



# MECCA CENTER NEWSLETTER

MAY 2017 | SHABAN 1438 - RAMADAN 1438 | ISSUE 23

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*By Sh. Hassan Aly*



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*By Numan Ali Dugmeoglu*

# PRAYER TIMES FOR MAY 2017 | SHABAN 1438 - RAMADAN 1438

Day اليوم	May ايار	Shaban شعبان	Fajr الفجر	Sunrise الشروق	Dhuhr الظهر	Asr العصر	Maghrib المغرب	Isha العشاء
Mon	1	4	4:20 AM	5:47 AM	12:49 PM	4:42 PM	7:51 PM	9:19 PM
Tue	2	5	4:18 AM	5:46 AM	12:49 PM	4:43 PM	7:52 PM	9:21 PM
Wed	3	6	4:16 AM	5:44 AM	12:49 PM	4:43 PM	7:53 PM	9:22 PM
Thu	4	7	4:15 AM	5:43 AM	12:49 PM	4:43 PM	7:55 PM	9:24 PM
Fri	5	8	4:13 AM	5:42 AM	12:49 PM	4:44 PM	7:56 PM	9:25 PM
Sat	6	9	4:11 AM	5:41 AM	12:49 PM	4:44 PM	7:57 PM	9:26 PM
Sun	7	10	4:10 AM	5:40 AM	12:49 PM	4:44 PM	7:58 PM	9:28 PM
Mon	8	11	4:08 AM	5:38 AM	12:49 PM	4:44 PM	7:59 PM	9:29 PM
Tue	9	12	4:07 AM	5:37 AM	12:49 PM	4:45 PM	8:00 PM	9:31 PM
Wed	10	13	4:05 AM	5:36 AM	12:49 PM	4:45 PM	8:01 PM	9:32 PM
Thu	11	14	4:04 AM	5:35 AM	12:49 PM	4:45 PM	8:02 PM	9:34 PM
Fri	12	15	4:02 AM	5:34 AM	12:49 PM	4:46 PM	8:03 PM	9:35 PM
Sat	13	16	4:01 AM	5:33 AM	12:49 PM	4:46 PM	8:04 PM	9:37 PM
Sun	14	17	4:01 AM	5:33 AM	12:49 PM	4:46 PM	8:04 PM	9:37 PM
Mon	15	18	3:59 AM	5:32 AM	12:49 PM	4:46 PM	8:05 PM	9:38 PM
Tue	16	19	3:56 AM	5:30 AM	12:49 PM	4:47 PM	8:07 PM	9:41 PM
Wed	17	20	3:55 AM	5:29 AM	12:49 PM	4:47 PM	8:08 PM	9:42 PM
Thu	18	21	3:54 AM	5:28 AM	12:49 PM	4:47 PM	8:09 PM	9:44 PM
Fri	19	22	3:52 AM	5:27 AM	12:49 PM	4:48 PM	8:10 PM	9:45 PM
Sat	20	23	3:51 AM	5:26 AM	12:49 PM	4:48 PM	8:11 PM	9:47 PM
Sun	21	24	3:50 AM	5:26 AM	12:49 PM	4:48 PM	8:12 PM	9:48 PM
Mon	22	25	3:49 AM	5:25 AM	12:49 PM	4:49 PM	8:13 PM	9:49 PM
Tue	23	26	3:48 AM	5:24 AM	12:49 PM	4:49 PM	8:14 PM	9:51 PM
Wed	24	27	3:47 AM	5:23 AM	12:49 PM	4:49 PM	8:15 PM	9:52 PM
Thu	25	28	3:46 AM	5:23 AM	12:49 PM	4:49 PM	8:15 PM	9:53 PM
Fri	26	29	3:44 AM	5:22 AM	12:49 PM	4:50 PM	8:16 PM	9:54 PM
Sat	27	<b>Ramadan</b>	3:44 AM	5:21 AM	12:50 PM	4:50 PM	8:17 PM	9:56 PM
Sun	28	2	3:43 AM	5:21 AM	12:50 PM	4:50 PM	8:18 PM	9:57 PM
Mon	29	3	3:43 AM	5:21 AM	12:50 PM	4:50 PM	8:18 PM	9:57 PM
Tue	30	4	3:42 AM	5:20 AM	12:50 PM	4:51 PM	8:19 PM	9:58 PM
Wed	31	5	3:40 AM	5:19 AM	12:50 PM	4:51 PM	8:20 PM	10:00 PM

## CALL TO PRAYER

إقامة

**Fajr:**  
30 minutes after Adhan

**Dhuhr:**  
1:15 PM

**Asr:**  
6:15 PM

**Maghrib:**  
2 Rak'as after Adhan

**Isha:**  
1-8: 9:30 PM  
8-19: 9:45 PM  
19-31: 10:00 PM

**Jumma:**  
1:00 PM

## CONTACT THE MECCA CENTER

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[www.meccacenter.org](http://www.meccacenter.org)

# THE MECCA CENTER **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

## *The Centerpiece of our Community*

Asalamu Alaikum, Dear Mecca Center community,

On behalf of the Board, staff, and volunteers, we sincerely thank you for making our Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting ceremony on April 22 a great success. Our new center has been in the making for many years and we could not have done it without the blessings of Allah (swt) and your dedicated support.

As we get closer to Ramadan, we are reminded of the great blessings Allah (swt) has provided us - including the opening of our new center and fostering the growth of our beloved community, alhamdulillah.



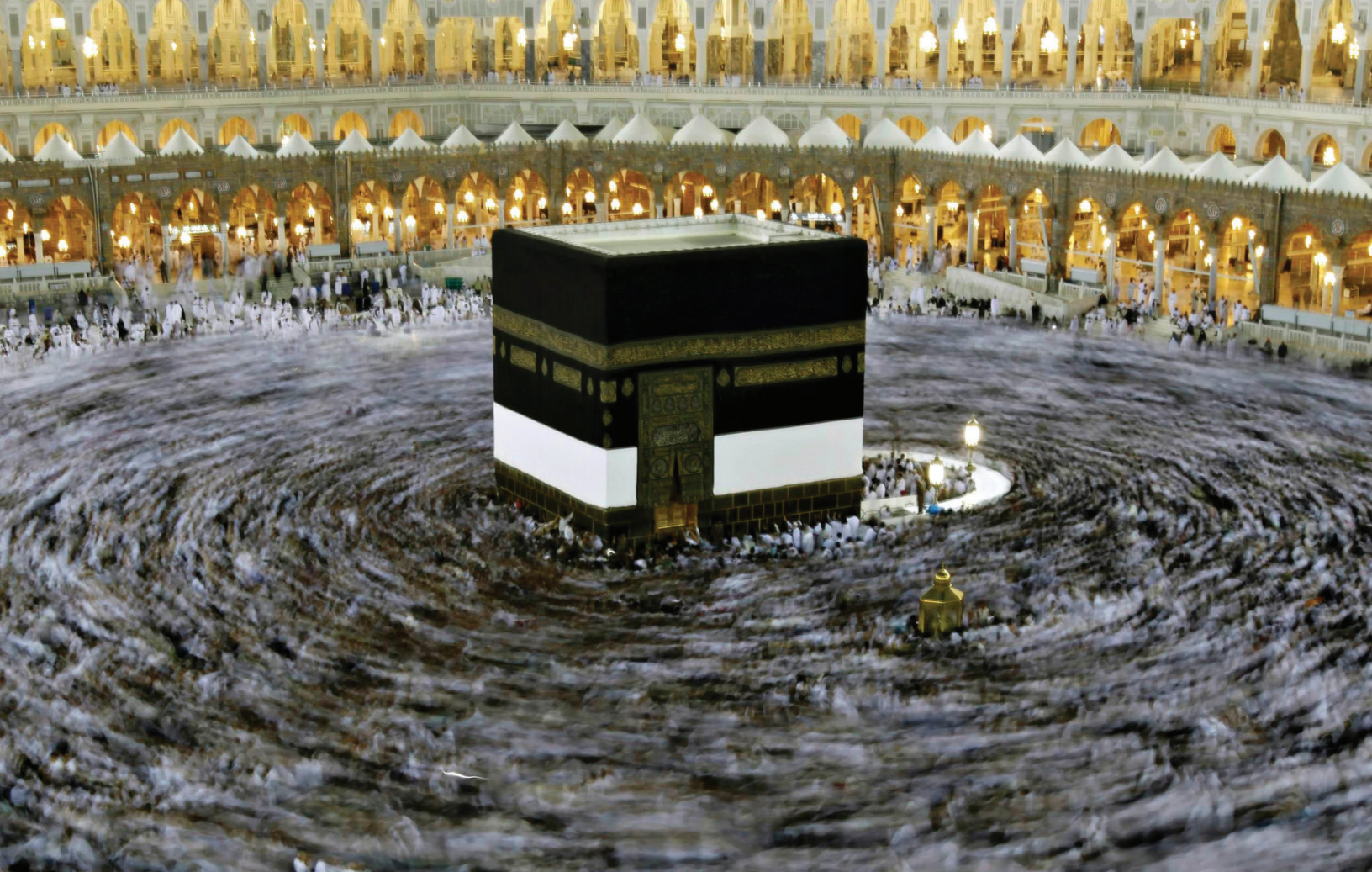
In March, our Annual Dinner keynote speaker Dr. Jonathan Brown underscored the importance of the institution as the central point for communities. He described how masjid throughout Islamic history have offered a place to worship but also a place to learn, grow, and raise our children. In our case, the establishment of the new Mecca Center will now allow us to fulfill our goal of serving current and future generations through nurturing programs and activities that bring our community together and make the Mecca Center our home.

Ramadan will be a very special time for our community as we prepare to celebrate the holy month in our new center, insha'Allah. As we near Ramadan, I ask you to remember the Mecca Center as the centerpiece in our community's lives and encourage you to participate in our wonderful programs, activities, and events. Thank you again for your continued support and Jazakum Allahu Khairan.

Wassalamu Alaikum,

M.A. Hamadeh, MD

*President, The Mecca Center*



## **SUBMISSION, UNITY, & IDENTITY: LESSONS LEARNED FROM CHANGING THE QIBLAH**

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*By Sheikh Hassan Aly, Imam & Religious Director, The Mecca Center*

After the Migration of our beloved Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) from Mecca to Madina, he used to face Bayt al-Maqdis in his prayer, and that remained the case for sixteen or seventeen months, as in the hadeeth of al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, who said: "The Prophet (pbuh) prayed towards Bayt al-Maqdis for sixteen or seventeen months, and he was hoping that the Qiblah would be towards the House (i.e., the Ka'bah)..." Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Later, in the month of Rajab or Sha'ban of the second year of the migration, Allah (swt) has commanded him to face the direction of the Ka'bah (the Sacred House at Mecca). Allah said: "... so turn your face in the direction of al-Masjid al-Haram (at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction..." [Al-Baqarah 2:144]. Yet, there are many lessons we can learn from this unique occasion, like submission, unity, and identity.

When we Muslims hear of a command from Allah (swt), we must accept it and submit to it, even if the wisdom behind it is not clear to us, as this is the true meaning of Islam or submission. Allah (swt) says: "It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter, that they should have any option in their decision..." [Al-Ahzaab 33:36].

This is one of the fundamental qualities of the believer, which we can find it as a major theme repeated throughout the Qur'an: "Obey Allah and Obey the Messenger..." An unconditional and complete submission to their commands is the essence of being a Muslim. Changing the Qibla was also a test for the true believer, Allah (swt) has spoken of this in the Qur'an: "... And We made the Qiblah which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels. Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allaah guided..." [al-Baqarah 2:143]

Allah (swt) does not give any command without there being great wisdom behind it – even if we do not understand it – as He says: "... That is the judgement of Allah. He judges between you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." [al-Mumtahinah 60:10]

The community of Madina was very new and unique community, people from different cultural backgrounds, different social classes and educational backgrounds, but despite all of this; they had one main cause to unite for: Allah (swt) and His beloved Prophet (pbuh). Allah says: "If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have brought their hearts together; but Allah brought them together. Indeed, He is Exalted in Might and Wise." [Al-Anfal 8: 63].

Coexistence instead of dependency and fusion should be the way of Muslims anywhere. We should avoid blind imitation of others, Muslims or non-Muslims. The Prophet (pbuh) said: "You will indeed follow the ways of those who came before you hand span by hand span, cubit by cubit, to the extent that if they entered the hole of a lizard, you will enter it too." Allah (swt) says: "Thus We have made of you (true Muslims) a Wasat (just) (and the best) nation..." [al-Baqarah 2:143]. Some meanings of "Wasat" are justice and fairness with balance. So Allah (swt) has chosen for this us goodness in all things and the best commands and rules, and thus He chose for us the Qiblah of Ibraaheem (pbuh). And Allah knows best.



# MECCA CENTER YOUTH



## **THE RAMADAN RUN** *By Numan Ali Dugmeoglu, Youth Director, The Mecca Center*

It's that time of the year again when Muslims across the world begin to anticipate the arrival of a blessed guest. A guest who comes annually bearing many gifts and blessings. A guest who invites us to remember and reconnect with God, His words, and our beloved Prophet (SAW), upon whom those words were revealed and through whom we know and love God. The arrival of this guest commemorates the momentous occasion in which God first spoke to our Master Muhammad (SAW) on the Night of Glory. This blessed and generous guest we await is the holiest of all months, Ramadan. Let us pray as the Prophet (SAW) would customarily pray when Ramadan drew near: *Allahumma barik lana fi Rajab wa Sha'ban wa ballighna Ramadan. "O Allah! Make the months of Rajab and Sha'ban blessed for us, and let us reach (the arrival of) the month of Ramadan."* [Narrated by at-Tabarani and Ahmad]

Now, as is the case with any guest who may come over your house, there are certain things we can do to prepare for Ramadan's stay with us. For most of us Ramadan can be a bit taxing with all the praying, fasting, and worship. We may find ourselves excited and full of energy in the beginning of the month because we want to do it right this year. We want to take advantage of all the blessings in seeking forgiveness and supplicating to God, but somewhere along the way we find ourselves lagging behind our expectations of what we would accomplish during the month. Does this sound familiar? If so, I invite you shift your perspective a bit. We tend to approach Ramadan as one leg of a relay race. We wait anxiously for the baton to be passed to us so we can run as fast as possible to pass it to someone else. Then once the baton's been passed, we sit back and watch the rest of the race trying to catch our breath because of overexertion. The problem here is that Ramadan is not a leg in a relay race. It is a marathon, which requires runners to properly prepare and condition themselves. Preparation for a marathon normally begins months in advance to the actual race. We can do the same with Ramadan, and begin preparing now as we are at the tail end of Rajab and on the cusp of Sha'ban.

You're probably wondering now, "how can we prepare for the Ramadan Marathon?" The answer lies in the Prophetic tradition. In the supplication above we see that the Prophet (SAW) sought the blessings of Rajab and Sha'ban, the two months before Ramadan. However, he (SAW) didn't just supplicate with his tongue. He also supplicated with his actions and an increase in good deeds. It is narrated that he (SAW) also said, "Rajab is the month of God. Sha'ban is my month. Ramadan is the month of my ummah (community)." So, let us use what remains of Rajab to turn back to God in increased repentance and recitation of the Quran, as it is His month. Let us observe more voluntary fasts in the month of Sha'ban, as was the custom of the Prophet (SAW). Finally, let us combine both the spirit of turning back to God and emulating the Prophet (SAW) in Ramadan, by being more charitable with our wealth and our self, as it is the month of community. Enjoy the blessings of Ramadan together by hosting and feeding one another in your homes and hearts, and see how light the burdens of the marathon become when you don't go at it alone.



# PROGRAMS

## AT THE MECCA CENTER

### **Mecca Center General Programs**

Friday Fiqh Lecture with Sh. Hassan Aly  
Every Friday 12:20-12:50pm

### **Tajweed Halaqa by Br. Fateh Riyal**

Every Monday and Wednesday (between Maghrib and Isha)

### **The Best of Company with Sh. Hassan Aly**

Every Tuesday 6:00pm-7:00pm

### **The Most Beautiful Names of Allah with Sh. Hassan Aly**

Every Wednesday 7:00pm-8:00pm (men and women)

### **Mecca Center Women's Programs**

Trim & Tone Bootcamp: A Total Body Workout

Every Friday, starting April 14  
10:00am-11:00am

Drop in \$15, 6 weeks for \$60

### **Yoga Classes**

Every Saturday - Starting April 22 through May 20  
12:00pm-1:00pm

Ages 18 and up, 5 classes for \$50, Babysitting is available

### **Mecca Center Youth Programs**

Mecca Center Girls Club

Alternating Fridays 6:00pm-8:00pm  
(Junior High & High School Girls)

### **Seeing Ourselves through the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh)**

Saturdays 5:00pm-7:00pm

Session 5:00pm-6:15pm

Open Gym 6:15pm-7:00pm

### **Mecca Center Youth Fellowship: Light Words**

Every Friday after Isha (Young men 14 and up)

Every Wednesday 6:00pm-8:00pm (Boys 10 to 14)

# THANK YOU FOR MAKING OUR GRAND OPENING A SUCCESS!



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**A:** The Muslims of Chicago.

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Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said to Mu'adh (R): "... inform them that Allah has enjoined on them the zakat. And it is to be taken from the rich amongst them and given to the poor amongst them." (Bukhari: 2.24.537)

Please visit ZakatChicago.com to use an online zakat calculator, get answers to FAQs, and to see a list of supported projects. You can pay your zakat online or by mail.

A committee of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago



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*Chickpeas, yogurt, tahini and lemon juice*
- Baba Ghanoush**.....\$6  
*Grilled eggplant, Tahini, garlic, yogurt and lemon juice*
- Falafel (6 pieces)**.....\$5  
*Chickpeas, parsley, garlic, onion, spices, deep fried and served with special sauce*
- French Fries**.....\$4  
*Basket of fries*
- Lentil Soup**.....\$5
- Kebbeh (6 pieces)**.....\$7  
*A mixture of cracked wheat and beef shell stuffed with spiced ground beef, onion and walnuts*

## SALADS

Prepared upon order.

- Fatoush**.....\$7  
*Lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, garlic, onions, lemon juice, spices and olive oil. Topped with deep fried pita pieces*
- Tabbouleh**.....\$7  
*Parsley, tomatoes, onions, cracked wheat, lemon juice, olive oil and spices.*

## SANDWICHES

Made from fine meat.

- Kofta Kebabs**.....\$8  
*A skewer of fine marinated ground beef, tomatoes, pickles, hot sauce, lettuce, a mixture of parsley, onion and pomegranate sauce*
- Lamb/beef Mix Shawarma Sandwich**.....\$9  
*Prime cut beef rib eye and lamb shoulder, pickles, tomatoes, onion, and pomegranate / tahini sauce*
- Chicken Shawarma Sandwich**.....\$8  
*Sliced leg/thigh chicken, pickles, tomatoes and garlic sauce*
- Chicken Tawook Sandwich**.....\$9  
*A skewer of chicken breast cubes, tomatoes, pickles, garlic sauce, and fried potatoes*
- Falafel Sandwich**.....\$6  
*Four pieces of Falafel, tomatoes, pickles, cucumber, parsley, mint leaves, hummus and special sauce*



11a-8pm daily, closed Monday, see website for updated hours as they may change.

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## SHAWARMA PLATES

- Beef/lamb Shawarma Plate**.....\$12  
*Fine cut of rib eye and lamb shoulder served with rice or fries, garlic sauce, pickles and tomatoes*
- Chicken Shawarma Plate**.....\$11  
*Thin sliced leg and thigh of chicken, served with rice or fries, garlic sauce, pickles and tomatoes*

## GRILLED MEALS

All Grilled Meals served with choices of (Rice or Fries), (Hummus or Baba-Ghanouj) and Lentil Soup.

- Maura's Mixed Grill**.....\$18  
*Three skewers: Kofta Kabob (ground beef mixed with onion, parsley and spices), Chicken Tawook (chicken breast cubes marinated with Maura's special seasoning), and Shish Kabob (seasoned lamb cubes)*
- Lamb Shish Kababs**.....\$14  
*Fine cut of leg of lamb grilled to your preference. 2 skewer ( 8-10oz)*
- Chicken Taouk**.....\$13  
*Two skewers of chicken breast cubes marinated with Maura's special seasoning and grilled*
- Kofta Kababs**.....\$13  
*Two skewers of ground beef mixed with parsley, onion, and special spices, and grilled*
- Mix and Match**.....\$14  
*Your choice of two skewers of Shish Kabob, Kofta Kabob, or Chicken Tawook*
- Grilled Platter**.....\$90  
*Group platter for 5-6 people. Appetizers: Soup, Salad, Hummus, Baba-Ghanouj, Falafel & Pickles. Meats: Kofta Kabob, Chicken Tawook, Shish Kabob*

## KIDS MEALS

100% real meat

- Chicken Tenders**.....\$6  
*3 pieces of chicken tenders served with fries*
- Chicken Nuggets**.....\$6  
*6 pieces of chicken nuggets served with fries*

## BEVERAGES

- Coffee or Tea**.....\$2.50  
*American or Turkish*
- Soda**.....\$1.50  
*Coke product*
- Lemonade**.....\$3
- Tea**.....\$2.50  
*cold or hot - ask staff for flavor selection*
- Bottled Water**.....\$1

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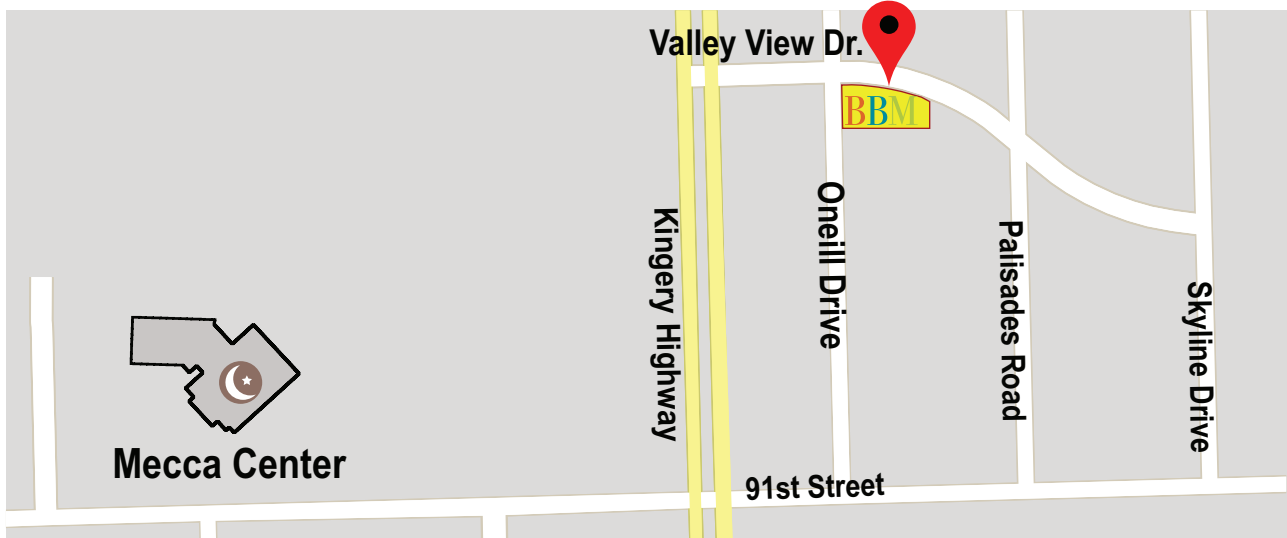
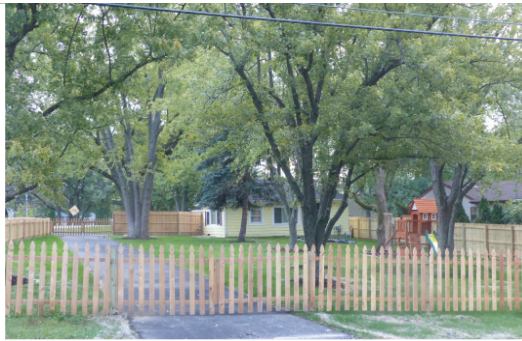
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