

Study of Al-Islam wins new convert

"Islam has complemented the growth in my life; it is an extension of things that I had already decided that I believe in terms of the main overall theology, the oneness of God and the mercy of God," said Gary Paarlberg of his newly adopted religion.

Mr. Paarlberg, of Crown Point, Ind., recently took two giant steps in the growth of his life. During a meeting at the Honorable Elijah Muhammad Masjid No. 2 in Chicago he publicly announced his declaration of faith. The same day, at the conclusion of the masjid meeting, he was married in a ceremony officiated by Emam Wallace D. Muhammad.

In declaring his faith, Mr. Paarlberg—as have hundreds of millions of Muslims throughout the world—expressed his belief in the oneness of God and in the mission of Prophet Muhammad. He was first introduced to Al-Islam by his bride, the former Sophy Sirisittwon, of Thailand.

"For more than a year I have been studying and contemplating converting to the Islamic faith since meeting my wife in Thailand," he said. "In my private moments in Thailand, I did a lot of thinking on the subject of religion. The teachings of Prophet Muhammad and the Holy Quran were a furtherance of what I had come to believe for myself."

The new Mrs. Paarlberg was born and raised in the Islamic faith in a country in which the predominant religion is Buddhism.

In seeking an Emam to conduct the marriage ceremony, Mr. Paarlberg said he asked various people for advice and they all pointed him to Emam Muhammad. "We met with Brother Darnell (Karim) and Sheikh (Ahmed) Rifai and they helped us to contact Emam Muhammad.

Mr. Paarlberg said he and his new bride decided to become members of the World Community of Al-Islam in the West (WCIW) because of the charisma of the Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad as a speaker and as a leader.

"I think he is very experienced and very knowledgeable in the true belief of Islam," he noted. "Joining the WCIW gives me an opportunity to learn both about the faith of Islam and to educate myself with the problems of contemporary America.

"I want to take this opportunity to make an expression of public gratitude for the way the people at the masjid have so kindly accepted us," Mr. Paarlberg added. "The great friendliness they have shown from the very beginning, from my very first visit, and all the help and kindness they have given to us is very truly appreciated."



GARY PAARLBERG and his bride Sophy Sirisittwon stand before the Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad during their wedding ceremony recently at the Masjid Elijah Muhammad No. 2. Mr. Paarlberg had earlier announced his declaration of faith in Islam.

(Photo by Wali A. Muhammad)

'Freedom Journey' highlights achievements of unsung heroes

WASHINGTON, D.C.—"Freedom Journey," a projected major Public Television series to consist of 13-hour long biographical dramas chronicling the lives of little known Bilalians and the outstanding contributions they made to history, was recently completed by Secundari Productions.

The premiere episode of the series, "The Lady and the Lynching," dramatizes the life and work of Ida B. Wells, born a slave in Holly Springs, Miss., who in the 19th Century was one of the few individuals, and probably the first and only woman of her time, to bring the crime of lynching to national attention.

"The Lady and the Lynching" stars Joan Pringle as Ida B. Wells, with Charles Weldon, John Carradine, Robert Earl Jones and Arthur McFarland in supportive roles.

Miss Wells, a writer and reporter for several of America's most prominent Bilalian newspapers, became one of America's first investigative journalists.

At personal danger to herself, Miss Wells single-handedly challenged Tennessee's Jim Crow law which granted the state the right to segregate its citizens in public transportation.

She succeeded in waging a

campaign to eradicate lynching at a time when Bilalians were not expected to express indignation nor act against the injustices they suffered.

"The Lady and the Lynchings" was written by Billy J. Parrott and Helen Jean Secundari, president of Secundari Productions and executive producer of Freedom Journey.

The hour-long episode, directed by Ms. Secundari on location in Savannah and Atlanta, Ga., will be the first hour of a two-hour drama about Ms. Wells.

The filming of the first hour and the development of additional "Freedom Journey" scripts are made possible by a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).

"Freedom Journey" seeks to illuminate the extraordinary diversity of the distinguished lives and actions of Bilalians who have been overlooked by history. Many of the persons whose lives will be dramatized are entirely unknown to the majority of Americans.

A vast array of Bilalians, among them notable explorers and organizers, have never benefited from detailed, factual, dramatized accounts of their place in American life.

The effects of alcohol

By A.K. Nur Mohammad

(Reprinted from the Journal of the World Muslim League, Mecca.)

The American National Council on Alcoholism (NCA) has found that the average life expectancy of the alcoholic is about 20 years less than the average American.

The NCA also says that one in four deaths among alcoholics is violent. The alcoholic frequently becomes a victim to falls, poisoning, suicide, and violent accidents.

NCA figures also state that one in three suicides is an alcoholic. The chances of an alcoholic committing suicide are nearly 60 times greater than the non-alcoholic.

Brain: The first areas affected by alcohol are the higher brain centers in the cortex which controls, among other things, speech and linear thinking.

Your tongue becomes a little thick and you misjudge distances. As more alcohol is consumed it begins to seep into the older brain center which control more essential functions such as motor coordination.

All the time alcohol is killing off brain cells by the millions. Brain cells are among the few parts of your body which can neither be repaired or replaced.

Cardio-Vascular System:

Alcohol quickly makes you feel warmer and gives a pleasant light-headed feeling. Frequent consumption of alcohol can lead to the hardening of the heart muscle (myocarditis).

Pancreas: Alcohol damages the pancreas causing inflammation and can cause pancreatitis which affects the production of enzymes and insulin.

Kidneys: Damage from alcohol can result in nephritis.

Bone Marrow: Alcohol attacks bone marrow where cells are made. Marrow production is greatly reduced while alcohol is present in the body.

Prostate Gland: Alcohol can cause prostatitis—an inflammation of the prostate gland, which, as it swells, squeezes the urinary tract making it difficult to urinate and causing great discomfort. It can also make the sex urge disappear for a time.

Skin: The skin becomes more frail and can lose its elasticity making drinkers look older than they really are.

Nervous System: Generally, alcohol causes temporary and sometimes permanent damage to the nerves. You feel the loss of sensation in your hands. Your feet are numb and tingling. Perhaps you will bite off your lip and feel nothing. (peripheral neuropathy). Regular drinking can cause blackouts, seizures, and delirium tremens.