



Monday, September 16, 2013

Background

Crescents Community News (CCN), a not-for-profit community eNewsletter, has been serving the Muslim and wider communities of Queensland and beyond since 2004.

CCN has been published uninterrupted every Sunday morning over the past 9 years (since 2004) and is currently in its 462nd weekly edition reaching out to over 3000 dedicated subscribers and readers in Queensland, as well as nationally and internationally.

Its readership, while concerned with Muslim issues in the main, also comprises a diverse demographic of all ages and sexes, different ethnic communities, government bodies and politicians as well as adherents of a number of different faiths.

Content and Coverage

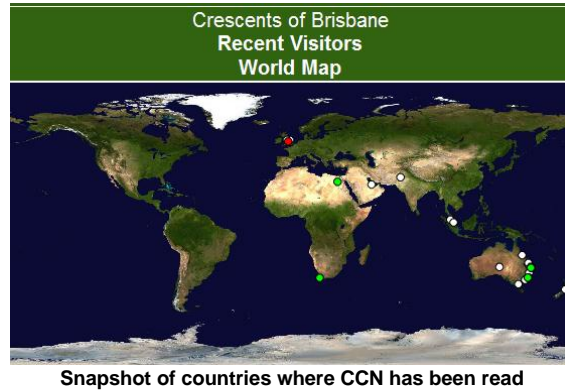
CCN covers topics that include local and international issues and particularly those that have a direct or indirect bearing on the community. It reports on the achievements of organizations and individuals from within the communities, creates awareness of the social and political matters that impact on, or can be influenced by, the community and keeps its readership abreast of the events that are to take place and have taken place. The net result of this has been a more informed and educated community that has become more inclusive and confident in the role it has to play in the Australian society.

Taking advantage of skills and talents invested in its volunteer writers and contributors and the access to the Internet, all of this has been achieved on a shoe-string budget with minimal staff and expenses and virtually no sources of income. Despite this the professionalism, quality, rigor and standard of the journalism and writing and the website design and production has not been compromised in any way.

Audience

The newsletter is read and subscribed to by people from many different communities in many different countries and has been widely recognized by Muslims and non-Muslims alike as an open window into the activities and achievements and trials and tribulations of the Muslim community.

CCN has played a particularly vital role in keeping isolated Muslim communities in such places as Mereeba, Cairns, Mackay, Townsville and other parts of Australia informed about events and activities through video, audio podcasts and social media forums via the newsletter.



The list of countries and cities where CCN is read (as identified through our site meter) includes:

Utah; Texas; Birmingham; Cote D'Ivoire, Abidjan; Swaziland; Harare; Dubai; Singapore; UK; Malaysia, New Zealand; Egypt; France; Germany; Toronto, Vancouver; Qatar; Saudi Arabia; Lahore; Mumbai; Zimbabwe; Maldives; Mauritius; South Africa; Gaborone; Dearbon, Mitchigan; Kenya; Ankara, Turkey; Morocco; Georgia; Kentucky, Lexington; Ohio; Powell; Stoke-on-Trent; Portsmouth, Kingston-upon-Hull, Stockholm; Riyadh; Indonesia; Fiji; and most parts of Australia.

Recognition

CCN has been acknowledged in Federal Parliament on more than one occasion for the invaluable role it has played in fostering a positive attitude towards the community.



CCN won the Media category in the Queensland Government's 2011 Queensland Multicultural Awards for *"challenging stereotypes through accurately and positively portraying Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse background."*

Dr Mustafa Ally, Editor-in-Chief of CCN, is seen receiving the award from the Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs, **Ms Annastacia Palaszczuk**, member of parliament in the Queensland Government.

"I congratulate Crescents Community News on being selected as a winner for the 2011 Queensland Multicultural Awards. I am pleased to say that your sustained efforts have helped toward building a fair, diverse and vibrant multicultural Queensland where everyone belongs. You should be justifiably proud in the publication of Crescents Community News," **Mr. Garry Page**, Executive Director, Multicultural Affairs Queensland.

Features

In addition to current affairs CCN carries the following regular features:

- **The Date Claimer**
 - An up to date diary that is used by the community and organizations to find out about current and future activities and events planned
- **The Book Club**
 - An eclectic collection of books usually recommended by CCN readers for the bookshelf
- **The Weekly Chuckle**
 - A highly popular weekly joke column with readers featuring the wit, wisdom and folly in the character of a Mula Nasruddin
- **The Useful Links** column
 - Provides web links to other organizations and services
- **The Notice Board**
 - Electronic posters of upcoming events and functions, educational programmes and services and businesses
- **The Keep Fit Column**
 - Weekly Q & A tips on keeping fit and healthy by a home-grown fitness expert
- **The Culinary Column**
 - Weekly tried and tested recipes with contributions from readers and guest chefs
- **Islam TV**
 - An embedded broadcast of Islam TV highlighting its latest programs
- **The Inbox**
 - Readers' Letters-to-the-Editor
- **Social Media**
 - Regular updates through CCN Twitter (#CCN786) and its Facebook Page (<http://www.facebook.com/CCN.Newsletter>)
- **The Centre Link**
 - Job opportunities and vacancies applicable to the broad readership are posted here
- **Around the Muslim World**
 - Regular updates on some of the issues reported in other Muslim countries and diasporas

All 397 (and growing) issues of CCN are available online at

<http://www.crescentsofbrisbane.org/CCN.htm>.

Initiatives

CCN has developed strong synergies with majority of the community individuals, groups and organizations and governmental and non-governmental agencies and provides all of them equal access without favour or prejudice.

CCN has initiated **The CCN Young Muslim Writers Award** in 2011 aimed at encouraging and supporting young writers become the confident communicators of tomorrow. The annual Award provides a platform for young writers to harness their skills, invest in their writing talents and turn them into a long-term interest. This annual national award calls for creative, interesting and exciting poems and short stories from 5-16 year old writers from across the country in the categories of best short story and best poetry. The CCN Young Muslim Writers Award has a Facebook page with a fully developed kit of information.

See <http://www.facebook.com/CCN.WritersAward>

Mission and Scope

In addition to its motto,*a sometimes self-deprecating and occasional tongue-in-cheek look at ourselves and the world around us* CCN is perhaps best summed up by its own publishing policy guidelines which it has adhered so faithfully and diligently to over the years:

- Strive for originality in journalism
- Be relevant and report on the positive aspects of community life, and extol the achievements of our constituents
- Encourage and promote social, cultural and educational activities that uplift and engage all sectors of the community
- Inform and educate without preaching, or directly offering rulings or injunctions of any nature (religious or otherwise) or engaging in political or religious controversy and debate
- Avoid motherhoods and the patently and blatantly obvious
- Be inclusive of all ethnic communities and relevant activities where possible
- Develop the niche market and a sense of community identity and self-pride
- Promote and report on events and functions that are of public interest and curiosity
- Respect peoples' privacy and sensitivities
- Raise the bar for quality journalism and commentary
- Keep tongue firmly in cheek at all times but above all
- Accentuate the positive and downplay the negative

CCN has over the years challenged the stereotypes and misconceptions so often attributed to the Muslim community, especially in the wake of negative and sensationalist media reports and events inside and outside of the country's borders. As its Editor-in-Chief pointed out when CCN

turned 350: *"In its own unique way CCN serves as reflections - not only of cultural idiosyncrasies, but also of the complex human condition and spirit."*

CCN also aims to continue to keep its ever-growing readership informed and abreast of news and views pertinent to the local, national and international Muslim community while promoting services available to the community and providing an avenue for Muslim owned and operated businesses to advertise their services. CCN hopes that the online readership network will bring the Australian community closer together, strengthen relationships within the Muslim community and provide a bridge to facilitate integration with the wider Australian community.

Crafting the weekly CCN

In addition to its slogan of being self-deprecating and tongue-in-cheek, CCN has gained a hard-earned reputation for consistency and predictability, journalistic and reporting quality, and pedantic and fastidious attention to detail particularly with respect to grammar, spelling and language usage.

Writing the weekly CCN requires a minimum of 20 hours a week.

It includes a number of pre and post publication tasks require an eclectic range of skills and abilities, and not everything works as normal or as expected and a number of workarounds have been developed over the years to accommodate for this.

The following are some of the more obvious tasks undertaken every week:

1. Research
 - a. Identifying appropriate articles/stories that are
 - i. Religiously and culturally sensitive
 - ii. Non-ideological
 - iii. Non-partisan
 - iv. Non-proselytizing
 - v. Apolitical
 - vi. Inclusive
 - vii. Interesting, entertaining, educational
2. Reporting
 - a. Attending events
 - b. Taking photographs
 - c. Writing the reports
3. Editorial
 - a. Articles must be proof-read for
 - i. Standards of English and writing
 - ii. Scope and objectives

- iii. Relevance
 - iv. Sensitivity
 - b. Letters to editor
 - c. Managing guest writers
 - i. Kbcooks
 - ii. Keepfit
 - iii. Nutrition
 - iv. Gardening
 - d. Mula Nasruddin
 - e. Thought of the day
 - f. Book Club
- 4. Subscription database
 - a. Maintain existing subscribers
 - b. Create new subscriptions
 - c. Remove un-subscribers and undeliverables
- 5. Setup skills
 - a. Designing webpages
 - i. HTML, FrontPage, Web Expressions, Javascript, asp, Photoshop
 - b. Embedding multimedia, widgets, forms
 - c. Editing images/graphics
 - d. Maintaining Date Claimer, events, business ads, weddings etc.
 - e. Converting documents to OCR, pdf, images
 - f. Home Page, CCN Page
- 6. Publishing
 - a. ftp to website
 - b. Facebook page
- 7. Distribution
 - a. Set up email
 - b. Mail Merge
- 8. Facebook Page
- 9. Twitter account
- 10. Backup
 - a. Website
 - b. Email database

For more information

Email: ccn@crescentsofbrisbane.org

Phone: 0402 026 786

Website: <http://www.facebook.com/CCN.WritersAward>



<http://www.facebook.com/CCN.Newsletter>



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16-Sep-13

SELECTED TESTIMONIALS FROM THE CCN WEBSITE

Others are available for viewing at

<http://www.crescentsofbrisbane.org/CCN%20250th%20Messages.htm>

The weekly bulletin from CCN includes a good blend of local Queensland, National as well as international issues that interest Muslims. The inclusion of humour, culinary delight, and exercise makes for a well rounded start to the week for most readers. From the perspective of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, such initiatives as the weekly CCN bulletin and similar makes the Australian Muslims now much more savvy and able to articulate our interests more widely.

And now employing twitter and similar gives the ability to many more to engage with the greater Muslim community and having links to the web sites of different organisations is very inclusive.

From AFIC's perspective, we give full marks to the CCN team of dedicated volunteers and hope that they continue with this valuable work into the future so that in years to come we will celebrate 25 years and more of their bulletins.

To imagine that Mulla Nasruddin will be entertaining us and our future generations can only be a welcome relief to our fast lives.

Congratulations on reaching 250 issues and all the best for the next 25,000.

Ikebal Patel

President

Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC)

CCN is a wonderful independent publication that I always enjoy reading. I have to read, listen and watch a lot of media in this job and there is almost no other publication that I can say that about. My office and I religiously (or should that be assiduously) read CCN each week.

I find it a delicious mix of important news and views, debate, announcements, notices, community events, nutritional advice, gossip, and, most importantly, humour. All of us are nourished, defined and confined by our roots. And as a politician I am acutely aware of the constraints that come with my upbringing in the "white-bread" west of Queensland - particularly when it comes to representing one of the most multicultural electorates in Australia.

Therefore, my weekly dose of CCN is invaluable in helping me keep in touch with the wonderful people on the south side who elected me. Muslim Australia all too often has a spotlight put on it - usually by idiots, the ignorant, the uneducated or racists.

I will always do my best to support and defend Australian Muslims - even those who do not live in the electorate of Moreton. I will continue to do so- not only because I have been befriended and welcomed into the homes of many of your readership - but because it is the right thing to do!

Regards

Graham Perrett, MP

Federal Member for Moreton

P.S. Anybody who has heard me speak locally will know that CCN is the source of all my best (and cleanest *Editor's insertion*) jokes

I have been an avid reader of CCN since I was introduced to this publication over a year ago. The range of information it contains never ceases to amaze me. There is something for everyone from current events, social gatherings, networking function, topics for debates, announcement, health issues, recipes, fashion, advertisements, and many more. CCN plays a role in our culturally diverse society.

For the many people who do not know or understand our fellow Australians who are from a Muslim background, this publication will open your eyes to many things that they are not aware of. Most of us tend to judge others from what we read in the newspapers or see on television.

The information available from CCN may not be the sensational ones we are given by the media but taken collectively they present a picture of a peaceful, happy, family and community oriented members of the Australian society. Having CCN is a very effective means of engaging with the community and CCN truly has earned its place in creating a harmonious society.

Agnes M. Whiten OAM

Chairperson

Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland

On behalf of the Muslim Business Network, I wish to congratulate you and all the others involved with CCN on the milestone of reaching the 250th issue of the CCN Newsletter.

CCN has played and continues to play a major role in keeping the Muslim community up to date with local, national and international news and events which are of interest to CCN's thousands of readers.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank CCN for its support of MBN and for attending and covering our events in CCN and wish you well for the future, Insha-Allah.

Ramadan Mubarak to you and all Muslim Brothers and Sisters who read and support CCN.

Wassalam,

Shummis Rane & MBN Executive

I take this opportunity to express my humble opinion on this remarkable milestone of CCN reaching its 250th publication. One can only imagine the time and effort involved in putting together a weekly "not to be missed" edition and all thanks and praise is to Allah swt for giving the CCN team the energy and drive to ensure that deadlines are met timeously. On behalf of the Islamic Society of Gold Coast Inc I congratulate the CCN team on this fantastic achievement. Your weekly issues have given us a sense of belonging to the broader community of Muslims and it has been an excellent tool for us to promote the activities that take place in Gold Coast as well.

On a personal level, CCN has helped to fill a certain void in my life. Back in South Africa it was a regular habit to wait for the Sunday Tribune and the Sunday Times to be delivered and the rest of the morning was spent lying around reading the Sunday papers before heading off to the once famous Curries Fountain to see and support non racial football.

Those were the days.....

Now it's getting up and heading for the computer to get the latest issue ofCCN.

Well done and keep up the great work!!!!

Habib Jamal

Islamic Society of Gold Coast Inc.

If you talk to the Muslims of the other Australian states on the topic of services for the Muslim community, they might express a sense of envy (in the good sense) because we might be a little ahead of the rest.

May Allah assist your efforts

Umar Batchelor

Federation of Australian Muslim Students and Youth (FAMSY)

Congratulations to CCN on reaching your 250th edition of an online resource which keeps the finger on the pulse of the issues relating to the Muslim community, both locally here in Queensland and more broadly at a national and international level. CCN doesn't just celebrate local successes and events (for which there are many), but also provides humorous and very informative articles along with facilitating debate on a range of issues that creates positive dialogue that at times also involves the wider community.

As the member of the Queensland Parliament with a large constitute from the Islamic faith, I know first hand the wonderful social, cultural and economic contributions that the Muslim community has provided to Queensland society over many years.

May I wish CCN all the very best for the many years ahead in what is an excellent online publication.

Regards

Stephen Robertson MP

Member for Stretton

Minister for Natural Resources, Mines & Energy and Minister for Trade

"The CCN is like a good cup of coffee... every time I read the new issue I get energized!"

Also, on behalf of Sunnah Inspirations, I would like to sincerely thank you for your assistance and cooperation in advertising the various events organised by Sunnah Inspirations.

Best wishes to the whole CCN team,

Wassalaam

Ismail Mohamed

Alhamdulillah, you have reached a significant milestone of the 250th. Edition. The CCN is a very informative newsletter, coming out weekly, and providing for the much anticipated Sunday morning ritual.

The content is diverse, catering for every taste, for every age bracket, and for those wishing to gain a better insight into the Muslim Community of Brisbane. The wide variety of subjects, the entertainment, the current affairs, and the community news, are all widely researched and printed for community needs. The CCN has filled a void that has lingered within the local Muslim community.

I know for a fact that it is widely read out there in the general community, by Muslims, and by well wishers of the Muslim community.

I pray to Almighty Allah SWT, to continue to help you to produce such a newsletter, for all to enjoy.

Wasalam

Hj. Sultan M. Deen

Dear Editor

Many thanks for adding me to your newsletter mailing list.

It is a great source of information (and mirth!).

(With reference to your write up on the tree planting at Kuraby) I did mention to Heather from B4C that if we held elections yearly, we would have enough candidate volunteers to get the whole of Brisbane replanted in no time.

Kind Regards

Kim Marx

Lord Mayor's Representative

Can Do Candidate Karawatha

The AMARAH team would like to wish all CCN volunteers and readers Ramadhan Mubarak. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate CCN on reaching its 250th issue. As Queensland's only weekly newsletter, CCN is such an important resource for our community.

Indeed, many of us cannot imagine a Sunday without CCN in our inbox. Where else would we get our news about what is happening in the Muslim community (local, national and international) written in such a witty and insightful manner?

The AMARAH team would especially like to thank CCN for the support it has shown to our organisation in promoting and supporting our events and causes. We are able to reach many more in the Muslim and the wider communities because of your existence!

Again, congratulations CCN on reaching this impressive milestone, and we look forward to reading the 500th issue!

Nora Amath

AMARAH

I have been regularly receiving, and reading, your publication on Sundays. Thank you very much for sending me the publication with many valuable information, particularly issues related to the Muslim community, in and around Brisbane, which is often ignored by mainstream media. Your publication keeps the readers abreast on the latest happenings in the community and various events that impacts on us.

I didn't agree on everything you published, but I communicated to you when I had any different opinion on some the contents of the publication. You treated them very professionally.

The community event calendar and forecasted dates for Islamic calendar have been useful to many readers.

I thank you and your team for including some stories from the Islamic Society of Toowoomba Inc and about my professional activities. I could imagine how much time and efforts it take to maintain a regular commitment of this nature.

You have done, and I believe you will continue to do so, if not better.

I wish you and your publication a bright future.

Shahjahan Khan, PhD

President, Islamic Countries Society of Statistical Sciences (ISOSS),

Department of Mathematics & Computing

University of Southern Queensland

Congratulations on the 350th edition...I really enjoy the CCN, and I know the dedicated work to make sure that each bulletin is delivered...

Thank you

Senator Claire Moore

Labor Senator for Queensland

Fantastic reading this week! And I'm not just saying that because my pic is in the report on Amarah :-). You're doing a great work of educating and uniting the community!

I also noticed that Warrigala has now got a halal stall, so thanks for following that up for us.

Best Wishes

Freya Ostapovitch

State LNP candidate for Stretton



Queensland Multicultural
Awards 2011

Media Award
L'espresso Community News

SELECTION OF READERS' VIEWS ON CCN
From the 2012 CCN Readers' Survey

It is the only 'Muslim' community news that I have subscribed to. I find it interesting because it has a wide coverage of topics. I have been trying to get some of our younger folk here in (overseas country) to follow your lead and start a similar project.

Its local ...I know the people involved and I can forward to those of my friends relatives that want an insight on the way we live.

It's professionally presented; articles and issues in general are of relevance to both Muslim and non-Muslims. I get the impression that the reporting is impartial.

It updates me about happenings in Queensland Muslim community.

I like the fact that I always get up to date information on what is happening in and around Brisbane as well as pictures and accurate dates of events, entertainment as well as special functions.

Always trying to be topical and with reasoned not bigoted answers.

I like the stories about other Muslims around the world and what they achieve in life.

The weekly joke as well as the news around the world relevant to Muslims that u won't find in the mainstream news

I enjoy the openness and variety of Muslim news from around the world which has opened my eyes to see the levels of reasonable attitude of Muslims toward Non-Muslims which is not generally portrayed to the broader community.

Very informative and relevant. Happy that it covers all Muslims and schools of thought, not solely on Wahabi or Sunni.

Links to items I may have missed. Dates for Ramadan, Eid etc; Community events and announcements; Annual gold day; the non-profit/voluntary nature of CCN.

In our busy lives, it keeps informed about what is happening in your local Muslim community

Keeping me informed on issues relating the Islamic community in Brisbane and beyond. CCN chuckle. Simple and direct layout. Easy access to info online. This: asking us what we think of the publication.

It is always there on (Sunday) morning for a read. (never missing or late).

Islamic events and you tube links that are attached to newsletter. Also (I) like most how it continues to evolve and improve.

Very professional and it has been a great community resource and communication outlet.

It gives me a feeling for all the positive activities going on in the Muslim community in Brisbane and beyond.

I like that it provides me with lots of information about what's going on in the local Muslim community. I like that the information is framed positively and moderately. I'm an Aussie non-Muslim but my husband is (Middle Eastern) Muslim so I feel I can link him into the community when he arrives and that it will be a positive community.

With our community getting bigger it's nice to get a weekly update... it brings us awareness of certain fundraisers, e.g. Syria appeal...

It is original, funny and has news/entertainment from around the world. It has up to date photos of local events which is great and helps people keep in touch with their community.

I love that it is a one-stop community information portal that offers a link to other important and interesting issues. Also it is a great asset to our community as it supports local businesses, events and provides invaluable info for the local community. CCN is my Sunday morning wake-up read wherever I am in the world. Love everything about this well-intended and well-rounded community newsletter...the one most consistent endeavour to come out of the Brisbane Muslim community. Onward and Upward.

The information that it delivers to public in a very professional way. The food for thought really appeals to me.

Everything!

It's an interesting mix of stories that are relevant to life in as a Muslim and particularly, being in Brisbane.

Its objectivity in the coverage of news and its readiness to provide news pertaining to our community.

It is informative and keeps one abreast of activities within the community. It keeps one informed of events that are taking place so that one can attend if they so wish.

The excellent standard you have maintained consistently week after week --- that is a great achievement --- well done & thank you.

It's nice to read it bcos it's there but i wouldn't miss it if it ceased to exist.

I like that it's updated every week.

Good chance to stay informed about local events/issues while also summarising broader issues/news etc...

CCN Chuckle.

Reading about what's happening in Brisbane and sometimes Australia

Very informative for local and international news. Excellent updates on a weekly basis.

The links to videos about Islam. Especially series of 10-12 episodes of history of Islam. Or Muslim scholars. Or history of Muslim world. etc.

How the Muslims in Brisbane are active in community work.

The articles and content layout. It keeps me informed on current issues locally and around the Muslim world. Makes for an entertaining start to my Sunday!

The information of what's happening around the world and seeing what Muslims are getting up to in different countries.

Everything is good.

Current news about affairs of the Muslims internationally. The dedication of the CCN editor. Very, very committed shukran.

Information about events and interests in my community.. (I'm non-Muslim and don't access this information from mosques and religious connections)

Warm and appears a part of family.

Please continue the good work and increase your readership.

It's excellent, Keep up the good work.

Keep up the good work. Your news keep updates the community. Well done.

Good luck and stay on for always for another 1000 years Amin!

Just keep the good work up. You are doing a wonderful job. May Allah keep u safe & healthy for all the good you guys are doing ameen.

Keep reaching out to non-Muslims. Your visible participation in the whole community, not just the Muslim community is a great strength of what you do

Continue with the good work...don't know how you do it week in week out!!

Keep going! I imagine it takes a lot of effort to get it out every week, I think that a fortnightly newsletter would work too if there ever was resource issues.

Wish we had a CCN in Sydney relating to Sydney Affairs.