز ونصارع مشالنا بصمت، نتكاتف المهام ، نتشاور الآراء ، نتحاور الاقتراحات وقراراتنا توافقية ، يعني بكل بساطة عملنا ممتع وشيق والتعامل معنا مريح ولكن ما زلن سيدات الطائفة الكريمة بعيدات آل البعد عن استقطاب التعاون الذي نرجوه والدعم الذي نستحقه ونتوخاه . للتوضيح ليس هناك أي تأفف من العمل أو عتياً على أحد بل هذه دعوة لتشجيع آل الأمهات، السيدات، الشابات، المثقفات، الواعدات، المسؤولات عن مجتمع حاضن لأولادنا، مجتمع مليء بالدفء والحنان



Artist rendering of proposed Druze Community Center in Victoria, Australia

Contributions to build our Druze Centre

Big thank you to all the members who contributed to the building of our Druze Centre. Please encourage your friends to do the same every little bit helps.

يشعر فيه أبنائنا أنهم أسياذ وملوك يستحيل عليهم التخلي عن هذا العرش. أخواتي دعونا نقرب المسافات بيننا ونشك الأيادي لنصنع جسر متين يعبره أولادنا بأمان وليتمكنوا من التعرف على تقاليدهم وحضارتهم. سيداتي باتحادنا نصنع القوة والنجاح والمرأة الأم هي ملكة الكون والكون منها ولها. بعد الدعوة للمساهمة والتعاون نتقدم بأجمل معايدة من جميع أبناء الطائفة الكريمة بمناسبة عيدي الأضحى ورأس السنة وندعوهم لمشاركتنا بنزهة إلى الحديقة العامة يوم عيد الأضحى وحفلة ساهرة ليلة عيد رأس السنة على أمل أن تكون سهرة ممتعة مليئة بالسعادة وروح المحبة بيننا. أعاد الله هذه المناسبات عليكم بالخير والبراة وآل عام وأنتم بخير.

اللجنة النسائية الدرزية





Cool Event's!

Upcoming Events

Schedule of Upcoming Druze Conventions

May 16 - 19, 2008 - Canada

★ Canadian Druze Convention 08
Montreal, Quebec

June 29 - July 6, 2008 - USA

★ 62nd ADS National Convention
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Nov 26- 30, 2008 - Texas, USA

★ **Houston - Mini-Convention**

Jan 2009 - Australia

★ Melbourne-Big Druze Weekend

Jan 2009 - Venezuela

★ 23rd Convention

May 2009 - Canada

★ Edmonton - Druze Conv. 2009

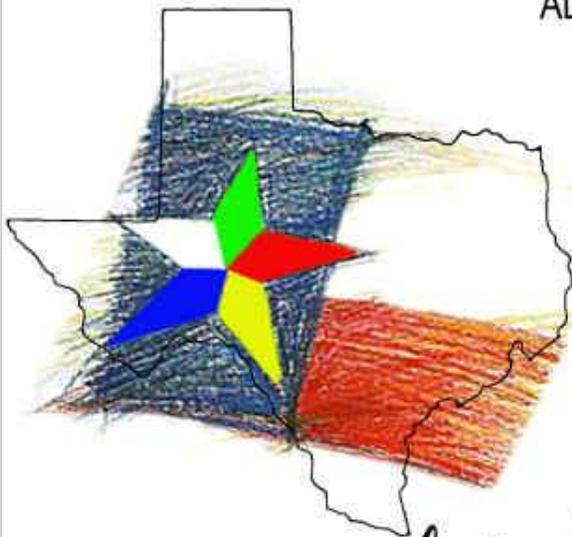
June - July 2009 - USA

★ 63rd ADS National Convention
Washington, DC



ADS Houston Thanksgiving Convention

November 26-30, 2008



unity
culture
sharing
conviviality
family
hospitality
fraternity
thanksgiving
Adha
heritage
devotion
caring
celebrations
religion
memories
unity
conviviality
giving
care
unity
Adha
ADS

come see how brightly
one lone star can shine...

"If someone feels that they had never made a mistake in their life, then it means they had never tried a new thing in their life."



ARIZONA

Dr. Hatem Sleem, President



2007 Thanksgiving Mini-Convention Report

The Arizona ADS Chapter members are proud of their accomplishment at the Mini-convention 2007 held during Thanksgiving weekend. The Chapter was founded in 2006 in a small Druze community of about 20 households. The Chapter was very active during its infancy. The members, all enthusiastic and energetic, working together as one team, rose to the occasion and organized over a dozen events including Parties, picnics, and fund-raising events during the one and a half years preceding the convention. They organized and delivered a very successful Mini-convention with over 300 participants in less than two years of its initiation. Here are some of the new ideas tried at the Arizona ADS Mini-Convention:

- ★ First night a Movie night where two movies were played, one for adults and one for children at the same time.
- ★ The movies were followed by a Reception, which was hosted by the Ladies of Arizona. It included a variety of home made foods, followed by socializing and board games.
- ★ Mornings started with hiking, which was quite popular and enjoyed by those who participated.
- ★ The Convention was officially declared open by a Kick-Off event. This opening event set the tone for the convention and delivered a message to the ADS youth on leadership and encouraged them to be involved.
- ★ A big emphasis was made on helping the youth and singles meet each other. Facilitation session of "Getting Acquainted workshop" was offered. It was successful and very well attended. Another session targeted at our youth was a Cultural discussion on "Growing up in America". It was well attended and valued.
- ★ On Thursday night, which also was the Thanksgiving night, a prayer opportunity was offered in the format of a Laylet Jom3a. It was facilitated by Dr. Rabeea Aboufakher.
- ★ A new concept was tested at this mini-convention. An education session was offered on Investing and financial planning. Top three speakers were recruited to speak at the convention.
- ★ The Chapter provided the convention participants with a unique opportunity to watch in person a Zajal Party hosted by the legendary Zaghloul El-Damour and by our Brother Adel Khaddaj.



Besides the new activities and events tested and the new concepts tried for the first time, most normal events for the mini-convention were successful. They avoided any incidents, minimized wait times and lines, and offered excellent food with variety of programs that targeted not only adults and youth, but also some designed for children 5 – 12 and youth 13 – 17. The Youth/Singles party was open for age 16 and up. Religious discussions and seminars were very popular. Several sessions ran into the upcoming events and people wanted to keep the discussions going.





BOSTON, MASS

Khaled Ghanem, President



Greetings and best wishes to all fellow Druze across the world.

The ADS Boston Chapter Board, will be honored to share with our fellow Druze some of the picture that were taken during our Adha party and the Halloween party. Also we would like to invite you to our upcoming welcome spring party at the Boston Bowling alley in Quincy, MA. Saturday, April 6, 2008.

The Boston Chapter will be honored with your presence that would lead to a stronger relationship with all the loving ADS Druze community. The purpose of all the events that is being held by the ADS Boston chapter is to strengthen the connection among fellow Druze, also to celebrate our Druze culture and heritage and to recognize the outstanding Druze fellows who have made a huge difference in their community. In addition, having a united, loving, and strong American Druze community is one of our goals. Our Druze heritage is very rich in kind deeds that's why we are blessed from generation to generation. Because of the well known Druze cultural and honorable morals, our ancestors truly deserved the title "Bani Maarouf" and we are also proud of it.



CENTRAL FLORIDA

Raja Hatoum, President



Halloween was celebrated the by having a picnic on the west coast October 28th 2007, with our brothers and sisters in our community Clearwater and Tampa Florida. Everybody had a great time especially people enjoying each others company and also the water view.



Eid-Adha party on Dec 22 in Orlando Florida. The party included a live band & singer. The National President Dr. Akram Bou-Ghannam was the guest of honor. Also, gifts were given to all the children by their parents. All the children's could not hide the joy and happiness that was covering their faces.



Central Florida Agenda for 2008 - On Jan 13 the Central Florida Board of Directors held their monthly meeting & set goals and agenda for year 2008. One of the goals to have a joint picnic with South Florida Chapter to kick of the pre-convention Mania, as well as a Mother's day picnic to thank all the mothers and Labor day picnic. In addition the Board of Directors approved 2008 Eid-Eldha party in the Central Florida Area. Also, social activities such fishing trips, kayaking, camping etc, were approved.

"Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one things of changing himself."



OHIO

Nader Dakdouk, President

I was born in Lebanon; my father is Ghazi Dakdouk and my mother is Mona Al-Jaouhari from Aramoun. My parents migrated to Ohio in 1979 when I was seven years old. After all these years, I was really looking forward for my return visit to my homeland in the summer of 1996, where I met my wife Zalfa Aridi, and we now have a beautiful six year old daughter, Dina.



I am pleased to tell you that a new Ohio chapter has been reestablished on January 27th 2008. It's a great honor for me to represent the Druze community in Ohio. Our board is very passionate & impressively motivated to serve our society & make this chapter a great success. We are off to a good start, with 74 current members & planning on increasing our chapter memberships.

I would like to recognize our dedicated board members: Mr. Nahed Al-Jawhari (Vice President), Mrs. Lisa Al-Jaouhari (Secretary), Mr. Anis Kordab (Treasurer) and our directors: Mr. Faris Alameh, Mr. Akram Jaafar, Mr. Fadi bou-khizam, Dr. Rima Muaakassa, Mr. Chad Dakdouk, Mrs. Linda Al-Masri and Mr. Ghassan Baz.

The major drive behind forming this chapter was the swirls of enthusiasm and inspiration of my fellow Druze here in Ohio, and their strong belief of the need to have a non-profit organization that serves & contributes to our community. Our outermost purpose is to create a social environment for our youth so they can meet and relate to one another, understand and preserve our cultural heritage, traditions and faith.



It is a noble act and a challenge to be able to serve the society without any expectations; therefore, I would like to extend my gratitude to all members who contributed to the success of forming this chapter with their dedication and hard work. I would like to, specifically, thank Dr. Rima Muaakassa for kindly cooperating with us to reach our goal.

Finally, special thanks to Mr. Shauki Halime and his wife, Sarah, for giving us the opportunity to announce the birth of our Ohio chapter to Druze all over the world.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA





HOUSTON, TEXAS

Souheil Samir Ghaoui, President



Activities

- ★ Free Picnic - **March 2nd, 2008**
- ★ Dinner & Picnic - **Dallas, Oklahoma & Houston Chapters - Mar 22 & 23, 2008**
- ★ Second Annual Scholarship Benefit - **April 12th, 2008**
- ★ ADS-Houston Thanksgiving Convention 2008 - **Nov 26 - 30, 2008**

We are looking forward for you joining us at our Second Annual Scholarship Benefit (**Handful of Seed**) that will be held on April 12th, 2008 at the Sheraton Suites next to the Galleria (Houston, Texas). This is for the future of all of our beautiful KIDS (*The Leaders of the Future*). Invitations will be mailed soon with more details.

**April 12 - Scholarship Benefit Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Abdallah Najjar from Atlanta, Georgia**



2008 Thanksgiving Convention Location: [J. W. Marriott Houston](#)

Dates: **Wed Nov 26 to Sun Nov 30, 2008**

Chairperson: [Mr. Tarek Amine](#) Co-Chairperson: [Dr. Dima Suki](#)

NORTH CAROLINA (Charlotte)

Walid Shaban, President



- ★ The ADS Charlotte Chapter stayed busy these past couple of months. In addition to our weekly Arabic school, we held many get-togethers and parties to celebrate the various holidays.
- ★ In October we threw a spooky Halloween Party. Members had a blast dressing up and watching our children compete in games like "The flying bats" and "Wrap Your Dad Up Like a Mummy".
- ★ In November, we all got together and celebrated Thanksgiving. With tables overflowing with delicious food, it truly felt like we were one huge family—we all had so much to be thankful for.
- ★ In December we celebrated Eid Al Adha, & in honor of this holiday, our ladies hand stitched a beautiful, large Druze Flag. We spent the night enjoying one another's company, eating stuffed lamb, & celebrating our heritage.
- ★ Finally, we held our annual New Years Party in the Hilton Hotel. We brought in the year 2008 with each other doing the dabkee and dancing to Naji H'lal and the Waves Band.
- ★ We are looking forward to this New Year and all it will bring!



Never break four things in your life – Trust, Promise, Relation & Heart because when they break they don't make noise but are very difficult to repair.



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Marwan Aboudiab, President



Dedicated to serve the local community, to increase our chapter memberships and establish a path forward to future NC ADS projects that will serve the needs of the local chapter.

Previously Held Functions

- ★ ADS NCC celebrated the 2007 End of the Year Dinner and Party with delicious food and great entertainment.
- ★ This years banquet was held on Saturday December 22nd, at illusions Fayrouz Dining & Entertainment
- ★ ADSNCC.ORG new site was launched on November 10th, 2007. The new chapter's web site was created to communicate with our community on the local chapter activities & new projects that are under studies to serve North Cal Druze community



SOUTH CALIFORNIA

Rima Joumblat, President

It is an honor & privilege for me to have been serving our community for the past six months as President. I am blessed with talented, dedicated & hard working board members & volunteers.

The Southern California Chapter has evolved in so many ways in order to achieve our goal of reuniting the community. I'm pleased to report that we have had one of our most active years in our chapter. We have held our very successful cultural day. We also had our annual ADY Halloween party with an amazing haunted house built by the Masri brothers where it was enjoyed by children & adults alike. Not to forget the fun, exciting & informative Ladies Auxiliary Luncheon, as well as our Eid El Adha, New Year's Eve Party & Valentine's Party.

Our board & dedicated, committed volunteers are working tirelessly at renovating our Center. We have reroofed our center & have no more leaks. Due to the generous donation of Mr. Saleem Israeli for the amount of \$10,000.00 we were able to tile our entry floor & kitchenette area, as well as upgrading the kitchenette area by adding new oak cabinets & granite counter tops throughout, plus a new functioning sink. We also have replumbed a major leak from the main water pipe to the center. Thanks to the hard work,

generosity & leadership of Mr. Shakeeb Aboul Hosn, ladies Auxiliary & numerous volunteers we were able to paint the first floor of our center & still in middle of painting the main hall & fixing the ceiling.

Other programs are also in the works & soon to materialize are the publication of our phonebook, children's room, SoCal web site, & membership cards.

Thanks to all our supporters, dedicated volunteers & generous contributors who have helped us in moving forward in fulfilling our mission.





WASHINGTON, DC

Salim Zayton, President



OKLAHOMA

Ameen Halabi, President



Dear Shauki

We held our Aid Al Adha party on Dec. 22. Almost all our members showed up for this exciting event. As a group we got together almost daily during Inshore Al Aid. We recited Shaar as we used to back home. Dr. Rabi Fakereddine was our spiritual guest over a conference call for about an hour. Spiritually, it was very fulfilling and educational. Our thanks to Dr. Rabi.

- ★ **Our New Year's Party** was held at a home party that lasted all night. It was enjoyed by everyone.
- ★ **Valentines Day** - We attended a party at a Marionette church.
- ★ **March** - We will be holding our chapter elections during a bring your own dish event.
- ★ **April/May** - We are coordinating with Dallas & Houston Chapters a regional event in either April or May. We look for it to become an annual rotating event. We are very much looking forward to that.



As always we welcome anyone passing or visiting Oklahoma to call on us and to attend any of our events as our guest.

May God Bless All Druze.

Thank you Shauki and Sarah for a fantastic newsletter.

Ameen Halabi





DALLAS, TEXAS

Ramsey Kaedbey, President

A lifetime member & an elected National Board member for many years, focusing to keep unity among all the ADS chapters as well as giving his foremost attention to the youth, the young Druze professionals & the Faith.



Dallas Chapter Announces the "Micro-Convention"



A Successful Premier Regional Event: A Micro-Convention with A Tri-Chapter format: Dallas with Killeen, Oklahoma, and Houston. A THANK YOU FROM DALLAS goes To ALL who Made the Trip and MADE IT A POSSIBLE AND MEMORABLE Event.

Last weekend Mar. 22-23, 2008 was a Great Weekend Full of Successful Events with our Brothers and Sisters Families who traveled from Houston, Oklahoma and Killeen to be with Our DFW Families. [We in Dallas have been successful in bringing in a First! A Regional Tri-Chapters Families get together](#) to meet, enjoy and make new friendships and refresh the old ones forever.



Thank You DFW for this Great Weekend and our "Micro-Convention". You have Warmed us up with your Hearts and Presence. The Picnic was at the Fabulous Bob Jones Park, fishing pavilion in Southlake. The Warmth of those who attended made us go through the chill of that Sunday until the sun showed up at the close of our prayers (... "Devine Coincidence?!")... no one had left.

We want to thank as well our big brother Sheikh Samah Helal for his prayers and the Faith Education sessions he conducted to the Young and the Adults in our communities.

We all enjoyed the great company, the great picnic and the great evening at the new "Al-Amir" Restaurant with the great food, Belly Dancing and the Traditional Dabke. Our Guests Enjoyed as well their stay at the Marriott. Thank you Dr. Rabih Suki and Dr. Samer Souki for their Hearts and Encouragement. Our Big Thank you goes for the generosity, the Great Coordination and the Execution of such an event with our Brothers Souhail Ghaoui, President of the Houston Chapter, Ameen Halabi, President of the Okalhoma Chapter and our board member, sister Rima Assed of Killeen with all the Families and Friends who made the trip.



Our VERY Special Thanks go to our DFW LADIES for their Generous Home-Made Sweets which Crowned their serving and coordinating of the sumptuous BB-Q Meal, followed by the Traditional Arabic Bitter Coffee and the Egg-Hunt with gifts and prizes for the Kids. I can Whole heartedly say that we have a great New Women's Auxiliary at the ADS DFW-Chapter.

We Love you and Love our Families. Our Aim with this Premier Micro-Convention Program is to encourage more of these successful low cost Regional functions among Multiple Chapters in nearby States.

Join Us in Keeping this Community Alive and Healthy and Renew your Families Memberships. Together We Can.

The Few the Proud the Druze, God Be With You All.





MICHIGAN

Khalil Harfouch, President

I was born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 1962. I completed my high school education in Lebanon before moving to the United States in 1982. I am married to Labiba Radwan for twenty years and have three children – Nadeem, Tarek and Fatim. I served two terms as a Vice President of the ADS Michigan Chapter and three times as a Board Member.



The chapter has enjoyed a number of fun events, a Halloween Party, Adha Celebration on Dec 15 and our New Years Party.

We have a calendar of events planned & published for April through August, listed below:

1. Religious Seminars - Sunday evenings (see schedule posted)
2. Social Sunday Brunch #1 - April 6
3. General Meeting / Social Night - April 26
4. 2008 Mothers Day Celebration - May 10 - ADS Community Center
5. 2008 Fathers Day Picnic #1 - June 15 - Huron Meadows Metropark
6. 2008 - Picnic #2 - July 13 - Silver Lake Park
7. 2008 - Picnic #3 - August 24 - Independence Lake Park



SOUTH FLORIDA

Alex Makled, President

2007 activities: We have a lot to celebrate about our accomplishments during 2007. Our community came together as one big family exhibiting an enthusiastic and a strong support at our 2007 wonderful gatherings.

- ★ Early 2007 picnic at Oleta Park in Miami
- ★ Spring Picnic at C.B Smith Park in Broward
- ★ Back to school Picnic at the South Inlet Park in Palm Beach County
- ★ Thanksgiving Picnic at Oleta Park in Miami
- ★ Eid Al-Adha event at the Marriott in Coral Spring



2008 Agenda: This year promises to be exciting and full of great activities, programs & hopefully accomplishments to continue to propel our chapter forward. Our agenda in 2008 to include the following activities:

- ★ Spring Picnic early to mid-March in Broward County
- ★ Membership drive from Jan 1 to March 31st.
- ★ Election of a New President.
- ★ Hosting the National Convention in Fort Lauderdale this summer.

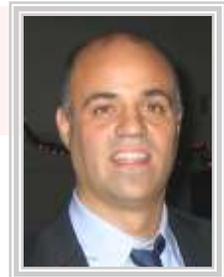


“Winning doesn’t always mean being first, winning means you’re doing better than you’ve done before.”



VIRGINIA

Rabih Hamze, President



ADS Richmond chapter has been very successful, over the years, at bringing the community together, which was one of its first priorities. As newly elected president, I am committed, as well as my dedicated board members, to make every endeavor in order to maintain these valuable assets in our community and to achieve the longevity of our chapter. I believe that it is our responsibility to pass on these wonderful traditions to our youth. It a vital matter we should take seriously. We can accomplish that through various activities and continuous interaction.

Here, in Richmond, we are proud to have started an Arabic language program, which is now serving about 40 students. Our community center is available and open at all times for pleasant events as well as for sorrowing ones. Families are welcomed every Sunday, or any other day, to spend a wonderful time at the center, while enjoying the various sports activities offered: volleyball, basketball, foosball, ping pong...Kids have a great time on the playgrounds around the center and through various kids' club activities. This summer was fun and eventful. Community members gathered for several picnics and sports tournament. Families enjoyed bread fresh off the "saag" during the Folklore Night.



Yard sales are always held to raise some needed funds to sustain our chapter, and this is made possible through the participation and generous contributions of our committed members.

Thank you for your continuous support, which will allow our cultural center to prosper. We are looking forward to working with our members and serving them better.



ILLINOIS

Khaled Nassereldine, President

Chapter Activities Reported by Raghida Arbid.



Raghida Arbid
Chapter Secretary
Very active & energetic community leader, working hard for the good of the Society.

Happy New Year and blessed Adha from ADS IL chapter. As all ADS chapters over the US, we've been lately overwhelmed with all the wonderful celebrations. New Year party was a blast. It was held on December 31st, a week after Adha party. Our families and friends got together & welcomed 2008 in a festive atmosphere. Everybody danced the dabkeh and enjoyed the latest music hits.

On December 22nd, we celebrated Eid Al Adha. Joy of the Eid and the deep meanings of it occupied the majority of the speeches. Also this year, our kids were reminded of our great tradition of the Eid. For the occasion, they decorated piggy banks boxes with Druze stars to save money for orphanage houses. Kids were rewarded with Adha gifts and everyone enjoyed the delicious Arabic food.



On October 28, We had a spooky Halloween party. Games, prizes, delicious pizza and gifts kept everybody occupied till the last minute. Our kids were very scary but cool in their costumes.

Currently, we are planning for the upcoming 2008 spring and summer picnics. Thanks to the board members and all the volunteers who had helped to make our 2007 parties a success.





2008 ADS National Convention

ADS National Convention



La SOCIEDAD DRUZA AMERICANA les invita cordialmente a su 62da Convención anual en:

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Desde el 29 de Junio hasta el 6 de Julio del 2008

en el *Marriott Harbor Beach Resort & Spa*

Para reservar su habitación con tarifas promocionales visite: <http://marriott.com/llsb?groupCode=drzdrza&app=reswink>

Venga y acompáñenos en la bella ciudad de Fort Lauderdale, donde nuestros amigos de la comunidad Druza del Sur de la Florida, se preparan para darle la bienvenida a todos los visitantes de este magnífico evento que se llevará a cabo en un fabuloso Resort, en el cual, se desarrollará una semana llena de actividades educacionales, culturales, divertidas y sociales para todas las edades. La comunidad del Sur de Florida esta lista para mostrarnos la verdadera hospitalidad Druza y la temática de este año:

¡Nuestros Niños... Nuestro Futuro!

★ PRECIOS DE PAQUETES PARA LA CONVENCION ★

INSCRIPCIONES TEMPRANAS			INSCRIPCIONES TARDIAS		
Antes del 10 de Junio del 2008	Miembros del ADS con membresía paga & Participantes Internacionales	Miembros con membresía NO paga	Después del 10 de Junio del 2008	Miembros del ADS con membresía paga & Participantes Internacionales	Miembros con membresía NO paga
Esposo y esposa	\$450.00	\$552.00	Esposo y esposa	\$518.00	\$619.00
Individual	\$254.00	\$310.00	Individual	\$293.00	\$349.00
Estudiantes con carnet	\$214.00	\$259.00	Estudiantes con carnet	\$248.00	\$293.00
Niños (3-12 años)	\$113.00	\$140.00	Niños (3-12 años)	\$141.00	\$169.00

Para mayor información, por favor visite: www.druze.com o contáctenos a:

Oficina Nacional de la Sociedad Druza Americana ADS

P.O. BOX 291437, Davie, Florida 33329-1437

Teléfono: 1-877-ADS-7330 / Fax: 1-954-337-0995 / E-mail: americandruzesociety@yahoo.com

Por favor marque su calendario, reserve a tiempo y prepárese para pasarla muy bien.

¡ESPERAMOS VERLES A TODOS EN LA FLORIDA!



Canada



www.druzequebec.com

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Nader Abou-Chacra, President
Very active and energetic Leader for the Druze Society in Montreal.

★ **Canadian Druze 2008 Convention from May 16 to 19, 2008**

Druze from the States and all over the world are welcome. This is in collaboration with the chapters from Edmonton, Ottawa & Toronto which promises to be an exciting National event. Many activities are planned. Please Contact us or visit our website if you need any further information.

MAILING ADDRESS

Canadian Druze Society in Quebec
 C P 266, Succursale St-Laurent
 Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4L 4V4

FOR INFORMATION

Email: [cgs2008@druzequebec.com](mailto:cds2008@druzequebec.com)
 Tel: 514-690-5529 (Nader Abou Chacra)
 514-836-7881 (Kamel Bouras)
 Fax: 514-721-1553

Held at: The Sheraton Laval Hotel & Convention Center

2440, Autoroute des Laurentides, (Carrefour Laval),
 Laval, Quebec, H7T 1X5
 Phone: 450-687-2440, Fax: 450-687-0655

Please make your reservations soon!

5th Annual Canadian Druze Convention

Montreal, May 16 - 19, 2008



الجمعية الدروزية الكندية



Canadian Druze Society in Quebec

in collaboration with the chapters from
 Edmonton, Ottawa & Toronto

5th ANNUAL CANADIAN DRUZE CONVENTION - PROGRAM

BIENVENUE À MONTRÉAL!

Check our website for updates on available tours www.druzequebec.com

Montréal's 360 years of history have left an indelible mark on the vibrant character of our city. It's been in turn a French settlement, a British stronghold, and today, the world's second-largest Frenchspeaking city. Over the years, European flair has blended with North American savoir-faire to create the story of Montréal a rich tradition, a mosaic of cultures, and a fierce passion for the future. Officially, Montréal is bilingual; in reality, the largest bilingual city in North America works, rests and plays in a multitude of languages and cultures... *yours to discover!*

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

TRANSPORT TO AND FROM ALL ACTIVITES WILL BE PROVIDED

SUNDAY, MAY 18

9:30 - 11:00 AM	HOSPITALITY DRINKS ROOM: QUÉBÉCOY HOSPITALITY SUITE
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY ROOM: GIUSEPPE SAPPUTO
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	CHILDREN ACTIVITY (UP TO 12 YRS) ROOM: QUÉBÉCOY HOSPITALITY SUITE
2:00 - 5:30 PM	TOURS / SHOPPING
7:00 PM	CHILDREN MAGIC SHOW & PIZZA DINNER (UP TO 12 YRS) ROOM: QUÉBÉCOY HOSPITALITY SUITE
7:30 PM	GALA DINNER ROOM: LAVAL

MONDAY, MAY 19

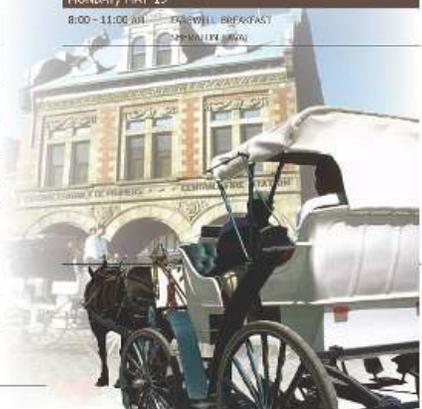
8:00 - 11:00 AM	BRILLIANT BREAKFAST SHERATON LAVAL
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FRIDAY, MAY 16

5:00 - 8:00 PM	REGISTRATION
8:30 PM - 1:30 AM	HOSPITALITY DINNER RESTAURANT LA PIZZANERA
8:30 - 11:30 PM	BELL ATRIUM DJ NITE (YOUTH 13 - 18 YRS)
9:30 PM - 1:30 AM	MOLINA SAPPUTO SINGLES NIGHT-OUT (YOUTH 19+ YRS)
8:00 PM	QUÉBÉCOY HOSPITALITY SUITE OPENS FOR THE DURATION OF THE CONVENTION

SATURDAY, MAY 17

8:00 AM	REGISTRATION OPENS
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM	SUGAR SHACK (INCL. LUNCH) BUSES WILL LEAVE AT 10:00 AM SHERATON LAVAL MAIN ENTRANCE
4:00 - 5:30 PM	EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY ROOM: GIUSEPPE SAPPUTO
4:00 - 5:30 PM	CHILDREN ACTIVITY (UP TO 12 YRS) ROOM: QUÉBÉCOY HOSPITALITY SUITE
8:30 PM	LESANES: EVENING & DINNER BUSES START LEAVING AT 8:30 PM SHERATON LAVAL MAIN ENTRANCE





Canada

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Walid Elawar, Honorary President
Former President of the Toronto Chapter, and very Active with the current board and longstanding member.



Druze Home Mortgage Paid Off

The Toronto Druze House Mortgage was recently paid off in full. On November 24th, 2007 the announcement was officially made during a evening hosted by the Toronto Druze Society. Numerous dignitaries attended and spoke.

Below is a my speech in honour of the occasion.

I welcome you all to this joyous and reflective occasion today that many of us call it "The realization of a dream", and here we are at this beautiful gathering announcing the payment of the mortgage on our beloved Druze House.

It was a necessary and gigantic step for our community, but its seeds were planted 37 years ago by a few Druze immigrants who had the vision and determination, and never stopped working until the dream became reality. To them is our gratitude and we salute them.

Tonight we celebrate the faith, love, determination, trust, sacrifices, and unity of our community. These are the cornerstones of this modest house, which will grow to bigger and better things in the near future with honesty, compassion, and true participation.

We would like the Lebanese and Arab communities to consider this house as their own, especially for any cultural, educational, or Arab nationalistic causes, and we wish that all other community groups will have their own centres and pay them off in the near future.

A Druze, or a Mowahid, is person who believes in the oneness of God, has faith and trust in Him and all his prophets, and believes in wisdom above all. May God give us the will and determination to get the changes our community deserves in these turbulent times.

Ladies and gentlemen, we came to a great country that we now call home which I truly believe that it is the best country on the face of this planet, and it is teaching us tolerance, respect, acceptance, equality, and humility. But, at the same time we have our own history, culture, traditions, and heritage that we must preserve through a cultural centre where we can teach the



Rola Hamdan
 Women Committee

new generations their language, religion, art, history, and help build their self confidence so they can face the new challenges here and back home, and let us teach them the difference between material progress and spiritual poverty.

Ladies and gentlemen, our contributions to our new home are great as well. Among us are doctors, lawyers, computer scientists, business people, movie producers, and more. Yet, we find our community facing many prejudices and discriminations, and we need change, but to create change we must get involved, especially in the political system, and at least use our basic rights of registering and voting, and building strong bridges between each other first, and then the different levels of government.

To us as a Druze community, we feel that it is the right time to build on and improve all programs, be it cultural, religious, educational, youth, women, and seniors. Because the financial pressures have been eliminated, we would like to do it in cooperation and partnership with you.

In closing, allow me to thank all of you again for participating with us tonight, especially our honoured guests. My thanks to all previous board members and committees who worked so hard over the years and continue working, especially the ladies committee. Thanks to all our community members whom the board and I had the honour and privilege of serving. A great big thank you for our trustees, Mr. Chafic Abou-tarieh, and my late father, Mr. Jamil Elawar whose spirit still guides me today, and of course my family and wife for putting up with my hectic schedules. Finally, I would like to say

I am proud to be amongst you
 I am a proud Druze
 I am a proud Canadian-Arab

And we did it!



Jihad Halabi
 Toronto Chapter
 President



Canada

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Bashar Bou-Diab, President



It gives us immense delight and eminent respect to, once again, take part in presenting to our brothers and sisters in the Druze communities in North America the events and gatherings achieved by our Canadian Druze Society of Ontario (CDSO) – Ottawa Chapter in the past 4 months in order to bring us all closer together, and bind us stronger.

1. Religious Lecture Series, October 7th and November 10th

Administered by the highly respected, Sheikh Jazaa Al-Sahnawi, these lectures discussed the "Tawhid" faith & its teachings through presenting the book "Maslak-Al-Tawhid" by its honourable author Dr. Sami Makarem. These lectures took place at the University of Ottawa.



Sheikh Jazaa Al-Sahnawi

2. Eid-Al-Adha Religious Session, Dec 9th

Also administered by Sheikh Jazaa Al-Sahnawi, this Eid celebration took on a religious way of explaining the meaning of Eid-Al-Adha to our children, youth and adults, according to the Druze faith. The event was a great success, as 75 of our brothers and sisters gathered and celebrated Eid with traditional sweets and refreshments. The event took place at the University of Ottawa.



3. New Year's Party, Dec 21st

In celebration of the upcoming New Year, about 80% of our Ottawa Druze community gathered together at the Gallery Lounge in Ottawa in an atmosphere of joyous dancing and talent activities. The party included a delicious dinner, a tombola draw for prizes, and some wonderful surprises.

If you need any information, or to refer anyone to us, please contact us at reachus@druze.ca or our website at <http://www.druze.ca>. Sincerely,

Yara Harb
CDSO-Ottawa Chapter Secretary





Canada



EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Imad Chehayeb, President

Upcoming Events

★ We are hosting the 2009 Canadian Druze Convention in May 2009. Our chapter is very excited to host and preparations are already underway.



Edmonton Druze Center

- ★ **Social Sunday** - Jan 6 our broke attendance records with many new comers. It is always held the 1st Sunday of every month, a social get together at the hall over brunch, with different activities and games for all ages. Drop by and enjoy. The youth religious discussion is getting to be very popular. Delivered by Mr. Kassab Radwan, with different topic every session. Next Social Sunday is on Feb 3/08.
- ★ **Tawhid Faith** - Weekly meetings held every Thursday evening to discuss and learn about our faith.
- ★ **Seniors Social** - these will be starting soon. A weekly social event for our seniors to get together for coffee and socialize.
- ★ **Library** - Our new library shelves are callin on Donors. We ordered some books to benefit the whole community, so, please if you have books that you would like to donate to the Library, contact us.
- ★ **Education** - computer courses:
 1. Autocad Drafting course will start on Jan 16.
 2. Computer Seminar Introduction to computer use for Beginners.
- ★ **Sports and Social** - ping pong will start soon (Wednesday weekly)
- ★ **Movie Night** for the Youth Group - Fridays once a month



UPDATE ON PREVIOUS EVENTS

- ★ Annual Gala Evening - Dec 24 was another huge success with approx. 390 community members and friends attending the party.
- ★ Dec 2007 marks the end of our mortgage on the Hall. A celebration is planned to celebrate this great community achievement.





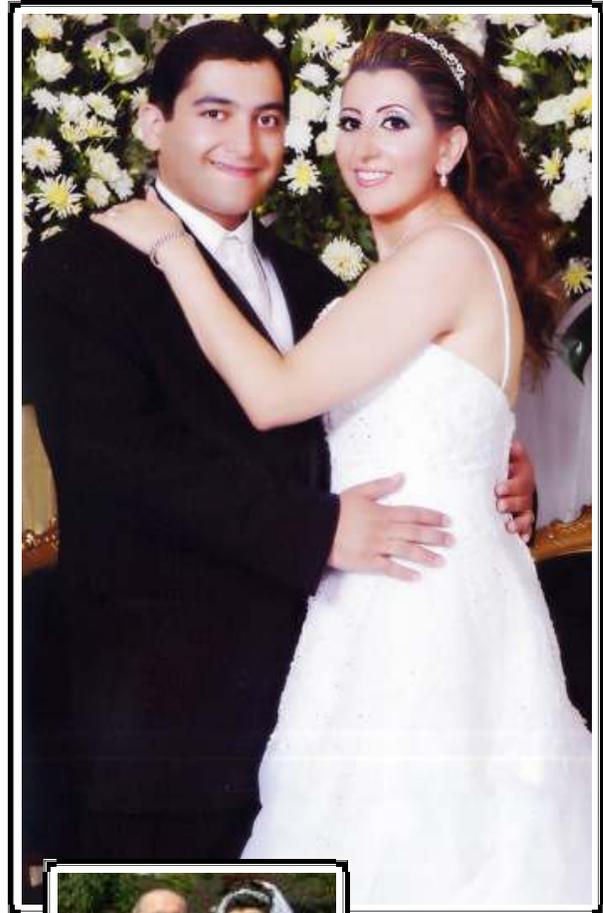
Weddings

Shadi Nawaf Malaeb & Rema Samir Fayad Massachusetts

On July 29th 2007,
Shadi and Rema
celebrated their wedding in
a beautiful ceremony in Connecticut.
After the wedding,
the bride and groom
and their families flew to Lebanon.
They were joined by a large gathering of
loving relatives and friends from their
home towns of Baysour and Sofar for
a joyful celebration at
Baysour's cultural and sportive al-rabita town hall.

Rema is a high school mathematics teacher from
Connecticut &
Shadi is a newborn medicine
specialist & pediatrician in Massachusetts,
where they currently reside. They are proud to have
first met each other at the
2006 ADS convention in Boston.

Congratulations Shadi & Rema!
We all wish you a happy & prosperous life together.
Shauki & Sarah Halime





Weddings

Amer El Masri & Feryel El Masri
Florida



On January 19, 2008

Amer El Masri

&

Feryel El Masri.

*celebrated their marriage
with the Central Florida
Community
along with friends & families.*

Congratulations!

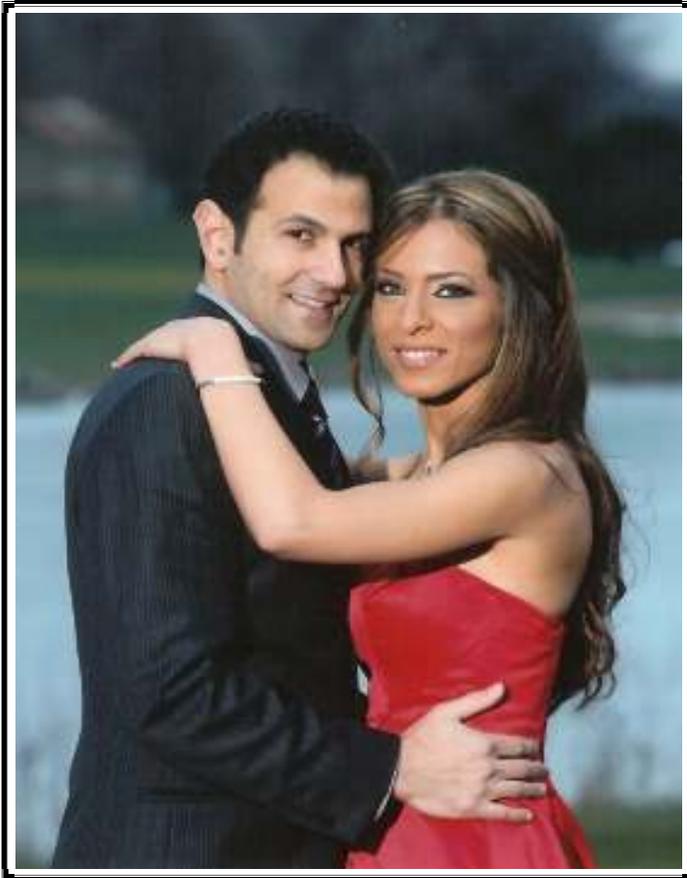
*We all wish you a beautiful,
& long life together.*





Engagements

Raji Abulhosn & Zeina Abu-Hamdan - Michigan



*Zeina, daughter of
Imad & Hala Abu-Hamdan*

to

*Raji, son of
Salman & Najat Abulhosn*

on

December 29, 2007

celebrated at the

Dearborn Hills Golf Club-Dearborn, Michigan

*We had the pleasure to attend
& celebrate the Engagement
of the lovely couple.
Wishing them the best future together.
Congratulations!*

Shauki & Sarah Halime





Congratulations



*Emir and Zeina Aboul Hosn
celebrated the birth of their new baby girl
RAYYA ABOULHOSN.*

*Rayya was born on
March 20th, 2008 @ 4:30pm
In Vancouver, BC, Canada
weighing 7.9 lbs/oz
a very happy baby and
is absolutely adorable.*



مبروك التخرج من الجامعة للجميع
واخص الأنسة ليال حمد نوفل
يرجى إرسال هذه الرسالة لها
وشكراً

عفيف نوفل - سوريا - السويداء

Congratulations!

We would like to extend our sincere congratulations to Ms. Carolina Masri for her recent graduation in the discipline of "Spanish/Television Communication".

Our Society is fortunate to have a talented and successful American Druze Society (ADS) Director who continues to achieve academic success and is multi-talented. We wish her continued success in all future endeavors!





History of Druze - Request for information

Julie Makarem

Previous ADS National President

The History of the Druze in America by Julie Makarem appears on her website americandruzeheritage.com, as well as on the American Druze Society website, 'www.druze.com.' Julie wrote the history from 1908 until 1970, and Ajaj Andari wrote the history from 1971 to 1996. Julie has updated the history until the present time. The History has been an excellent source of information for researchers, as well as for the American Druze & the Druze in all other countries.

Julie started collecting American Druze Society (ADS) material and memorabilia since she went to the first convention as a youngster in 1947. However, she turned the material over to the American Druze Society's officers when she went to live in Lebanon with her husband, Dr. Sami Makarem. She has not been able to recover the material for all of the early years of the Society's existence; therefore, as she wrote the history for those years, many years were unavailable. Therefore, she asks that anyone who may have ADS material, whatever years for which they may be, send the material to her. She will pay for the postage, and if requested, return the material to the sender. The material will be given to the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library where Julie's papers are stored in the archives (see: americandruzeheritage.com, Bentley Historical Library, Julie Makarem Papers, University of Michigan).

Much progress has been made since the inception of Al Bakourat Al-Durziat, and the establishment of the American Druze Society. There has been growth in numbers of members as well as activities. Conventions have continued yearly with the cooperation of the local community and national board and each year improvements are seen. Our conventions continue to demonstrate the unity, closeness and caring among our people.

El-Bakourat Ed-Dirziyat and ADS material requested:

Al-Bayan newspaper and Nahdat Al-Arab newspaper
ADS Visitor, Joe Nappa Publisher
"Our Heritage" various publishers
"Our World" Kathy Stevenson Publisher

Also, if you have any copies of the Al-Bayan newspaper published in Washington, D.C. or Nahdat Al-Arab newspaper published in Hamtramc, Michigan, as well as any information regarding these newspapers, please send them or a photocopy to me. The two newspapers are crucial for our history.

Please send any relevant material & articles to:

Mrs. Sami Nasib Makarem, 7869 Hamlet CT, Canton, MI, 48187, Phone: 734 453 9113; 313 605 1192.



Nassib Makarem wins Calligraphy Award



From: United Arab Emirates

On April 4, 2008, Nassib Makarem won an award for his calligraphy from the Emir of Shargha who also bought one of his paintings. He is the only Druze artist participating in the calligraphy events in all of the UAE.

In his exhibitions, the young

Nassib won a number of certificates from Arab calligraphy exhibitions and the latest certificate from the Islamic Arts Festival in the United Arab Emirates which was under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah.

The young Nassib S. Makarem is the grandson of the world renowned calligrapher Sheikh Nasib S. Makarem.

Sheikh Nasib S. Makarem who is known for writing 276 words on one side of a 'grain of rice.' You will see the 'grain of rice' on his website. You can see the famous artist's work, the paintings of his grandfather, Sheikh Nasib S. Makarem on his website, www.nasibmakarem.org as well as those of the grandson, Nassib S. Makarem on www.americandruzeheritage.com, (click on: Druze Religion, then, click on Eid al-Adha, then click on Nassib S. Makarem) to take you to the paintings. The difference is stunning, and the beauty of both is as well.





Fantastic!



Arizona



“Physical beauty, whose manifestation is harmony, is the reflection of true beauty on the souls.”



AL MUWAHIDOUN

ACROSS HISTORY

By Dr. Foazi Barouki

د. فوزي الباروكي



A professor of linguistics, an Arabic course developer, & test writer for foreign language institutions in Central California. He is from Sweida, Syria, married with 3 boys. His boys are college graduates, & two of them live in San Francisco, California.

الموحدون عبر التاريخ

العالى الذين أسسوا
القاهرة، ووضعوا الحجر الأساس لجامعة الدول العربية في
دولة الفاطميين، من القيروان، إلى المهديّة، إلى القاهرة.
وضعتم مدينة الألف مئذنة وأسستهم نضال الموحدين في
تاريخ الإسلام. "فقدماً كانت القاهرة أم الدنيا، ويجب أن
نقول إن هذا الجبل العالى وأبناءه هم آباء القاهرة الذين
أسسوا الحضارة فيها".

وأكد على كلامه مخاطباً: أنتم أحفاد سلمان الفارسي
والصحابي الجليل أبي ذر الغفاري، وعمار بن ياسر والمقداد
بن عمرو الذين بلغوا رسالات الدولة ودينها الحنيف.
والصحابي أبو ذر الغفاري، هو ذلك النائر الاشتراكي الذي
كرس نظرة الإسلام إلى الوحدة بين الفرق الإسلامية حين
قال: "من قال لا إله إلا الله دخل الجنة". وأضاف: لقد كنتم في
تلك الحقبة الزمنية "رجالاً تزرعون النخيل في الأرض
وتمضون. ونحن نترك ما قدمته أياديكم البيضاء عبر التاريخ
من جهاد في أيام الهدى. "هذا الجهاد الذي جعل منكم حمائم
تتشرون السلام في أرض العرب.

ثم أردف يقول: نحن جننا من دمشق لنقول لكم إن التاريخ
جرى على غير ما نتمنى، فلنسا نهج الفتاوى التي أتى بها
"ابن تيمية"، والتي قادتنا إلى الهاوية والجحيم وشتتت الأمة
وفرقت وحدتها وكفرت الناس حين قيلت ضد بعض الطوائف
الإسلامية. فإن ذلك الأفق الضيق الذي انعكس على تفكير هذا
العالم مرفوض رفضاً باتاً. ولقد كان حرياً عليه أن ينظر في
باطن الحقيقة وألا يقيم الناس حسب مواقفها السياسية،

(Continued on page 57)

لقد كان من دواعي سروري أن أقضي جزءاً من صيف عام
2007 في مدينة السويداء، وأن تتاح لي الفرصة لسماع
محاضرة قيمة في المركز الثقافي عن الموحدين الدروز رفعت
من معنوياتهم وكرست وحدة كلمتهم ونضالهم الوطني والقومي
المشرف في ماضيهم وحاضرهم. ألقى المحاضرة العلامة
الدكتور محمد حبش، عضو مجلس الشعب السوري وعلق عليها
الشيخ حمود الحناوي، عضو مشيخة عقل الطائفة الدرزية في
جبل العرب، والأستاذ عبداً لله الأطرش، عضو مجلس الشعب،
والأستاذ المحامي توفيق عبيد، وآخرون بحضور مجموعة من
علماء الشريعة الإسلامية في دمشق، وعدد من أقطاب الرموز
الدينية وكبار المثقفين في محافظة السويداء. وقد كانت هذه
المحاضرة بما جاء في محتواها من عمق في تاريخ الموحدين
وفهم لمكانتهم القومية والسياسية والاجتماعية في العالم العربي
قد عززت من صفاء التوحيد ونقاء الموحدين.

استهل الدكتور حبش محاضرتة التي أطلق عليها عنوان:
"دمشق عاصمة الروح" بقوله: "جننا من دمشق عاصمة القيم
والفضائل لزيارة محافظة السويداء، محافظة الكرم والعنب
والثورة والبطولة. جننا من عاصمة الروح، العاصمة الأولى
لسوريا الطبيعية التي قدمت للتاريخ القمح والأنبياء، إلى جبل
العرب، جبل المقاومة والثورة: مقاومة سلطان باشا الأطرش
وجهاد سلمان" (سلمان الفارسي).

واستطرد الدكتور حبش بقوله: جننا من دمشق لنقول لكم إننا
نعرف من أنتم ولا نهج تاريخكم الناصع، فأنتم أبناء هذا الجبل





ACROSS HISTORY - 2

(Continued from page 56)

الطاغوت تفريقها". ثم أكد أيضاً أن الإسلام قد قام على حكمة عليّ، ورقة أبي ذر، وصفاء سلمان ليعم في أرض الله، بدءاً من الأرض السورية التي أنبتت قمحا وأنبياء وقدمته للتاريخ، فبهدي الأنبياء أغنت سوريا قلوب العالم بالروح، ودعت إلى التلاحم والإخاء. هذه الأرض السورية هي التي أنجبت سلطان باشا الأطرش الذي بث ثقافة المقاومة والروح الوطنية للرسالة التوحيدية وشعار "الدين لله والوطن للجميع".

وتعقيباً على محاضرة الدكتور حبش عزز الأستاذ عبد الله الأطرش ما جاء فيها من إيجابيات فعالة، ثم تلاه مداخلات أخرى من الأستاذ توفيق عبيد ومعاون وزير الأوقاف، والشيخ عبد الرزاق مؤنس وشيخ عقل الطائفة الشيخ حمود الحناوي، وكلها أكدت على الوحدة الوطنية بين أبناء سوريا، وأنتت على ما تضمنته المحاضرة من وعي وعمق أكيد لنضال الموحدين عبر التاريخ، وعلى ما قدمه البحث من رسالة واضحة لإتباع لغة الحوار والمحبة بين الفرق والمذاهب والطوائف. فقد رحب الشيخ الحناوي بالدكتور حبش ومرافقيه مشيراً بقوله: "لقد تعودنا دائماً أن نقول للزائرين أهلاً وسهلاً، فكيف ونحن أمام سادة أجلاء أفاضل، وأصحاب رسالة سامية، جاؤوا لنقول لهم: طوبى لمن يحترم الآخرين، ولا يلغئهم، طوبى لمن يجمع الكلمة ويلم الشمل ويوحد الصفوف"، ثم أشاد شيخ العقل بالمضمون القيم لهذه المحاضرة حيث تبحر المحاضر في تاريخ الموحدين على جميع المستويات الدينية والاجتماعية والسياسية، وخلص شيخ العقل إلى القول "بأن الموحدين أزليون منذ أن بدأت الخليقة مع الله وأنبيائه ورسله ثم مع أبي الثوار الزعيم الخالد سلطان باشا الأطرش، وأن ما قاله الدكتور حبش فقد جاء من عمق إسلامه وسماحته وجهاده، وصفاء توحيدنا، لأن التوحيد لا ينفصل عن الإسلام".

المراجع

فوزي الباروكي: ملاحظاتي الخاصة عن المحاضرة التي ألقى في المركز الثقافي في السويداء بتاريخ 17/8/2007 بعنوان "دمشق عاصمة الروح" للدكتور محمد حبش.

ليلى نصر، "د. حبش: الموحدون عبر التاريخ كانوا حمائم سلام يزرعون النخيل في الأرض ويمضون". Annour Newspaper, 306, 22/8/2007 ❖

فالحروب الداخلية التي جرت في القرنين السادس عشر والسابع عشر لا يمكن أن تحدد مفهوم علاقاتنا الحالية. وبما أن دمشق لم تتقبل ثقافة التكفير تلك، فقد تبنت بصيرة الشيخ الأكبر محي الدين العربي الذي دعا إلى التسامح واحتوى عقيدة الحب والإخاء. وأضاف: نحن على بصيرة بما كتب التاريخ، ونحن نعرف جهادكم الذي وحده سيف سلطان باشا الأطرش يوم قاد الثورة السورية الكبرى، والذي اجتمع على محبته كل ثوار سوريا. والسوريون الذي ناصروه كانوا أجابيد كراماً، وكانوا يعلمون أن من يعمل مثقال ذرة خيراً يره. واليوم في أعشاش النسور في الجبل العالي نقدم رسالة المحبة.

وهنا أشار المحاضر إلى أن ثمة جيلاً جديداً في دمشق يراجع التاريخ. هذا الجيل يدرك جيداً أن الفقه الذي كفر الموحدين في الماضي لن يُقبل في سوريا بعد اليوم، فقد طرد إلي غير رجعة لأنه كان مستأجراً في خدمة السياسة، ويدرك أيضاً أننا اليوم



Dr. Foazi Barouki, his wife and 3 sons.

في أمس الحاجة للبحث في أساس الحكمة والتعمق في مكنونها وأسرارها التي انتمن عليها شيوخ الموحدين في رسائل الصفا، وكتب فيثاغورس الفلسفية، حيث أن لغة الحوار والمحبة هي التي ننصف فيها رجال الفكر والتاريخ.

وخاطب أبناء الجبل مؤكداً لهم أن ذلك الجيل الجديد يحتاج إلى علم الإمام الغزالي، ومكتبات الفقه الإسلامي الغزيرة، وفقه حمزة بن علي إلى جوار الشافعي، وأبي حنيفة وجعفر الصادق، لاستكمال لوحة الوطن الجديدة، وهي الأمة الواحدة التي تدرك أن الله خلق لها أسباب وحدتها وليس من حق

Distinguished Druze



كمال جنبلاط: وزن أكبر من الطائفة

Kamal Jumblat (Arabic: مال جنبلاط December 6, 1917 – March 16, 1977) was an important Lebanese politician. He was the main leader of the anti-government forces in the early years of the Lebanese Civil War. He is the father of the present Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblat.

Family & Education

Kamal Jumblat was born in 1917 in Mukhtara, in the Chouf area of Lebanon, into the prestigious Jumblat family, who were traditional leaders of the Lebanese Druze community. His father, Fouad Jumblat, director of the Chouf District, was assassinated on August 6, 1931. After his father's death, Kamal Jumblat's mother Nazira played a significant political role for over a quarter of a century.

شخصيات درزية تاريخية

أموثٌ ولا أموثٌ فلا أبالي ففذا العزم من نسج الخيال
هي الأيتام تجري في دمانا أم الحق المكون ألف حال؟!
كلمة جنبلاط

The lights of stars that were extinguished ages ago still reaches us. So it is with great men who died centuries ago, but still reach us with the radiations of their personalities. Kahlil Gibran

Kamal Jumblat is a figure never repeated in the history of Lebanon and Arabs.

Many studies were published to describe him as prominent Lebanese politician, charismatic socialist leader, philosopher, thinker, poet...

In 1926, the young Kamal Jumblat joined the Lazarus Fathers Institute in Aintoura, in 1928 he finished his elementary studies. He achieved his high school diploma, having studied French, Arabic, science and literature, in 1936, and a philosophy diploma in 1937. Jumblat then pursued higher studies in France, where he joined the Faculty of Arts at the Sorbonne University and achieved a degree in Psychology & Civil Education, and another one in Sociology. Returning to Lebanon in 1939, after the outbreak of World War II he continued his studies at St Joseph University where he obtained a law degree in 1945.

On May 1, 1948, he married May Arslan, daughter of Prince Shakib Arslan (the Arslans being

(Continued on page 59)

الإنسان بالنسبة لكمال جنبلاط فرد،
نفسٌ و عقلٌ، حواسٌ و عواطفٌ حيث
قال:

"أنت أنا يا أخي، أنت هذا الكون في
حقيقته، أنت الإنسان، بل أنت وجه
الرحمن."

"أنت في صباح الجمال صلاةً"

أنت في حنين الضلوع صفاءً"



Distinguished Druze

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the other prominent Lebanese Druze family). Their only son, Walid Jumblat, was born on August 7, 1949.

Early political career

*Kamal Jumblat practiced law in Lebanon from 1941 to 1942 and was designated the Official State Lawyer for the **Lebanese** Government. In 1943, he appeared on the political scene after the death of his relative Hikmat Jumblat. In September, 1943, Kamal Jumblat was elected to the National Assembly for the first time, as a deputy of Mount Lebanon. He joined the opposition of the ruling Constitutional Bloc Party, headed by the then-President, Bechara El Khoury. In 1946, he was appointed Minister for the first time, for the portfolio of Economy, Agriculture & Social Affairs.*

In 1947, in spite of his own election for the second time as deputy, he resigned from the government, protesting voter fraud in the parliamentary elections. Likewise, he protested against what he termed the oppression and corruption of Bechara El Khoury, and was a main founder of the National Socialist Front, a movement which succeeded one year later in bringing down Bechara El Khoury.

On March 17, 1949, Kamal Jumblat officially founded the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) and declared its constitution on May 1, 1949. The PSP was a socialist party espousing secularism and officially opposed to the sectarian character of Lebanese politics. In practice, it has been led and largely supported since its foundation by members of

the Druze community in general, and the Jumblat clan in particular. In the name of the PSP, Jumblat called the first convention of the Arab Socialist Parties, which was held in Beirut in May 1951. The same year, he was reelected for the third time as Deputy of Mount Lebanon.

In 1952, he represented Lebanon at the Cultural Freedom Conference that was held in Switzerland. In August 1952, he organized a National Conference at Deir El Kamar, in the name of the National Socialist Front, calling for the resignation of President Bechara El Khoury. Due mainly to these pressures, the President resigned the same year.

The 1958 revolt

In 1953, Jumblat was re-elected Deputy for the fourth time. He founded the Popular Socialist Front the same year and led the opposition against the new President, Camille Chamoun.

During his presidency, the pro-Western President Chamoun tied Lebanon to the policies of the United States of America and the United Kingdom, who were at that time involved in the creation of the Baghdad Pact, comprised of Hashemite Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan. This was seen by pan-Arabists as an imperialist coalition, and it was strongly opposed by the influential Nasserite movement. Jumblat supported Egypt against an attack by Israel, France, and the United Kingdom in the Suez War of 1956, while Chamoun and parts of the Maronite Christian elite in Lebanon tacitly supported the invasion. The sectarian tensions of Lebanon greatly increased in this period, and both sides began to brace for violent conflict.

In 1956, Jumblat failed for the first time in the parliamentary elections, complaining of electoral

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عش ببساطة، أجب بكرام،
اهتم بتعمقٍ و تكلم بلطفٍ
فالسعادة تُبقيك حلواً
و التجارب تجعلك قوياً
و الأسي يُدِيمك محباً عطوفاً
و الفشل يدعك متواضعاً
و النجاح يحملك مشعاً.

“There is an aristocracy of the soul, irrespective of denomination, which gives us all our sense of honor, our reason for working, thinking, loving, and living.”

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gerrymandering and election fraud by the authorities. Two years later, he was one of the main leaders of a major political uprising against Camille Chamoun's Maronite-dominated government, which soon escalated into street fights and guerilla attacks. While the revolt reflected a number of political and sectarian conflicts, it had a pan-Arabist ideology, and was heavily supported through Syria by the newly formed United Arab Republic. The uprising ended after the United States intervened on the side of the Chamoun government and sent the U.S. Marine Corps to occupy Beirut. A political settlement followed by which Fuad Chehab was appointed new President of the Republic.

Uniting the opposition

Jumblat chaired the Afro-Asian People's Conference in 1960 and founded the same year, the National Struggle Front (NSF), a movement which gathered a large number of nationalist deputies. That same year, he was reelected Deputy for the fifth time and the NSF won 11 seats within the Lebanese Parliament. From 1960 to 1961 he was Minister for the second time, for the National Education portfolio and then in 1961 he was appointed Minister of Public Work & Planning. From 1961 to 1964 he was Interior Minister.

On May 8, 1964, he won at the parliamentary elections for the sixth time. In 1965, he began joining together Arab nationalist and progressivist politicians into a Nationalist Personalities Front. In 1966 he was appointed Minister of Public Work and Minister of PTT. He also represented Lebanon at the Congress of Afro-Asian Solidarity, and presided over the parliamentary and popular delegation to the People's Republic of China in 1966.

He supported the Palestinians in their struggle

against Israel for ideological reasons, but also to garner support from the Palestinian fedayeen based in Lebanon's refugee camps. The presence in Lebanon of large numbers of Palestinian refugees was resented by most Christians, but Jumblat strived to build a hard core of opposition around the Arab nationalist slogans of the Palestinian movement. Demanding a new Lebanese order based on secularism, socialism, Arabism and an abolition of the sectarian system, Jumblat began gathering disenchanted Sunnis, Shi'a and leftist Christians into an embryonic national opposition movement.

Build-up to Civil War

On May 9, 1968 he was reelected Deputy for the



seventh time. In 1970, he was once again appointed Minister of the Interior, a reward for his last-minute switch of allegiance in the presidential election that year, which resulted in Suleiman Franjeh's victory by one vote over Elias Sarkis, who was considered the odds-on favorite. As Interior Minister, he legalized the Communist Party (LCP) and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP). In 1972, Kamal Jumblat was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize by the Soviet

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Union. The same year, he was reelected Deputy for the eighth time. The following year, he was unanimously elected Secretary General of the Arab Front, a movement supportive of the Palestinian revolution.

The 1970's in Lebanon were characterized by rapidly building tension between the Christian-dominated government and Muslim and leftist opposition forces, demanding better representation in the government apparatus and a stronger Lebanese commitment to the Arab world. The conflict took place more or less along the same sectarian and political lines as the 1958 rebellion.

Both the opposition and their mainly Christian opponents organized armed militias, and the risk of armed conflict increased steadily. Jumblat had organized his own PSP into an armed force, and made it the backbone of the Lebanese National Movement (LNM), a coalition of left-wing Lebanese demanding the abolition of the sectarian quota system that permeated Lebanese politics, which discriminated against Muslims. The LNM was further joined by Palestinian radicals of the Rejectionist Front, and maintained good relations with the officially non-committal Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The Palestinian presence in the ranks of the opposition was a new development compared to the 1958 conflict.

The Lebanese Civil War

In April 1975, a series of tit-for-tat killings culminating in a Phalangist massacre of Palestinian workers, which prompted full-blown fighting in Beirut. In August 1975, Jumblat declared a program for

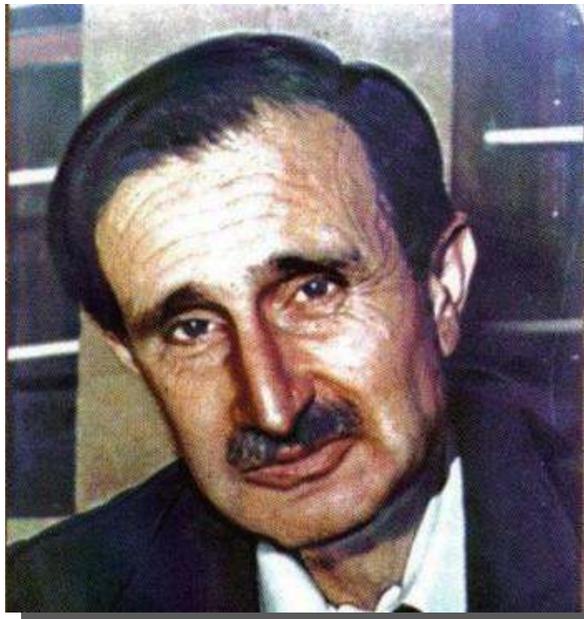
reform of the Lebanese political system, and the LNM openly challenged the government's legitimacy. In October a new round of fighting broke out, and quickly spread throughout the country: the Lebanese Civil War had begun.

During the period of 1975-1976 Jumblat acted as the main leader of the Lebanese opposition in the war, and with the aid of the PLO the LNM rapidly gained control over nearly 70% of Lebanon. This prompted Syrian intervention, since the Assad regime feared a collapse of the Christian-dominated order. Some 40,000

Syrian soldiers invaded Lebanon in 1976 and quickly smashed the LNM's favorable position; a truce was declared and the fighting subsided. The conflict remained unsolved, however, and during 1977, violence again began to increase.

Death and legacy

On March 16, 1977, Kamal Jumblat was assassinated. In 2005, his son Walid Jumblat, who immediately succeeded him as the main Druze leader of Lebanon and as head of the PSP.



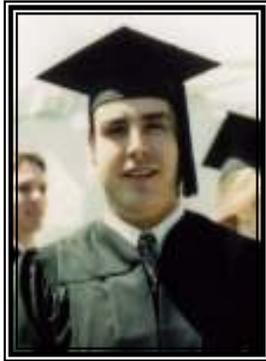
Extremely literate and considered by friend and foe alike to be a talented writer, Kamal Jumblat wrote more than 1,200 editorials in both [Arabic](#) and [French](#). He left hundreds of publications, held hundreds of press conferences and delivered hundreds of political speeches during international, regional and local conferences as well as within the Lebanese Parliament.

His political, philosophical and literary works contributed to the enrichment of Arab and worldwide libraries. So far, only twenty-five of his books and manuscripts have been published. Many books were also published about his life and genius. ❖

Physical beauty, whose manifestation is harmony, is the reflection of true beauty on the souls."



In Loving Memory



Wael K. Eljawhari, Ohio, USA

D.O., age 35. Beloved son of Kamel and Montaha; loving brother lad, Salah, Rashad and Mohjat; and many nieces and nephews all of Lebanon. Beloved brother of Ziad and Sadika (Samir); uncle of Ramiz, Jad, Danny and Dima all of Cleveland. Funeral Services Thursday, Feb. 21, 2008 at THE MALLCHOK FUNERAL HOME, 5660 RIDGE RD., PARMA, OH., at 11 a.m. Interment Brooklyn Hts. Cemetery. FAMILY WILL RECEIVE FRIENDS AT THE FUNERAL HOME WEDNESDAY 4-8 P.M.

انتقل الى رحمة تعالى المأسوف عليه

القاضي المتقاعد الشيخ

حسين محمود بك تلحوق

زوجته أمال حمدان

شقيقه النائب السابق المرحوم الشيخ فضل الله تلحوق

اولاده زياد، زلفا وهند زوجة أنور النكدي

وانسباؤهم ينعونه بمزيد من الأسى.

يصلى على جثمانه الطاهر اليوم الاثنين 17 كانون

الاول 2007 الساعة الحادية عشرة في قاعة الرسالة

الاجتماعية – عاليه

تقبل التعازي يومي الثلاثاء والاربعاء 18 و 19 منه

في منزله في حي المشايخ – عاليه



بالرضى والتسليم لمشينة الله تعالى
نعنى وفاة

**المرحوم عصام فواد
جنبلاط**

الظابط في الشرطة القضائيه

المنتقل الى رحمة تعالى بكانون

الثاني 2008

زوجته سعاد حليمه جنبلاط

اولاده

المراقب اول في الجمارك كمال جنبلاط

المهندس غسان جنبلاط

سائلين الله ان يتغمد الفقيد بواسع رحمته وان يلهم اهله الصبر

والسلوان

الأسفون آل حليمه وال جنبلاط

لكم من بعده طول البقاء.

Bism Allah Al Ruhman Al Raheem, By the name of God the Gracious the Merciful

With a heavy heart and extreme sadness we celebrate the passing of the soul of Mr. Khalil Braik El Mazry. He left this earth on Thursday, March 27, 2008. Rahamahoo Allah W/ into Al Baakeen.

Mr. El Mazry is survived by his wife Nelfa and their children: Jamili; Linda, Nadia, Khalil

His Children and their family:

Ali & Eisis El Mazry and their children Merwan, Shajira, Rabie, Amal

Ibrahim & Carmen El Mazry and their children Rayan, Manal

Omar & Yfticar El Mazry, son Iyad

Suzie El Mazry, daughters Rania, Jinan





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ان ما نقوم به هو عمل نابع من محبتنا
لطانفتنا .. طائفة الموحدين الدروز
ولتواصلنا مع بعضنا البعض حول العالم ،
وقد حققنا نجاحاً كبيراً بذلك
بمشيئة الله وبتشجيعكم.
مع الف شكر
حفظ الله طائفة الموحدين الدروز حول العالم

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شكراً.

What we are about ...

This complimentary Druze Magazine is a non-political communication vehicle for the Druze community worldwide. It is our pleasure to be part of globally connecting our diverse Druze societies with one another.

With our common roots we have flourished & now reside in every country around the world. In an effort to keep our uniqueness & traditions in a fast paced and changing world; we need to maintain a method to transcend the requests for conformity.

We have the ability to share our unique culture & customs in a very accessible cyber world while maintaining the efforts required



to preserve those elements which have defined our past, & bring it's relevance & significance to our future generations.

This magazine is an attempt to stem the tide and assist with the evolution of our culture, as the world will surely dilute us if we are unable to define ourselves in a manner that will uphold our unique destiny into the 21st century.

We are at **The Dawn (Al-Fajr)** of our time to make a difference and create an identifiable culture that will be impossible for anyone to extinguish. **We want to hear from everyone on their ideas and thoughts.**

We have the widest Druze network available & the magazine is posted on the www.DruzeWorldwide.com website for it to be accessible around the globe for all to read & enjoy. It is also supported through social media websites such as [Druze Worldwide Group on Facebook](http://DruzeWorldwideGroup.com) and others.

Everyone is welcome to submit an article or opinion for publication consideration. All ages are included & encouraged. We reserve the right to review, edit, accept or decline articles as well as revise for clarity, content & space.

Until the very exciting next issue, wishing the best to everyone!!

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الفجر

“Excellence is an art won by training & Habit...we are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.” - Aristotle



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