

**HAPPY
NEW YEAR
&
EID
MUBAREK**

Algerian-American Association of Greater Washington

Friends of Algeria

It is my pleasure to be part of this Association and my honor to write this editorial. It is the Directors true hearts and strong beliefs that motivated me to join. Soon after the elections, sad news from our country gave us a chance to bring the community together. Members and friends from far and near gave their time and money to this fundraising. The numerous words of encouragement we received as well as the great turnout at events, were yet another signal this Board is on the right track.

This newsletter is an important mean to share information with you. Authors are members at large and many of you can contribute with news and information. Let us once more ask for your feedback and brilliant ideas to take our association one step further and make it a stronger one.

Nacer Megherbi

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Three Birds With One Stone

By Houria Sammari

Objective – or Bird – Number One was to raise enough funds to reach the initial fundraising target of US\$10,000 initially set by the AAAGW to benefit the victims of the November floods in Algeria. Objective Number Two was to organize a successful Ramadhan Sahra.

Both objectives were exceeded during the evening of December 2, 2001 at the Casablanca Restaurant, in the heart of Alexandria, which attracted over 120 guests, both members and non-members of the AAAGW. Once again, and without fail, the Algerian community showed its strong sense of community as well as its generosity. During the evening, the AAAGW raised a total of \$2,491 for the victims.

The evening at Casablanca began with an opulent Iftar: Hrira opened the way, followed by a delightful table of colorful appetizers such as dates and griouech, as well as tasteful carrot, baba ghanouj and potato salads. A tagine of lemon olive chicken and a lamb and vegetable couscous were served as main course, followed by mint tea. After dinner, Andaloussia, our local Algerian band, gave one of its best performances and cheered the crowd with old and new songs from all regions of Algeria, including Chaabi, Chaoui, Kabyle, Andaloussi and Rai.

If, by now, you are still wondering whether the mention of the third bird is a type-o, wonder no more: our own third bird is more of a non-tangible nature, it is the momentum that the new AAAGW Board hopes to have insufflated into the AAAGW. It also took the form of great encouragement and strong support received from many members of our community during the evening and for days following the event.

The AAAGW Board would like to thank those who have contributed to reaching the fund raising goal and would like to extend its special thanks to the Andaloussia Band, and to the volunteers who helped organize the event including Farida Kerouani and Samia Rechache.

Eid for Kids!

By Abdelaziz Rebatchi

Very often one tends to reflect on the past and regret, not without some dose of nostalgia, the way previous events were organized. No more, the Eid celebration as we saw it this time, had nothing to envy to the previous ones. In fact it was even better since kids had a blast. It was so nice to see all the kids busy with their painting, drawing, etc...

What was even more appreciated, was the number of comers that remarkably increased. Specifically, kids were welcome by an armada of volunteers and board members. They were invited to paintings, drawing and face painting. The "adult" kids were then invited to participate to a written test on Algeria. While they were taking their test, the younger ones were subject to an oral test given to them in order to test their knowledge on Ramadhan and Eid. The kids responded very enthusiastically to the challenge and did not seem to mind the questions at all.

Then followed a nice fashion show for kids, heartily applauded by the crowd. It is of interest to underline these events for the kids, for they allow them to gain pride in their own culture, food and traditions. While the parents were enjoying a get together, sharing sweets brought by the membership, the kids could not stop playing and expressed great joy at receiving gifts, again another tradition the Association made sure would be perpetuated.

There is no question, it was a great day during which everybody enjoyed the gathering; and unquestionably a great success. Thanks to the organizers and volunteers who clearly wanted to make a difference.





SCHOOL OPTIONS IN THE WASHINGTON

French Immersion Program

By *Radia Lalouani*

Parents in the greater Washington area are faced with numerous choices when it comes to their children's education. For children of Algerian-American background, the choice is wide. Parents have the option to enroll their children in the French immersion programs offered by excellent public schools in Montgomery County and in Fairfax County. French is obviously available at the Lycée

Rochambeau (the French International School) in Bethesda, MD, and in private schools in Washington D.C., including the Washington International School (WIS), or the Rock Creek International School (RCIS).

If Arabic is your first language option, various local schools also provide both Arabic language and Islamic education.

The Islamic Saudi Academy, funded by the Government of Saudi Arabia, and located in Alexandria, comes to mind. The Islamic Weekend Schools, in Maryland, also teaches on Sundays Arabic and the fundamentals of Islam with a modern approach.

The following school descriptions are only meant to give you an idea of what is available for parents who chose to keep their children in a multi-lingual environment, and for those parents who want their children to keep in touch with their Islamic heritage.

In Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), students in grades one through six, who are in the French Immersion program, spend half of their day with an English speaking teacher studying Language Arts and Social Studies and the other half of their day with a French teacher learning mathematics, science, and health.

The overall goals of the program are to develop students' communicative and academic proficiency in the target language and in English and for students to succeed academically in all subject areas at levels comparable to those they would have reached if they had been schooled only in English. Another benefit of

the program is that students develop multicultural awareness and a more global perspective.

Elementary immersion students move on to middle school where a transition program is in place. Students in grade 7 and 8 are transitioned from content-based instruction to sequential foreign language study.

This program is open only to residents of Fairfax County. Fifty percent of the students are from within the school boundaries and fifty percent come from outside the boundaries.

Kent Garden Elementary School follows the standard county enrollment procedures which are:

First priority is given to native speaking children. Second priority is given to siblings of alumni. A computer

lottery is conducted if there are more applications than spaces in the program. Enrollment forms are available in January of the child's kindergarten year.

For more information, please contact about the FCPS Foreign Language Office, please visit their web site at <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OHSICS/forlang>

Similar Immersion Program is available in Montgomery County Public Schools. MCPS has five French immersion programs. The MCPS French immersion program is available at Potomac, Maryvale, and Rock Creek Forest Elementary Schools respectively. Students may continue the French immersion programs in grades 7 and 8 at Eastern Intermediate School.

Islamic Saudi Academy

By *Yamina Gharsa*

ISA is an educational institution funded by the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Academy is located in Alexandria, VA (8333 Richmond Highway) It was established in order to provide educational services to children of Saudi citizen who reside in the Washington, DC metropolitan and other children of the Arab and Muslims communities who wish to study Islam and the Arabic language. Saudi children shall be given

priority to attend the school with other children admitted on a space-available basis.

In an atmosphere conducive to building Muslim character and personality, the academy seeks to provide students with a balanced and thorough education in English and Arabic which will enable them to enter American, Saudi Arabian or others college and universities.

Programs in English as a second Language (ESL) are offered in place of language Arts in order to prepare English Learning Learners to

work at grade level. Science, Social Studies and Math are taught in English. However, Saudi students are permitted to take Arabic language Social Studies. Students of other nationalities must be approved by the school administration.

The total number of units of credits for graduation from the Islamic Saudi Academy shall be 26. A unit of credit requires that course meet a minimum of 150 Clock hours.

More information can be found at <http://www.saudiacademy.net/>

The Meaning of Eid-Al-Adha

By *Abdel-Allah Stambouli*

In a few days, Muslims around the world will be celebrating Eid-ul-Adha, the only other major holiday in Islam after Eid-Al-Fitr which occurs at the end of Ramadan. Likewise,

Eid-Al-Adha comes at the end of Hajj (or pilgrimage), a ritual performed in Mecca (Saudi Arabia) whose roots go all the way back to the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham). Eid-Al-Adha is known as the day of sacrifice. The Hajji (pilgrims) who are financially able, buy a sheep, a goat or a

young camel, to make their sacrifice in order to commemorate Ibrahim's willingness to offer his son's life. The prophet Ibrahim, known to be a devout and humble man, had a dream in which God wanted him to sacrifice his son Ismail. In accepting this fate, Ibrahim, his wife and his son Ismail

demonstrated total submission to God. At the last moment of sacrifice, God sent a ram instead to show his mercy. God wanted to show to all believers that the world is really an illusion of sorts and that they are merely travelers in this world so that they should not get too comfortable.

ON AREA: Arabic, French, and more ...

Washington International School

By *Yassine Belkhodja*

The mission of Washington International School (WIS) is to provide an education that is challenging, and international in its approach. A rigorous academic curriculum including the Primary Years Program and the Middle Years Program of the International Baccalaureate Organization leads to the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Students graduate proficient in at least two languages; many are functionally or fully bilingual.

Classes in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten are conducted entirely in Spanish

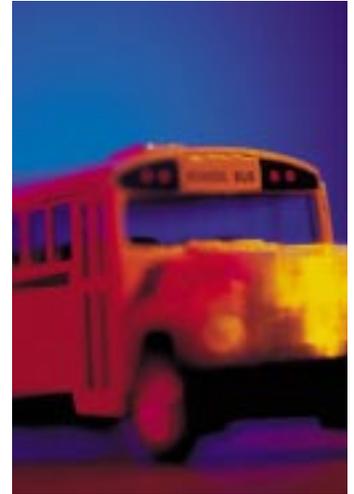
or French, Through both organized and spontaneous activities, children develop comprehension skills and then establish and expand their working vocabulary in French or Spanish.

Instruction in Grades 1-5 is bilingual. About half of each day's classes are taught in English and half in French, Spanish, or (for native speakers) Dutch. Reading, writing, and associated language skills are taught through two languages of instruction, as are science, history, and geography. Mathematical concepts are taught in English and reinforced through activities in Dutch, French, or Spanish. Classes taught by specialists in sports, music, drama, art, and

information technology are taught in English and, whenever possible, French or Spanish.

While the basis for student work at WIS is the curriculum the School has developed over the years, it is placed within the framework of international curriculum of the International Schools Association and international school teachers, and the International Baccalaureate Organization.

More information can be found at <http://www.wis.edu>



French International School

By *Dalila Bessaha*

Founded in 1955, the Lycée Rochambeau (The French International School), is the largest French school in the U.S. and one of the largest independent schools in the Washington D.C. area. The main campus is located in Bethesda, MD and includes the secondary school and the administration. The greater part of the elementary school is located in Chevy Chase, while the nursery school is now in a third campus in Bethesda. The Lycée offers a complete program of pre-school to secondary education and is accredited by both the French Ministry of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education.

The program covers a curriculum that leads to the French Baccalauréat. Students also obtain an American High School Diploma at the end of the Première, provided they

have fulfilled the required courses of American History.

The lycée coursework is primarily conducted in French. It is consistent with the curricular guidelines of the French Ministry of Education, comprising a common core curriculum with virtually no electives through the eleventh grade. In the twelfth grade and Terminale, the curriculum provides for 3 different academic tracks : (1) Economics & Social Sciences, (2) Languages, Literature, & the Humanities, and (3) Physics, Chemistry, Biology, & Mathematics.

The Lycée is international in character and many of the families are on assignment with embassies and international institutions. Approximately half of the 1160 students are French, with the rest coming from 50 other nations; Americans represent 15% of the student body.

More information can be found at <http://www.rochambeau.org/>

The Islamic Weekend Schools

By *Abdel-Allah Stambouli*

The main objective of these weekend schools is to help parents strengthen their child Muslim identity through Arabic and Islamic teachings. The schools strive to provide the highest quality Islamic education to a student population of ethnically diverse backgrounds. They are organized as non-profit organizations and are operated by the parents themselves and volunteers.

Classes usually take place on Sunday mornings for 3 hours around 10:00am in a structured classroom environment that integrates Religion, Quran and Arabic studies. Most of the schools levy a tuition fee for their operating costs such as the rental of the facility. In addition to regular classes, some schools offer parenting sessions usually

given by the parents. During the academic year, the schools organize potlucks, picnics, field trips for kids and mini-camps. Many Algerian families currently attend these schools to keep their children in touch with their Islamic heritage.

For instance, around five Algerian families attend the Islamic School of Potomac (ISP) of Montrose Rd, MD, whose tuition is \$25 per child or \$30 per family. More than seven other Algerian families attend the Islamic Weekend School (IWS) of Rockville, MD, whose tuition is \$120 per child per semester or \$200 per child per year.

For more information about these schools contact Mr. Hossein Mahboubi at (301) 871-9777 for ISP or through the web for IWS: <http://www.islamicweekendschool.org>.

Youth Contest

... and the winners are:

Selma Amrane won a \$50 Gift certificate to Westfield Montgomery Mall. **Jamel El-Hamri, Badreddine Hadidane, Nazim Benarbane, Omar Melikechi, and Saddek Zouamia** all won a pair of movie tickets. Congratulations

to the winners and thank you to all who participated.

More contests and activities for our younger members are scheduled in coming weeks.

For suggestions, please send an email to youth@aaagw.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tax Seminar

March 17, 2002 at 2:00 p.m.

At the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center.

Dr. **Mustapha Rechache**, CPA, MBA, Ph.D, will make a general presentation on federal and state income tax filing as well as tips and advice on how to avoid common mistakes.

Standard tax return forms will be available for federal, MD, VA, and DC.

He has also offered to assist low-income members of the community in filing their taxes. If interested please contact Dr. Rechache directly for a free filing and/or advices (301-515-7066).

Algerian-American Association of Greater Washington

Bring your kids and come share the celebration of Eid El Adha with the community

EID EL ADHA CELEBRATION

Sunday February 24, 2002

From 1:30pm to 6:00pm

At the SLIGO MIDDLE SCHOOL

1401 Dennis Ave., Silver Spring MD 20902

PROGRAM

- Painting contest for kids
 - Storytelling for kids on the meaning of Eid Al Adha.
 - Culinary Contest (for parents)
- Bring a creative or traditional dish or dessert.

Prizes will be awarded to the best cooks.

A MECHOUI (roast lamb) will be served. This was offered to the community by an anonymous member.

DIRECTIONS:

From North of Silver Spring, take Georgia Avenue South and turn left on Dennis Avenue. 1401 Dennis Avenue and the school will be on your left.

From Washington D.C., take Georgia Avenue North, drive beyond the beltway (I-495 exit 13). Turn right on Dennis Avenue. 1401 Dennis Avenue and the school will be on your left.

Plenty of parking is available. The event will take place in the school cafeteria.

For more information, call Abdelaziz at (202) 319-0910



Ice Skating Trip

Sunday February 17, 2002

3:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Cabin John, Bethesda, MD

\$ 3.50 per kid/youth (subsidized by AAAGW)

Parents must be present.

Azouz Begag at Georgetown U

On Monday March 11 and Tuesday March 12, 2002, author and researcher Azouz Begag will be the guest of the French Department at Georgetown University.

Azouz Begag is the best known and most prolific author of post-colonial immigrant origin in France. The son of Algerian immigrants, he is the author of autobiographical and other narratives which are

widely studied in North America as well as in France and elsewhere in the francophone world. Frequently cited as an exemplar of the French model of 'integration', courted and criticized by activists from different parts of the political spectrum, Begag speaks with exceptional authority and clarity on the complexities and contradictions characterizing the debates over immigration, 'race' and ethnic relations in France.

Algerian-American Association of Greater Washington



**Women's Day
March 8, 2002**

You are cordially invited to a Breast Cancer Seminar to be held at the Bethesda Chevy Chase Regional Services Center on

Friday March 8th at 6:00 PM.

Men are invited, and the group will then proceed to have dinner together in one of the Bethesda restaurants.

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, Maryland USA 20814.

For further information, please call Nadira at (202) 473-7739 or send an email to social@aaagw.org.

Make your Video-clip

Saturdays March 9 & 16

(2 sessions)

at MediaEditPro

Free

Limited seating & advance registration required at youth@aaagw.org

Want to Make a Difference?

The Youth Committee is still looking for young dedicated volunteers. Send an email to youth@aaagw.org or write to the Association.

Suggestions welcomed.