

Shadhiliyya Community Newsletter

December 2008

Edition # 7

Please print and distribute this newsletter at your community gatherings. Thank you.



Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim

As-Salaam 'Alaykum beloveds,

Warm Greetings once again from the Communication Circle! We are delighted to bring you this latest quarterly edition of the newsletter. It's been an amazing year for our tariqa. Insha'allah 2009 will bring continued progress and expansion for everyone.

Eid Mubarak and Happy New Year!

In This Issue:

- ◆ **A New Year Teaching**
- ◆ **Reflections...**
- ◆ **Circle Updates**
- ◆ **A Wedding**

Come and join us! Do you like to have fun, be creative and serve Allah and your community all at the same time? You're in luck! The Communication Circle is currently open to new members! To join, contact Rifqa Quereau with subject "subscribe to comcircle."

And now... ***Our Quarterly Newsletter***

Announcements & Events

Healing of Unity Promise Call on Jan 7, 2008 Sidi has asked Wadude Laird to present the Healing of Unity healing method and to do the promise for him. **A fourth call has been added on January 7, 2009. More information at: <http://www.healingthebrokenheart.org/unityhealing/>**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Islamic New Year

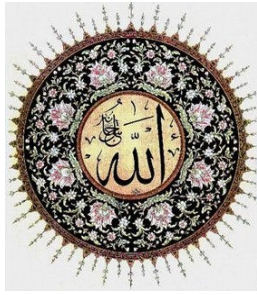
The 29th or 30th is the last day of the month of Dhul-Hijjah, which is also the last day of the Islamic lunar calendar. This year it will fall on either December 27th or 28th. The following day is the first day the Month of Muharram and the Islamic New Year. The Prophet Muhammad y said, "Whoever fasts the last day of the year and the first day of the year, Allah makes it an expiation of 50 years for him, and fasting one day of Muharram is equal to 30 days of fasting." For this reason these are important days to fast. Also, there is a special dua'. One reads it 3 times on the night before the New Year. That dua' is:

"In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate, and Allah bless our Master Muhammad y, his family, and his companions and grant them peace.

And do not dash my hopes in You, O Generous, O most merciful of the Merciful. And Allah, Most Exalted, bless our Master Muhammad and his family and companions and grant them peace.

O Allah, and as for my actions that have pleased You and for which recompense and forgiveness has been promised, please accept them from me.

O Allah, whatever actions I have committed this past year which have not pleased You, which I may have forgotten though You do not forget, while You are forbearing with me though fully capable of punishing me, while You called me to relent and atone even after my audaciousness before You – O Allah, I surely seek Your forgiveness for that, so forgive me!



Reflections on a Year of Transformation

by Wahida Kass

It was just one year ago that I was stunned to hear that our national organization was in grave financial trouble. The Shadhiliyya Sufi Center Board invited everyone to a series of national meetings (conference calls) to explain the situation and ask for help. By Allah's grace, many people, including myself, stepped forward to offer their assistance, ideas and vision. As a result, we are now in a very different place financially, organizationally and spiritually. While there is still a lot to do to implement

"By Allah's grace, many people...stepped forward to offer their assistance, ideas and vision. As a result, we are now in a very different place financially, organizationally and spiritually."

the changes which have been put in motion, there is also much more hope and movement forward into

a new way of working together to fulfill our vision. Things that have felt stuck are beginning to un-stick. Things that have felt hidden are becoming transparent. Things that have felt constrained are becoming free. Truly Allah is oft-returning to give us so many chances to get this right!

One of the keys to this transformation has been self-less service on the part of many beloveds who, from their deep love for Allah, our Guide and our community,

"...it was clear to me that Allah would ask me about what I did - or didn't do - in this time of need..."

stepped up and worked with great submission, excellence and persistence to see us succeed. From the beginning it was clear to me that Allah would ask me about what I did in this time of need in my community. If I turned away, it would be like abandoning my family. Somehow I knew that I had to give whatever I could, even though the situation at that time seemed impossible to turn around, and even though I didn't believe I had all that much to give.

"This year revealed to me the important role of service in our path...."

Now, one year later, I have been amazed at what I did have to offer -- what Allah has pulled out of me -- and my walking has been deeply enriched by the service I have

given. This year revealed to me the important role of service in our path -- something I had (sadly) not really been aware of. The Qur'an tells us that whatever we give in the cause of Allah is never wasted, and benefits us as well as our intended beneficiary. I want to acknowledge and thank everyone who has worked so very hard this year, and every year. I feel sure that Allah will bless and reward you generously!

It is also my deep hope and wish for more beloveds to take the step into service this coming year. It can look daunting to find the time, but I invite you to look past that veil and ask Allah what he wants you to do for Him. By working

"It is also my deep hope and wish for more beloveds to take the step into service this coming year."

together we build bonds of love, community, and unity; we allow Allah to clean our nafs; we walk faster and farther and receive blessings and inspiration from our God. What's not to like? Please think about it. My heart is filled with hope and eager anticipation for what we can accomplish together! Happy New Year!

Shadhiliyya Circles News

Governance Circle



We are now in the implementation phase of the new Governance structure, al hamdulillah! This means that we are still in

transition, with the Interim (expanded) Board of Directors in place until the new One Hand One Heart Board is formed. It also means that members of the Governance Circle are working with all the existing circles, councils and boards to provide whatever kind of support is needed for them to begin moving into adopting and implementing the model in their group.

So far this fall we have held trainings with the Board, the CSC, the Mother Center and some regional centers/communities. We are also dialoging with the University about how they can adapt the new model to their needs. We are very encouraged by the levels of commitment and effort being invested by several different communities in making the transition to the new model, as well as the good results that are starting to emerge. To request support or information for your circle or community, please email <mailto:governance@suficenter.org> or governance@suficenter.org.

A **summary** of the proposal is available on the website ([click here](#)). You can also read a transcript of the meeting with Sidi. The Governance Circle welcomes your questions at governance@suficenter.org.

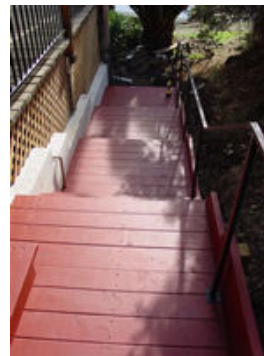


Running the Retreat Center Circle

Reported by Rifqa Guillot

Lots of big changes are happening at the Shadhiliyya Sufi Retreat Center (the Mother Center) that give all of us up here in the Napa Valley/Pope Valley area lots of *himma* and hope. First, much needed improvements and upgrades to the physical facility are in progress.

They include a complete overhaul of the yellow house where Ibrahim Jaffe and his family lived for many years, major repairs and refurbishments that protect and enhance the physical structures at the Center, a physical reorganization of the office space, including a very welcome enlargement of the book store.



Another long-awaited area of improvement is the **complete restructuring of the Retreat Center organization**. Thanks to the beyond-generous help of Abd al-Qadr Davies and Khadijah Gigliotti, our "Running the Retreat Center

Circle" has produced written job contracts for all Center employees, including job accountabilities and organizational flow charts that create a new consensual model of decision-making. Our Running the Retreat Center Circle is made up of both staff and volunteers who meet and work together a minimum of 4 hours a week to work through all the issues associated with getting our new organization up and running.

A third area of change is the **new programs that are beginning to flourish at the Center**. The first year class of the University of Spiritual Healing and Sufism completed their first week of class at the Center, with

thirty-eight students, six assistants, and [three](#) faculty. Our local community programming is benefiting from the twice-a-week dhikrs held by our Imam Said bin Yunus. The local community has begun exploring new ways to use the Center as an integral part of their lives. For example, one couple rented the entire Center for their wedding. Their guests included the extended families of both bride and groom, as well as the entire local Sufi community.

And last, but certainly not least, **the plan for agricultural development on the land around the mosque**, a dream long held by our guide, is beginning to take shape under the steady, patient work of our Imam, Said bin Yunus. Stay tuned for further developments...



Conflict Issues Resolution Committee^[1]

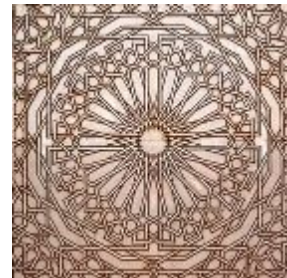
Mahabba Arthur, moderator, Mahabba@cox.net

CIR is a group that came into existence at the beginning of 2008 as one of the communications focused committees under the Council of Honest, with a particular emphasis on resolving community issues. Our initial mandate had been to be the “gateway to participate in the Tariqa Support Panel,” a three member group formed by the Council of Shadhiliyya Communities to resolve “long-standing personal, interpersonal and community issues.” That Panel never became fully operational and, as currently envisioned, CIR will supersede it and subsume some of its functions, if approved by the Council and the Board to do so.

At the heart of CIR’s vision is the notion of inclusion: that in Truth there is only God’s Unity and that within that Unity all poles are contained, co-exist and find their resolution in the One. It is our premise that each of our walking, whether consciously or

subconsciously, is not just for our self but for the ontological poles we carry and voices we represent for the collective walking of our tariqa. Hence, we believe that we are all in this together and that each of us is a requisite part of the whole regardless of which pole we carry and whether we perceive ourselves – or other perceive us -- as being in or out of the unity. CIR’s pledge to the community is to try to be a container for the community where all poles/voices are welcomed and can be aired and heard so that we can walk the issues that Allah puts before us together – regardless of our individual stations, ranks and states – from as deep a place of surrender as we are able in each given moment. [Read More...](#)

[1] Whether we will be a committee, a circle, a panel, a council or some other group designation is yet to be decided as is our name and acronym but for now we are using the designation that was given to us at the time this committee was established by the Council of Honest.



Diversity Circle: *Al-Wasi' (The All Encompassing)*

Explorations have included many of the topics one would expect our circle to examine such as race, social groups, culture, sexuality and economic diversity issues. Recent focus has been on “spiritual elitism (hierarchy, rank, misuse of power) and the impact such attitudes have had both on the seasoned traveler and on people new to our way. We have planned a deeper discussion on economics and its impact on our tariqa as a whole and on individuals. We have monthly calls and if you would like to be included, please email me, Nur Hrabko, moderator, at doctornur@gmail.com.

Razzaq Circle

The Razzaq Circle members are continuing to hold the vessel for increasing monthly donations in order to establish a solid financial base for our organization. Happily, donations are increasing and have made a critical difference this year, subhan'allah! We are also making plans for an online auction in 2009 and developing a donor-care program, to ensure that everyone who contributes is held in love and appreciation for their valuable giving. To join this circle, contact Wahida Kass, moderator.



Community Land Circle

These are exciting times! In the wake of Sidi's visit, we are feeling the imperative to move forward with the Community Land Circle Project to purchase parcel #2 of the Land in Pope Valley, California, find the best way to legally designate it as community owned land and then to develop a plan for acquiring and using the land. Sidi has made clear that it is not a good thing to own land and not make use of it. He deeply blessed our project and asked that we work as "One Hand, One Heart."

To get things moving, Said Boone, of First Light Farm, has entered into a year-by-year lease with the SSC to plant cover crops on 1/2 to 3/4 of an acre near the barn. The plowing and planting is set to happen by mid-December because timing is critical to catch the fall and winter rains. The cover crops will enrich the soil and prepare it for planting in the future. Sa'id says, "If he plants it, they will come!" and we agree. Regardless of our future planning and development on parcel #2, enriching a section of the meadow can only bring good, provide forward movement,

and, as an extra perk, fava beans for taste testing in the Spring.

The first six months of our existence, the Community Land Circle members focused on creating a vessel by invoking Qualities into parcel #2. Since Sidi's visit, we have started doing research on the financial and agricultural options available. We accidentally lost our first nexo site (our website for circle communication), but now have a new one up and running.

If you are a beloved with *the himma* to join us, whether you live in Maryland, Maine, N. California, or anywhere in the world, we would love to have your ideas and support. This is an easy time to jump in, because we are moving now from having held a vessel of Light and Intention for this project to an active work phase. We will be scheduling our next meeting **imminently** so let us know if you would like to be a part of this blessed and exciting venture by emailing Maryam hand at marhand@gmail.com.



Communications Circle

This is our 7th newsletter since our circle's formation in December 2007!! The new website for our national community continues to expand. If you have not yet visited www.suficenter.org, please do! There is a new Calendar feature under Events which, insha'allah will become a central and comprehensive listing of retreats, Islamic observances, USHS sessions, teleclasses and conference calls.

Look for more community-oriented features on the website in the coming months. This website does not only represent the SSC at the Mother Center. We are committed to supporting and enhancing communication throughout the national community. We welcome your participation, requests and

suggestions at share@suficenter.org. To join our circle, contact [Rifqa Quereau](mailto:Rifqa_Quereau) at jeanneq19@gmail.com.

Community News



A Wedding

The marriage has finally happened. The union is complete. We are having our honeymoon and are glowing with happiness. Who got hitched? Why, the Mother Center (aka, the Land) and the University (of Spiritual Healing and Sufism), of course! The rooms have now been officially reserved and already once-filled with USHS students studying the way of the prophets, the way of the healing, the way of the Love.

Sabira, a first-year student, had a few expectations about going to school and was looking forward to staying at a fancy hotel. However, she found that she really enjoyed having class in a mosque where so much praying took place. She also liked the “total immersion” she had while at the Mother Center, away from the outside world, as well as things like *wudu* instructions in the bathrooms. Read more...

At night, the students had time to sit quietly in the mosque and write stations after days filled with learning about the path. The curriculum includes what faculty member Ryhana Rae calls, “walking into the opening of the Sufi path, receiving the remembrance, stepping on the ship of safety and the first steps of the healing work.”

Ryhana also loved holding the University classes at the Mother Center. She said, “The Land is way better than a hotel - by a long shot. It provides an atmosphere to be together and to bond.” The protection and seclusion of the Land offers what Rae says is a “contained

and holy environment that helped excel [sic] the students’ walking.”

Half the students were up at 5:30 am for fajr prayers, al-wird, then recitation of the Wazifah and Qur’an. There was also time for questions and answers with Imam Sa’id bin Yunus. Student Sabira shared that doing these practices with Sa’id gave her a “feeling of guidance, trust and wisdom that deepened her sense of safety.” Plus, she said, “I had a ton of questions, and he would just answer every one.”

The students also appreciated the cooking, which one said was “filled with love, unlike [at] a hotel.” It is worth mentioning that many students chose to fast during the month’s “bright days”, (the three full moon days) as well.

Insha'allah, the New Year will bring two more classes and a healing intensive to the Center. We hope to support, nurture and uplift participants with the love, peace and light the Land brings! *By Salaam Guillot*



Year 1 Class at the Mother Center – Nov 08

Teleconference Calls - See website for current list of calls.

Have you seen our new national website yet?

It's not just about the Mother Center in Pope Valley, California. It's there for YOU, no matter where you are! Teachings, calendars, links, resources and community news available 24/7. Watch for more features in the New Year.

www.suficenter.org

Did you know?

Communities and circles can send messages to the national tariqa list about non-profit events open to everyone. Just email your ready-to-publish announcement to share@suficenter.org.

.....
The Communications Circle would love your DIGITAL PHOTOS, especially candid shots of beloveds, Sidi, and other teachers, at Sufi events. Please help us enhance our newsletters and website with photos of our own people. (Send to Rifqa Jeanne Quereau, jeanneq19@gmail.com.)

.....



It's Not Too Late!

...to make a tax-free donation or monthly pledge this year! If you haven't given yet, please ask your heart what kind of a donation you could offer right now. *Any* size is helpful! Your contribution makes it possible for our national organization to continue offering programs and support for students of this path, as well as meet Sidi's charge upon us to spread the message of Unity in this country. Thank you. You can make a donation or download a pledge form from the website at www.suficenter.org | Support.

Ma'a Salaam



Credits

This Newsletter is brought to you by your Communication Circle:

Wahida Kass Rifqa Quereau
Mahabba Smith Sumayyah Allen
Sa'id Kelleher Rabi'ah Korchinsky
Mahabba Stuart Ahmed Kehoe
Maryam Banville

E-mail: share@suficenter.org