

# Meet the WCIW COUNCIL OF IMAMS

## Sheikh James A. A. Shabazz

With the Name Allah,  
Most Gracious,  
Most Compassionate



I, James Abdul Aziz Shabazz, was born in Arkadelphia, Arkansas in 1915, now being 63 years of age. My father was a Baptist preacher. We moved to Camden, Arkansas when I was at the age of eight. I graduated from the Camden High School in 1934, the same year that I moved to Chicago.

While in high school I was attracted to the program of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) founded by the Honorable Marcus Garvey. In coming to Chicago, one of my intentions was to join the UNIA. But at that time, there were only a few members scattered here and there.

In my desire to become a part of something whose aim was for the betterment of Bilalian (African American) people, I heard about the Peace Movement of Ethiopia in 1938, headed by Madamn Gordon, because they advocated approximately the same program as the UNIA. I joined, but because of the internal problems that developed, I became disenchanted and left.

Then in 1940, I heard about the then Nation of Islam under the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and was attracted to his teachings, so I joined in the same

year.

Presently, I am a member of the Muslim Student Association (MSA) and do plan to maintain closer working contact with them and similar organizations in the future. With the years of experience that I have acquired in becoming a senior Imam and by Allah blessing me to observe the transitions that the WCIW has undergone, as well as the Bilalian communities in general, I feel that this type of information will be of great benefit to our Community as it progresses.

In 1976, I was blessed to go with Imam Wallace Deen Muhammad and a few other members of the WCIW on a tour of Arabia. While on tour, Dr. El-

4855 South Woodlawn Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60615

With the Name Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful  
As-Salaam-Alaikum

## Attention All Hajjis

Those who owe (balances) on Hajj trip must have those balances paid no later than October 6, 1978 in full, unless arrangements have been made with the Hajj Office.

Those who are notified for free trip must send \$200 immediately to Hajj Division Office. Make money order payable to Middle East Travel Bureau. You should know who you are by now.

Send to: Hajj Division of WCIW  
C/O John Abdul Haqq  
4855 So. Woodlawn Ave.  
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Remember the following documents also must be at the Hajj Division Office by Oct. 6, 1978, unless we have been notified.

- Your Passport
- Your inoculation document against cholera and smallpox.
- Your good health letter from your physician.
- Your Saudi Visa Application Form with 4 pictures.
- Your Conversion to Islam Letter from your Masjid stating you are a Muslim, a member of the WCIW.

All tickets and the above information will be mailed to you starting Oct. 20 or 21, Insha-Allah.

The following articles should be taken with you on Hajj:

1. Sleeping Bag
2. Air Pillow
3. Flashlight
4. Slippers (cross over the foot or bathroom sponge type)
5. Aspirin
6. Two packs of Wipe & Dipe or one roll of toilet paper or Kleenex.
7. A few packs of juice powder, Lipton's Soup Mix, or something similar.
8. Some candy or sweets, etc.
9. A small bag to carry these items.

Buy the following things when you arrive in Jeddah, unless you have them already:

- Ahram towels
- Small water bottle.

John Abdul Haqq  
WCIW Hajj Div.

Tigani A. Bugideiri of the Sudan, a member of the Muslim Student Association's official staff, as well as a very devoted Brother to the cause of Al-Islam, suggested to Imam Muhammad to make me the first Sheikh of the WCIW; Imam Muhammad accepted the suggestion.

I not only have received awards from the Masjid of the WCIW, but also I have received many notes of appreciation from the WCIW Muslim Prison Population throughout the United States.

After graduating from high school, I spent two years in college studying Comparative Religion and have continued these studies independently. I am presently concentrating on Fiqh and Shari'a—the Law of Al-Islam as given by our Holy Book, the Holy Quran, and the Sunnah or Life of Prophet Muhammad.

The distribution of Bilalian News, our news media arm, is of course one of the top priorities of the programs of the WCIW Masjid. Here in Chicago, we are distributing approximately 4,500 papers—including those of individual couriers—per week. For a projection, we hope to increase this program by doubling this figure by early 1979. As a Muslim, our objective is always to please Allah and to express gratitude for His infinite blessings.

In 1941, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad chose me to be the principal of the then University of Islam, a position that I held until 1956. At the time I took this position, all of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's children were attending, except Brother Emanuel, the oldest son.

In 1956, I was chosen as assistant minister to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and served in this position for about 12 and one-half years. When Chief Imam Wallace Deen Muhammad, as he was then known, came into office in 1975 upon the passing of his father, I became one of the assistants to him.

In 1978 during the month of September, the Honorable Imam Wallace Deen Muhammad formed the Council of Imams and chose me to be its first Convener for a period of one year. This is the position that I presently hold, as well as that of the Midwest Regional Representative of the World Community of Al-Islam in the West (WCIW) to the Council of Imams.

In addition, I am a member also of the Imam Staff of Masjid Honorable Elijah Muhammad here in Chicago, Illinois under Resident Imam; Sheikh Muhammad Nur. Also, I am on the Board of Directors of Masjid Honorable Elijah Muhammad, thereby

(Continued on page 18)

## Press lauds Muslims A start for community park

*(Editor's note: The following editorial appeared in the Sept. 12, 1978 Martinsville Bulletin, published in Martinsville, Va.)*

Alling Community Park in Martinsville's West End got a much needed dose of attention Saturday from an energetic and public spirited band of citizens.

The 10-acre facility for the past few years has been a park more in name than in practice due to the excesses of hoodlums and rock-throwing vandals. The problem is so bad that some city officials have suggested City Council consider selling the land.

But Saturday morning a West End Muslim Minister, Qiblah Kahn and 10 friends served notice to the rowdies they intend to reclaim the park for the surrounding neighborhoods.

They couldn't have picked a better time to intervene because the park was

at its worst. The grounds were covered with trash and broken liquor bottles and, they said, the picnic shelter was occupied by a gang of youths playing craps smoking marijuana and drinking.

On seeing Khan and his group, the gang dispersed and the Muslims picked up trash and broken bottles for 90 minutes.

Khan plans to return this Saturday but hopefully, if his appeal for help to other West End organizations is answered, with greater numbers.

We hope the commendable example of Khan and the Muslims takes root and other volunteers come forward with manpower and ideas for reviving interest in the use of the park. We're confident that the City Council and the city government will lend their support in this effort to recover a public facility that is too important to be wasted.