

FEZANA *bulletin*

September 2014 / VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 9



UPCOMING DATES

Through Sept 20, 2014

A Thousand Years of the Persian Book Exhibition.
Library of Congress,
Washington D.C. [click here](#)

September 11-28, 2014

Day to Serve Volunteer Opportunities.
www.daytoserve.org

September 21, 2014

9/11 Unity Walk; Embassy Row, Washington D.C.
[Click Here](#)

September 21, 2014

The People's Climate March; Columbus Circle, New York City. [Click here](#)

September 22-23, 2014

Fourth Annual President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge; George Washington University. Washington, DC.
[Click here](#)

September 30, 2014

Deadline for submissions.
WZCC Global Awards for outstanding Professionals and Entrepreneurs.
www.wzcc.net

(DATES CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

FEZANA Workshop: Empowering Women at the United Nations

By Nurelle Mehta, Toronto

[Nurelle Mehta participated for the first time at the 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations on March 10, 2014 as a member of the FEZANA UN-NGO Team.]



I can safely say that the Big Apple has a world of opportunities, only if one is willing to actually look for them.

After several conference calls from November to March, and countless edited versions of our presentation, we were finally ready to represent FEZANA at the United Nations (UN) for the Commission of a Status of Women 58 (CSW) conference. Going in and coming out, my entire perspective on my goals, ambitions and life in general have taken a total 180.

I vividly remember my first day walking into the UN building filled with a sense of pride in our Zoroastrian delegation to the UN. I felt confident yet uneasy because I was unsure of what this week could bring. I knew it could go either way -- good or bad -- but I hoped for the best and channeled my vision in the right direction. Our practice sessions were mainly over phone calls and I wasn't at a 100% but the feeling of just being in New York City made it a lot better!

The second day rolled around and I felt more comfortable especially because you were exposed to huge crowds of people -- new and in the same boat as you. These crowds were different. They were from all walks of the earth, different accents, different appearances and different cultures. Canada is known to be a cultural mosaic but this... this was incomparable. It was a fusion of inspiration and culture under one roof! The day of the presentation flew by and I can hardly recall it. It was just in a blink of an eye that it all fell together. The audience was left satisfied, and receiving good feedback was what really motivated me to become better.

Right after the presentation, a few of us decided to attend a round table conference on trafficking and migration. I volunteered to write notes for our group on a huge chart paper but little did I know that the person in charge of writing was also meant to speak in front of the whole room. I don't mind speaking to an audience or going up on stage but I knew that I wasn't the type of person to speak on the spot without preparation. I was really nervous but I said a quick *Ashem Vohu* and *Yatha Ahu Vairyo* and I was good to go. I then realized that maybe this opportunity was just a blessing in disguise and well. I was right - it was a blessing. After presenting in front of the huge crowd, many people seemed to be impressed with my delivery. I don't mean to boast in any way but I had just discovered a new talent: Speaking on the spot. It is something a political science student needs especially in higher years of postsecondary education. I was no longer afraid to be on the spot and have come to a realization that I can use this to my advantage. With the right people, right connections and current knowledge from my courses at university and gained knowledge from the CSW meetings, I



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Zoroastrian
Associations of
North America
(FEZANA)**

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NGO in consultative status
(Roster) with the Economic
and Social Council of the
United Nations



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can see myself moving forward. I am confident in my dreams of working at the UN and making an impact on people's lives.

By the last day, I had grown a strong attachment to the city and the UN building. It was like I had created a niche for myself. Reflecting back, I am so grateful for this opportunity and would encourage others to get involved and grab it.

To conclude, I'd like to repeat what I said earlier: opportunities are always available. When one goes on a search for them, you come to find that every day is an opportunity within itself just hiding for you to seek it. So, if there is anything I'd like to tell people, it's to keep believing in yourself and don't shy away from the world when the world is opening up to you.

Lastly, I would also like to give a huge thanks to **Teenaz Javat** who informed me about this wonderful opportunity and **Afreed Mistry, Mani Rao, Homi Gandhi, Behram Pastakia, Nina Mistry, Tanya Bharda** and **Rayomond Dinshaw** because they are really what brought such a wonderful presentation to life and, without all of their hard work and contribution, I don't think the CSW 58 meeting would have been such a great success. □



FEZANA AT THE UN: Read about Tanya Bharda's experience as a FEZANA representative at the UN DPI/NGO Conference at UN Headquarters in August 2014 in the next FEZANA Journal.

To Connect:

Zarathushtis from anywhere in the world interested in joining the FEZANA UN-NGO team should contact Co-Chairs, Afreed B. Mistry [afreed.mistry\(\)gmail.com](mailto:afreed.mistry@gmail.com), Behram Pastakia [bpastakia \(\) aol.com](mailto:bpastakia@aol.com), and Homi D. Gandhi [homidgandhi \(\) gmail.com](mailto:homidgandhi@gmail.com), with a copy of their curriculum vitae and a letter of intent stating how they would further the vision and mission of the UN. We seek individuals with leadership potential who can speak and write well. Fluency in multiple languages is an added asset.

Gram Seva Trust Update

[The Gram Seva service example was part of the presentation of the FEZANA Workshop on Empowering Women, at the 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations held in March 2014. Below are excerpts from an update from Dr Ashwin Shah who writes from Village Kharel, Navsari District in rural Gujarat in India.]

This year, Gram Seva celebrates 20 years of health care delivery and rural development. More than 8,000 children have received treatment for malnutrition and more than 25,000 pregnant women have received antenatal care. In addition to these cumulative milestones, Gram Seva also treats over 70,000 patients annually in our hospital.

Gram Seva has always been a proponent of a holistic approach to healthcare and has taken our community health workers advice to heart. We have started off this year with initiatives in sectors outside of the hospital such as rehabilitation programs for alcoholics and sanitation projects for poor families. As we continue this work, you can look forward to hearing about our many more projects that are improving our surrounding communities.

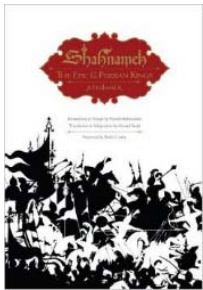
Thank you,
Dr. Ashwin Shah



BOOK AWARENESS

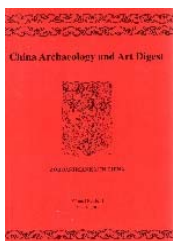


This month we focus on two Zoroastrian books that were mentioned in the news:



The Shahnameh: The Epics of the Persian Kings
by Rahmanian

A stunningly vivid colorful and intricately illustrated 500-page book edited and translated by Sadri. It was featured in the *Wall Street Journal* and is available at FIRES (ZAH & ZANT) and at amazon.com.



A recent excavation in China claims 'very likely' to redefine the origin of Zoroastrianism. You can delve into this Zoroastrian-China connection in "*China Archaeology and Art Digest - Zoroastrianism in China*" Vol. 4 No 1. The journal is also available at FIRES (ZAH).

<http://www.fires-fezana.org/>

AROUND FEZANA: News from FEZANA Committees

Excellence in Sports Scholarship Committee Announces a New Chair



Niloofar Balsara has accepted an appointment as Chair of the FEZANA Excellence in Sports (EXISS) Committee. We thank outgoing Chair, Shiroy Dadachanji, for his service in chairing the committee.

NILOOFER BALSARA

Niloofar is a resident of Vancouver, Canada. She and her husband, Mobed Firdos Balsara, have served the Zarathushti community in Vancouver for the past fourteen years. An HR professional, she is the Head of Talent at HSBC Bank Canada. Niloofar is also a published author of Children's books and loves reading and travel.

FEZANA would like to welcome Niloofar to the FEZANA family. □

FEZANA Academic Scholarships Announced

The 2014-15 FEZANA Academic Scholarships have been announced. The Academic Scholarship Committee was greatly impressed by the high caliber of applications received. This year, twelve recipients were awarded scholarships:

BANOUBAI AND MANECKSHAW KAPADIA ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP
Ziba Colah (*University of Houston; Houston, Texas*)

FEZANA 25th ANNIVERSARY ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP
Michael Henry (*Columbia University Medical Center, New York*)

FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Aria Behrouzi (*College of Osteopathic Medicine; Spartanburg, South Carolina*)

Shazad S. Bulsara (*University of Texas; Arlington, Texas*)

Shiva Gojini (*University of California, Los Angeles*)

Natalie Kanga (*University of California, San Diego*)

Hooman Kasrei (*Santa Monica College, Santa Monica, California*)

Tina Unwalla (*Pennsylvania State University*)

MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP - THE FEZANA SCHOLAR

Farin Bakhtiari (*California State University, Northridge*)

MORVARID GUIV ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Azvina Mehta (*Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine; Toronto*)

Eiraj Zandi (*California State University, Long Beach*)

PURVEZ AND ABAN RUSTOMJI ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

Farzad Sunavala (*Louisiana State University*)

[Look for full write-ups on the scholarships and their recipients in the Spring 2015 issue of the FEZANA Journal.]

REFLECTION

**Zarathushtra Preaches
Tushnaa Maitish
(Silent Meditation)
Ushtavaiti Gatha
Yasna 43 Verse 15**

*Spentem at thwaa Mazdaa
menghi Ahuraa,*

*Hyat maa vohu pairi-jasat
mananghaa,*

*Dakhshat ushyaa tushnaa-
maitish vahishtaa,*

*Noit naa pourush dregvato
khyaat chikhshnusho,*

*At toi vispeng angreng
ashaauno aadareh.*

(English Translation):
As divine and sacred have I
recognized Thee, O Lord of
Life and wisdom,
When *Vohuman* entered
within me
And light of Truth and
knowledge brightened my
heart;
Then I realized that silent and
deep meditation
Is the best means of
acquiring knowledge and
spiritual insight!
And that is not fit for any
leader to make peace with
the followers of untruth,
Because they regard
righteous and truthful
persons as their enemies.

**(source: Translation of
Gathas the Holy Song of
Zarathustra, from Persian
into English by Mobed
Firouz Azargoshasb, March
1988, San Diego,
California)**

[Excerpt from WZSE
(Weekly Zoroastrian
Scripture Extracts) #70; from
Erv. Soli Dastur. For audio
version of recitation contact
dastur (@) comcast.net.]

SSZ Conference in Chicago Enlightens All



The mission of the SSZ [Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism] – *Yasnaaicha* (proper understanding), *Vahmaaicha* (contemplation), *Khshnao-thraaicha* (gaining knowledge) and *Frasastayaecha* (imparting knowledge) -- was well-accomplished, at the 2014 SSZ Conference in Chicago, on September 6, with presentations by academicians, theologians, educationists and lay scholars: Kersey Kabraji of Pune, India on the *Gathas*; Dastoor Dr. Kersey Antia of Chicago on *Spenta Mainyu*; Dr. Dan Sheffield of Princeton University (by video on Zoroastrians and Food); Dr. Wouter Henkelman on the Persepolis tablets at Oriental Institute, Chicago; and next-generation speakers Khursheed Ichhaporia on Gahambars; Persis Driver on the Phenology Network; and Erv. Rayomand Ravji on Tushnamaiti as well as panelists.

This 9th SSZ Conference, hosted by Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, and supported by FEZANA, was dedicated as the “Keki Bhote Memorial SSZ Conference” in honor of the Late Mr. Bhote’s ardent support to the Society over the years. For further information on SSZ, visit www.s-s-z.org □

[Look for the full report of the conference in FEZANA Journal, Fall 2014]



Guest of honor Kersee Kabraji presenting the Zoroastrian Scholarly Studies and Service Award to Joseph Peterson for his “scholarship and dedication to advancing learning of the Zarathushti scriptures ...”



Next generation panel on “Visioning the Future of Zoroastrian Practice in North America”: Cyrus Rivetna, Rayomand Ravji, Pervin Taleyarkhan, Urvaksh Patel and Eric Elavia. Not in picture are Mehrab Deboo and moderator Khushrow Madon.

Concept of *Tushnamaiti* is Universal



Photo by Nitin Dogra

A “Silent Meditation” held at DuPont Circle in Washington D.C. on 9/11.



Erv. Rayomand Ravji spoke on *Tushnamaiti* in the Gathas at Chicago’s SSZ Conference on September 6.



Firdosh Mehta, Past president of FEZANA and his wife Rashna, were guests of Mehernosh and Wen Pastakia at their family restaurant in Beijing, China, to celebrate Parsi New Year in August with friends and family.

CONNECTIONS

Archaeological Excavations in China Suggest Zoroastrian Connections

A short video clip from CCTV on recent archaeological excavations in China, suggesting a civilization that revered fire. [Approx 3 minutes] [click here](#)

“Zoroastrians in China” China Archaeology and Art Digest, No. 13 (December 2000), 508pp.

In this issue of this scholarly journal, the impact of two archaeological discoveries in China and their Zoroastrian connections is addressed. **This Journal is available at FIRES (see Book Awareness, page 3).**

[Click here for details](#)

2015 Parliament of World Religions

THE PARLIAMENT IS RETURNING TO U.S. SOIL

The Parliament of the World's Religions has announced that it will bring the world's largest and most historic interfaith gathering to Salt Lake City in October 2015, marking its return to the United States for the first time in 22 years.

<http://tinyurl.com/oufkj7n>

Join thousands of faith and interfaith leaders and activists from more than 80 countries, representing more than 50 faith, and spiritual traditions in this transformational event. The Parliament is the summit of interfaith networks. Enjoy five days of listening, sharing, practical insight, training and networking.



October 15-19, 2015

**Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, Utah
Hundreds of Sessions to Choose From**

SUPER SAVER RATE AVAILABLE NOW

Save \$325 when you register by November 30, 2014. (The Super Saver rates are available on a first come, first serve basis. It may end before Nov 30th if it reaches its maximum limit.)

[Click here](#) for Fee Information.

CONTACT US TODAY TO JOIN IN THE DISCOUNTED GROUP SUPER SAVER RATE

A group of 10 or more qualifies for a special discounted Super Saver registration rate of \$189 (non-refundable). **Those interested to avail of this discounted rate may send an email to [rivetna \(@\) aol.com](mailto:rivetna@aol.com) indicating your interest no later than October 15, 2014.** You will be contacted to send in your check if the number of responses received equal or exceed 10.

For more information on The Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions (CPWR) visit <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/> □

ZAGNY/IZA Bid Farewell To Its Darbe Mehr



As construction of their new Dare Mehr is well underway, ZAGNY (Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York) and IZA (Iranian Zoroastrian Association), on July 5, 2014, bid farewell in grand style to their home for the past thirteen years.

The event started with a beautiful Jashan ceremony by ten priests. The gathering of about 200 was treated to a grand evening of memories, entertainment by local members, dinner and dancing. □

COMING THIS FALL IN THE FEZANA JOURNAL

Don't Miss the Fall 2014 *FEZANA Journal* which will feature "**Gahambars in the Haft Keshvar Zamin.**" Guest Editors are Erv. Soli Dastur (Florida) and Kayomarsh Mehta (Chicago).

Subscribe or renew your subscription today!
[Click here](#)

UPCOMING DATES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

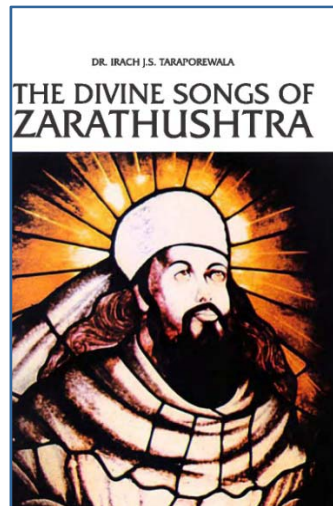
October 23-25, 2014
Federation of Zoroastrian Youth Associations 23rd All India Youth Meet in Panchgani, India
;teamfozya (@) gmail.com

November 1-2, 2014
11th Annual ZAH Library Event. Sarah Stewart, Guest Speaker (SAOS; Curator, The Everlasting Flame Exhibition) Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center, Houston. [Click here.](#)

November 16, 2014
Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF) Maidhyoshem Gahambar.
zafboard (@) gmail.com

December 29-31, 2014
17th North American Zoroastrian Congress, Los Angeles, California
www.nazc2014.org

February 5-6, 2015
Youth Assembly at the United Nations. New York City. [click here](#)



Reprint of Valuable Educational Resource Needs Your Support!

The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra: Translations of the Gathas into English
by Irach JS Taraporewala

FEZANA has obtained permission from the Hukhta Foundation to reprint the *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra — Translations of the Gathas into English* by Irach JS Taraporewala.

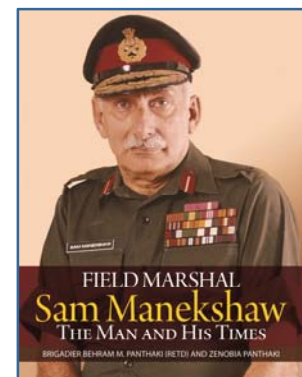
At the FEZANA AGM in Seattle, Washington State, held on 18 May 2014, seed money for the reprint of this book was sanctioned. **Donations are now sought from individuals, from member associations and small groups to cover the costs of publishing this very valuable religious education resource to benefit our Zarathushti community.**

Checks can be made out to FEZANA (marked for "Taraporewala Publication" in the memo section) and mailed to: **Nilufer K. Shroff, FEZANA Treasurer, Cherry Hill Post Office Box 3873, 1175 Marlcrest Road, Cherry Hill, NJ, 08034.** Nilufer can be reached at fezanatreasurer (@) gmail.com. [click here](#) to donate online (Please mark "Taraporewala" Publication in the memo section). □

NOW AVAILABLE

Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw
The Man and his Times
By Brigadier Behram Panthaki
(Retired)
and Zenobia Panthaki

ISBN #: 978-93-83098-30-9
Publication of 2014



This long-awaited coffee table book is **now available on Amazon.com** at a discounted price of \$34.62 (full price \$45). You can search by entering the title or the ISBN No. (without dashes).

Hurry and purchase the book for it is a collectors' item and comes highly recommended by eminent jurists, diplomats, generals and leading newspapers/journals. This book has been presented to President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It entertains and educates and will continue to do so for several generations. Additionally, in purchasing this book you will also serve a worthy cause for most of the royalty will go to the War Wounded Foundation and the War Widows Welfare Fund of India.



• Register • Attend • Sponsor • Meet • Learn • Share • Enjoy



*Whatever you've heard about the Congress, there's only one way to
find out if its true...*

REGISTER and ATTEND

Final Early Bird Discounts Deadline: September 20, 2014

<http://www.nazc2014.org/registration/>

Program Highlights: Speakers and topics of interest to all Zoroastrians.

Young Adults' Programs: A fun Pre-Congress Weekend in LA and programming geared towards young adults!

Children's Programs: Special programs to engage your children, while you attend sessions created for adults.

Participate: The WZSO and the Poster Session provide great opportunities for all to participate in the Congress.

US & Canada Airfare Discounts: Enter ZTC3643272 in the Offer Code Box when you book your United Airlines flight to LA to received upto 10% off!

Exhibition & Vendors: The Congress proudly presents Ferdowsi's Shahnameh: The Crown Jewel of Persian Literature. Don't miss out on this exciting exhibition! The Congress will also host several vendors so come ready to shop till you drop!

Entertainment: The Congress welcomes Mima Goodarz, The Z Band, and more for fun nights full of song and dance!

Hotel Information: We have special rates for Congress registrants and other amenities provided by the Hilton. Make your Reservations Now!

International Travel Discounts and Car Rental Services in LA: Contact Bomi Patel of BB Travel Experts (at bbtes9@gmail.com or 408.264.4395) for "at cost" worldwide ticketing and the best rates for rental cars in LA!



Los Angeles, California
December 29-31, 2014



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Be Creative and Celebrate your Connection with Zoroastrianism

Participate in the XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress' Poster Session

- *Do you have a creative way to illustrate what you are learning about Zoroastrianism? To showcase what being Zoroastrian means to you?*
- *Have you written a paper on Zoroastrianism at college and want to present it at a conference?*
- *Are you a Zoroastrian studies instructor who wants to engage your students in a class project?*
- *Are you a parent who wants to engage your child in learning about Zoroastrianism through art?*

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes", consider registering in the Congress' Poster Session, where we will showcase your creativity and your connection to Zoroastrianism.

To register, email a short description of your poster and your contact information to:
poster@nazc2014.org **on or before September 30, 2014.**

There is no age limit. The subject matter may be anything related to Zoroastrianism. The poster size should be 22 x 28 inches or larger.

Support **YOUR** Congress!

www.nazc2014.org ❖ 310.634.1445 ❖ info@nazc2014.org