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FORGING A FUTURE A CELEBRATION OF FEZANA'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Ye urvanem men gaire vohu dade hathra manangha
ashimcha shaothananam vidush Mazdao Ahurahya
yavat isai tavacha avat khsai a-aeshe Ashahya.

*I lead my soul to the House of Song through the power of Good Mind
and righteous deeds known to You, Ahura Mazda.
As long as I have the will and the strength
I shall teach others to strive for righteousness.*

[Yasna 28.4, see "The Essence of Gathas" by Firoze Jungalwala, this issue]

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EDITORIAL

To Those Who Fear the Religion is Dying Out in the 'Modern' West



Fear not! In the short span (about 30 years or so) that Zarthustis have been on this continent in any significant numbers, there has been more commitment to perpetuating the faith than at any other time in its long and checkered history.

I cannot say how very proud I am to be a North American Zoroastrian, amidst a group of Zarthustis who have faced, and are continuing to face tremendous odds, as a miniscule community in a sea of non-Zarthustis, and who are nevertheless succeeding beyond anyone's expectations, in preserving and perpetuating the religion, in inspiring our children to grow up with Zarthusti values, and in bringing recognition and respect to our religion.

If you could come to one of our Congresses, and mingle with the North American community; if you could go behind the scenes of a youth congress, or a youth camp or seminar, and listen to their deliberations and their concerns, for themselves and for their religion; if you could attend a FEZANA meeting, and see the involvement of the people, who, while they may not always agree with one another, nevertheless, are deeply committed, and striving in their own way to do what he or she believes is best for their community and their religion; if you could go to one of the numerous conferences, seminars, and workshops, where Zarthusti educators and scholars and

youth and adults gather to learn; if you could pick up and read the FEZANA Journal, reflecting the pulse of the community here in North America ...

If you could visit a Zarthusti home here in North America, where parents are striving to imbibe Zarthusti values in their children; and see their efforts to maintain the traditions. And they are succeeding well, because of the hospitable climate afforded to all, in these two countries of Canada and U.S.A.

If you could have attended the Parliament of the World's Religions, in Chicago in 1993, where Zarthustis stood tall among the other faiths, far out of proportion to our numbers; if you could attend the countless interfaith gatherings where Zarthustis present themselves and gain respect and recognition; if you could listen to our youth proudly present our religion to their class-mates at school ...

If you could have seen the Chicago Darbe Mehr being built; the tremendous dedication and effort that went into the building — from fund raising, to search for the land, through design, ground-breaking, clearing the brush that covered the property, construction, the day the half-built roof trusses collapsed; when members gathered to sweep and clean, and sand and varnish, and polish and paint for interminable days; the arrival of the Afargan in a crate, from Surat, India; down to the momentous Inauguration Day, when the sacred flames were installed in the Afargan by our Priests, with the prayers and blessings of the community. And of course there are eight such Darbe MehRs now — each built with love and dedication by the community.

If you could come to the Darbe Mehr on a Sunday morning, and see the 50-60 kids learning, praying, and having fun with their Zarthusti friends; if you could see the dedication of our Sunday School teachers; if you

could see the Board Members discussing and debating community matters; if you could step into our Prayer Room and feel the warmth and love of the community as they do Humbandagi together; if you could see the ladies gathering in the kitchen to make Dar ni Poris for Ava Ardivisur Parab; or the seniors gathering for Bingo; or adults gathering for Gatha classes ...

If you could see the life cycle events — navjotes, weddings, funeral prayers, that have taken place on that stage; if you could see the sacrifices made by our Priests who take time from their busy jobs, and without remuneration, perform Jashans, Tandarostis, Machis and more; if you could see the ladies happily cleaning the divas, and polishing the khoomchas before the Mukta; and if you could come and see the Darbe Mehr during the Muktads, shining and spotless, filled with table upon table of flowers and the fragrance of lobban; if you could come and enjoy the Gahambars and Jashans, and Mehrgan and Jashne Sadeh, and NavRoz and Pateti ...

To this community, our Darbe Mehr, so lovingly built, be it consecrated or not, is as sacred as any Atash Bahram, anywhere. If you could stand beside our Chicago community members and pray as the Priests say Atash Niyaishe on a Sunday morning in front of our shining Afargan in the dim light, with the flames roaring ...

If you could have a taste of some of these things that are happening in North America ...

Then you would not fear. ■

Roshan Rivetna
Publisher, FEZANA Journal

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*There are only two lasting bequests
we can make to our children —
one is roots, the other wings.*

■ ■ ■ ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE ■ ■ ■

"Welcoming Group" for Newly Arrived Students in the USA and Canada

Viraf Mohta of Princeton, New Jersey bounced the idea on the Zarthusti Internet alias, and now, a few months later, the volunteers still keep coming. Viraf, who has now also joined the FEZANA Small Groups Committee, has started a "Welcoming Group" to assist newly arrived Zarthusti students, such as receiving them at the airport, getting them in touch with other students, or with the local Zarthusti Association, or hosting them for a few days till they get their feet wet. Thanks to the magic of Internet, Viraf now has a long and growing list of volunteer 'welcomers' in most major cities of USA and Canada and in 8-10 countries. If you would like to be a 'welcomer' or a 'welcomee', contact Viraf Mohta, 4 Bozarth Ct., Hamilton, NJ 08690, email: vmohta@etes.org. Tel: (609) 581-1668.

Shahriari on "The Twilight Zone of Science"

I would like to thank Shahriar Shahriari publicly for flying down from Vancouver to San Jose on his own time, and presenting a great workshop to our youth in Northern California, on March 3.

His seminar "The Twilight Zone of Science", brought a new perspective to our youth who are trying to bridge science and religion. The exercises in his workshop covering topics from Order and Chaos, to Matter and Energy, Creativity, Sixth Sense and more, kept the youth enthralled. I highly recommend this seminar to other Youth Groups.

*Mehran Sepehri
Mountain View, California*

"Nouruz" at the Sacramento Public Library

A special exhibit, "Nouruz", featuring paintings by Iranian artists, books on Iran, and a slide show was held at the Sacramento Public Library March 26-30, 1996. A festive 'Haft Seen' table was also set up decorated with food symbolizing the New Year. Traditional cookies were served after the program. Proceeds benefited the Library's Farsi books and materials collection. Contact Behzad Chami at (916) 753-4254.

Iranian Heritage Day in New Jersey

Governor Christine Whitman of New Jersey declared Iranian Heritage Day in that State with the proclamation:

"WHEREAS residents of Iranian heritage in New Jersey provide a rich, enduring cultural history in art, literature, education and theology; and

WHEREAS, succeeding generations of Iranian-Americans, like their forebears, have distinguished themselves in the fields of business, education, politics, medicine and industry; and

WHEREAS, Iranians throughout the world will celebrate the arrival of Spring, the Iranian New Year 1375, on March 21, 1996, ... I do hereby proclaim March 21, 1996 as IRANIAN HERITAGE DAY."

Issues Facing Contemporary Zoroastrians

The Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington (ZAMWI) organized a two-day seminar focusing on crucial issues relating to Zoroastrianism from the viewpoint of a new generation of North American Zoroastrians on May 25-26. It provided the youth constructive interaction with older Zoroastrian leaders. Contact Orang Demehry (703) 255-0538.

Novruz Celebrations in California

Numerous Novruz celebrations were held in California. The Stanford Zoroastrian Student Group held an event with a Haft-Seen table, games and dancing, open to all Stanford students and Zoroastrians. Dr. Mehrban Shahrivini was guest speaker at a Navroz function celebrated by the Society of Iranian Professionals of Northern California.

Over 500 attended the cultural evening, with a Persian singer and Indian dinner, jointly organized by the Zarthusti Anjuman of Northern California and the Persian Zoroastrian Organization, in San Jose.

The California Zoroastrian Center celebrated at the Rostam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr in Westminster, near Los Angeles. 400 guests attended the cultural program, free of charge.

The Zarathushtrian Assembly celebrated at Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills with a religious and cultural program, attended by over 450 persons.

Submitted by Mehran Sepehri

BC Attempts Definition of a Zoroastrian

At an Extra-ordinary General Meeting on January 28, the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia discussed proposed changes to their Constitution, among them a new definition of a Zoroastrian:

"A Zoroastrian is a person who attests to be a true believer and follower of the religion as propounded by Asho Zarathushtra in the Gathas, and who subscribes to established Zoroastrian habitual or customary practices."

The definition was put to vote, but did not pass due to lack of time and legal implications as advised by a solicitor. It will be brought up again at a future meeting.

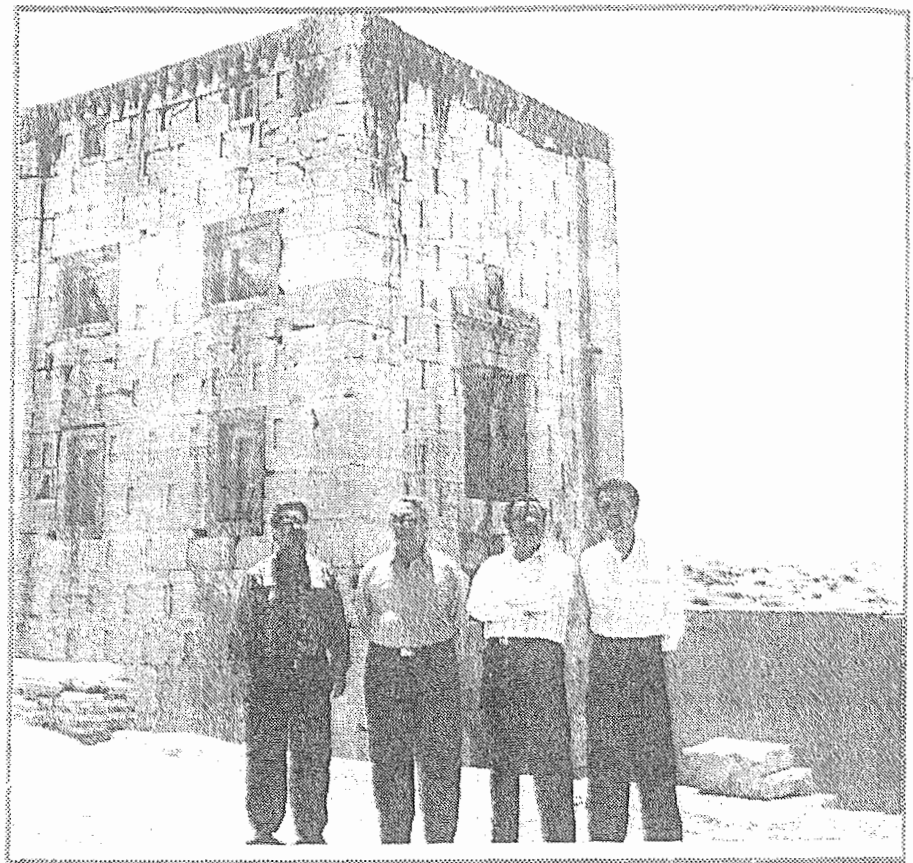
Visit of Iran's Zoroastrian Member of Parliament

The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia hosted a program in honor of Parviz Ravani, Zoroastrian Member of Parliament in Iran on January 6, 1996. A simple, intelligent gutsy gentleman, in his early forties, Mr. Ravani, an architect, is one of five minority MPs in the Iranian Majlis, the others being Armenians (2 seats), Assyrians (1 seat) and Jews (1 seat). Mr. Ravani encouraged Zoroastrians to attend the Congress in Tehran in June.

He stated categorically that there are only two areas where Zoroastrians are not allowed to have positions: in the military and in the judiciary. Apart from this, there is no prejudice in the Constitution against any minority community. In his estimate, there are about 55,000 Zarthustis in Iran.

[From BC Newsletter, "In Search of the Truth", May 1996].

Photo Right, Mr Ravani (3rd from left) with Alayar Dabestani, Dr. Khosrow Dabestani and Farshid Dehmoubed in Shiraz, Iran



Firdaus Dhabar's work in New York Times

The November 21, 1995 Science Section of the New York Times mentions the work of Rockefeller University graduate student, Firdaus Dhabar, a member of the New York Zarthusti community, and an ordained Mobed.

Firdaus, working with Dr. McEwen, has shown that stress induces a dramatic redeployment of immune cells. Dhabar's work has shown that, with stress, immune cells travel from the blood to the bone marrow, spleen lymph nodes and skin, ready to do battle. This causes the body to generate more immune cells in the blood. Chronic stress, however, does suppress the production of immune cells. Future experiments are planned to study the point at which this turn takes place.

[From ZAGNY Newsletter, Feb 1996]

Impact of new US Immigration bills

Smith Bill rejected. Congress overwhelmingly (333-87) passed the Immigration in the National Interest Act, 1995, without passing cutbacks in legal immigration as proposed in the Smith Bill. It voted to keep *legal* immigration at the current level. But it did pass many provisions that will make the *illegal* alien's life more difficult.

This has almost killed the hopes of Senator Smith to forge comprehensive changes by eliminating legal immigration to the USA. Congress rejected the proposal to cut legal immigration to one third its present level.

Congress instead decided to take drastic measures against undocumented aliens. The Bill provides for additional border patrols, systems to check eligibility of job applicants, and tough penalties against document fraud and immigrant smuggling. It allows

States to bar children of undocumented aliens from attending public schools.

Simpson Bill Pending. However another bill (Simpson Bill), with similar provisions to cut legal immigration is still pending in Congress. This Bill also proposes to severely restrict family immigration; all adult children, siblings, and some parents, would be barred entry. Concerned persons are encouraged to write to their Senators and Congressmen to vote NO for the Simpson Bill. It will severely curb the ability of US citizens from reuniting with their family members.

About 715,000 people relocated to the US in 1995, and the trend will continue in the future.

From article by Lal Varghese. For information contact Mr. Varghese, Attorney at Law at (214) 788-0777.

Ivy F. Gandhi Young Zoroastrians' Camp

ZAGNY has permanently named its annual summer camp the Ivy F. Gandhi Young Zoroastrian's Camp in loving memory of the late Ivy Gandhi who started these camps and ran them for many years. This year, the Camp will be from the night of Wednesday, August 14 to Sunday, August 18. Contact Homi M. Byramji at (201) 316-8636.

ZSO Silver Jubilee

The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario will celebrate its Silver Jubilee this year, with a Gala Banquet on September 20, at the Thornhill Community Center. Tickets are \$50 per person. A car will be raffled that night. A Silent Auction will be held. The Banquet Committee is inviting advertisements for their Souvenir Brochure (\$200 full page, and \$150 half page). For information, contact Banquet Committee Chairperson, Dhun Noria at (416) 447-0101.

Zarthusti Art Objects at Royal Ontario Museum

Ardeshir Dastoor and his committee have planned an Exhibition of pre-Islamic art and artifacts to illustrate the level of art and technology that existed during Iran's Zoroastrian era. As part of this program, the Royal Ontario Museum has been approached to set up exhibits of relevant art objects in the Iran Gallery, and provide lecture tours, starting in September 1996.



The essence of synergy is to value differences — to respect them, to build on strength, to compensate for weaknesses.



Dasturji Kotwal on Speaking Tour in USA and UK

Dastur Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal, High Priest of the Wadiaji Atash Bahram in Bombay, was on a visit to USA this April. He will proceed to the UK in May, before returning home.

Dastur Kotwal spoke to audiences in a number of US cities: Houston (where he also performed Aryehneesh Dotiwalla's Navjote ceremony), Dallas, the University of Indiana, Pittsburgh, Chicago, San Jose, New York, Washington, DC and others.

Dasturji Kotwal, right, with Dr. Kersey Antia, in Chicago, April 1996.

2nd World Zoroastrian Youth Congress "Faith in the Future", London, UK, 1997

July 4-7, 1997: Full Day Seminars

July 8-12, 1997: Evening sessions, sight-seeing, socializing

The Young Zoroastrian Congress Committee of UK, cordially invites young Zoroastrians from North America to the next Youth Congress, in London. Meet and exchange ideas with youth from around the world, to shape the future of Zoroastrians as a global community. Delegates will also have the opportunity of visiting the UK and enjoy the hospitality of UK-based Zoroastrians.

Call for papers on:

Religion — Past, Present and Future

Unity of Zoroastrians as a global community

Eco-world and its safeguards

Technological revolution: diversity and effects.

Kerman Jasavala, Chair, YZ Committee, Zoroastrian House

88 Compayne Gardens, London NW6 3RU, UK

Fax: 44 181 241-7150 • Tel: 44 181 997-2076 • Email: dhunji@warfield.demon.co.uk

IN COMING ISSUES OF FEZANA JOURNAL

Fall (September) 1996: A Review of Zoroastrian Scriptures.

Winter (December) 1996: History and Achievements of Parsis in Bombay

Old photographs and stories of Zarthustis in Bombay will be welcome.

Letters and articles on these themes are invited. Submission deadline is July 1 for the Fall Issue, and October 15 for the Winter Issue.

COMING EVENTS

1996 FEZANA AGM

The 1996 FEZANA AGM will be held July 3 -4, at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco. FEZANA workshops will be held on the afternoon of the 4th. All FEZANA Officers, Member Association representatives and Committee Chairpersons are invited. Observers are also welcome. Contact: FEZANA Secretary Ketayun Kapadia at (609) 795-0946.

FEZANA Tenth Anniversary — Pre-Congress Party and Fireworks

Celebrate FEZANA's Tenth Anniversary with a dinner party, music, toasts, entertainment and fireworks, at His Lordships Restaurant, Berkeley Marinas, Northern California, with a spectacular view of San Francisco and the Pacific Ocean, on July 4, 1996, 6 pm - midnight. \$20 per person. All are invited. Contact Mehran Sepehri at (415) 988-8875.

Interfaith Encounter at the Presidio

Delegates to the San Francisco Congress, and others are invited to an interfaith encounter at the Bay Area Interfaith Center at the Presidio in San Francisco, on July 5, at 7:30 pm., hosted by the Center. They and other interfaith leaders, including those involved with the United Religions initiative, are looking forward to meeting our Zarthusti community members. Contact Rohinton Rivetna (708) 325-5383.

ZSO Childrens Day Camp

The ZSO youth group will hold 3 two-week sessions for children 6-13, at the Darbe Mehr this summer. Contact Aimie Mirza (905) 823-5690.

North American Congress San Francisco, July, 1996

Zoroaster-Granger Collection



Godrej Kerawalla at (408) 272-1850.

The Tenth North American Zoroastrian Congress will be held July 5-6, at the Cathedral Hill Hotel and Convention Center in San Francisco. Contact:

International Gatha Conference in Houston

The Second North American International Gatha conference will be held in Houston from August 31 to September 2, 1996. To foster an exchange of ideas and increase appreciation of Gathic literature, the Center for Gathic Studies, the Zoroastrian Associations of Houston and Greater Boston, and FEZANA are proud to present readings and discussions with eminent Gathic scholars from around the world.

Over 16 recognized academic and religious scholars will exchange their research and reflections on the Gathas, as well as educate, enlighten, and extend the current state of Gathic studies in the Avestan and Pahlavi texts. For registration details, see next page.

Heritage Tour of Iran

Most delegates to the Tehran Congress from USA and Canada will be joining the Heritage Tour of Iran, June 10-19, covering Zarthusti Heritage sites, Persepolis, Pasargadae, Pirs, Mt. Demavand and more. Contact Dolly Dastoor at (514) 656-2036 (Canada) or Rohinton Rivetna at (708) 325-5383 (USA).

Sixth World Zoroastrian Congress, Tehran, 1996

The Tehran Anjuman will be hosts for the Sixth World Zoroastrian Congress, in Tehran, from June 19-22, 1996. Contact Dolly Dastoor at (514) 656-2036.

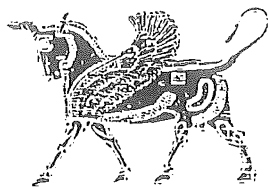

World Avesta Conference in Tajikistan, September 1996

A World Avesta Conference will be held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in early September 1996. The Tajikistan Friendship Society has invited a delegation to visit Tajikistan to attend this Conference. A tour of the ancient historical sites of Zoroastrian interest in the Sogdian Empire period is being arranged, hosted by the Friendship Society. Contact Dr. Meher Master-Moos, Mustafa Building, Sir P.M. Road, Bombay 400 001, Tel: 268 0214, Fax: 266-2735.

World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, London 1997

The Second World Zoroastrian Youth Congress (following the First in 1993 in Los Angeles), will be held July 4-7, 1997, in London, UK. Planning for the Congress is being undertaken by Young Zoroastrians (YZ) of the London area, with the support and backing of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, ZTFE. Young Zoroastrians from around the world are invited. [See announcement on page 5]

Second North American International Gatha Conference



Gathic Vision in the Next Millennium

Houston, Texas
August 31 - September 2, 1996

Featured Speakers:

Professor James Boyd
Professor Jamsheed K. Choksy
Professor Richard N. Frye
Professor Helmut Humbach
Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia

Prof. Kaikhoshrov D. Irani
Professor Jean Kellens
Dastur Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal
Prof. William W. Malandra
Prof. Farhang Mehr
Ervard Dr. Rohinton Peer

Prof. James R. Russell
Prof. Martin Schwartz
Prof. Prods O. Skjærvø
Prof. Gernot L. Windfuhr
Prof. Ron G. Williams

and

Ardeshir Anoshirvani, Dr. Jehan Bagli, Keki Bhote, Dolly P. Dastoor,
Kaemerz Dotiwala, Khorshed F. Jungalwala, Dina G. McIntyre,
Rohinton Rivetna, Mobed Fariborz Shahzadi, and Kobad Zarolia

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and lend generous support. Camera-
ready artwork is due by July 1996.



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713.270.5519



Need more information?

Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia	Tel: 610.589.5419
Kaemerz P. Dotiwala	Tel: 713.565.1042
Sarosh J. Manekshaw	Tel: 713.870.9317

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION:

J. W. Marriott Hotel at the Galleria

Room rate is \$59.00 / single or double, plus tax. For reservations, please call Nargesh Sethna at
713.729.8845. Your enclosed check will secure your reservation.

REGISTRATION

☐ Yes, I will attend the Second North American International Gatha Conference.

The registration fee of \$100.00 per person is enclosed. Make check payable
to **Z A H - Gatha Conference** and mail registration form to: Mrs. Nargesh Sethna

5026 Hazelton
Houston, Texas 77035

Name

(Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss)

Address

City

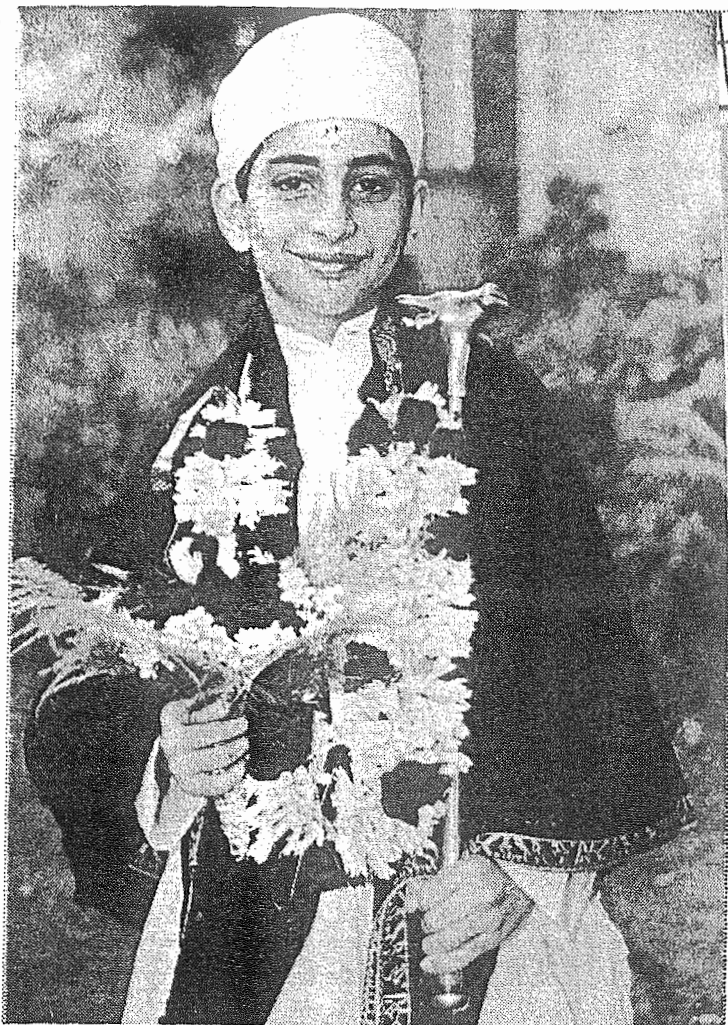
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■ ■ ■ AROUND THE WORLD ■ ■ ■



New 'Little Dasturji' Down Under

He prays loudly. Maybe a little hesitant, maybe a little shy, maybe a little self conscious. You might even recognize a tinge of Australian accent in the age old Avestan phrases. He prays sincerely. He prays with his heart. He is just a little boy. And he makes the Zoroastrian community of Victoria, Australia, very proud. He is their new Ervad, Behzad Kotwal. Behzad's Navar ceremonies were performed at Vadi Dar-e-Meher Agiary in Navsari, India, on December 21, 1995. Behzad joins another new Australian Mobed, Ervad Baghdad Bana (*photo left*) who also became a Navar last year.

It is indeed heart-warming to see the tradition passed on to the new generation of Zarthushtis, down under.

[From *Rathaeshtar*, Newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Victoria, February 1996]

AHURA, the Opera

"AHURA", the first full-fledged rendition of passages from the Zend Avesta in the choral-orchestral traditions of western classical music, was created by 55 year old Ms. Meher Madon-Janson, in coordination with Pervez Doctor's 30-piece Bombay Chamber Orchestra. The choir was drawn from the Bombay School of Music and the Dadar Music Ensemble. AHURA runs through six movements: Discord, Ashem Vohu, Ahunavar, Fravarane, Tandarosti and Paeon to Ahura Mazda.

Zoroastrian is Ambassador in Rome

Dr. (Mrs) Khorshed Rustomji (Ginwala) was appointed, in 1995, the Republic of South Africa's Ambassador to Rome, Italy. Khorshed is the sister of Frene Ginwala, who is Madam Speaker of the South African Parliament. Their appointments acknowledge a high political profile of this illustrious Parsi Zarthushti family in South Africa.

Khorshed, as a Doctor, was involved in ANC health structures, so when

democracy arrived in South Africa, she became formally involved in political bodies, representing the party on National Health Forum.

President Mandela then asked her to become Ambassador, representing her country of South Africa. "I did not jump at it", she is reported to have said, "But after careful consideration I thought how I could use that position to promote the Reconstruction and Development Program", which is so dear to her heart.

[From *ZTFE Circular*, July 1995]

A Blooming Tribute to Freddie

Rose-grower Eric Stainthorpe of U.K. has developed a new strain of rose which is officially registered as the "Freddie Mercury Rose", in the name of the late pop star, Freddie Mercury (Bulsara). The rose reflects Freddie's favorite color, yellow, and is tinged with red. Stainthorpe took about five years to fully develop this strain of rose and grow it in any number. The rose made its first public appearance at the Royal National Rose Society's northern show in 1995.

[From *ZTFE Circular*, October 1995]

Labour Candidate Maravala Elected

The London borough of Redbridge elected Labour candidate Filly Maravala by a thumping majority over his Conservative rival in May 1995. He will be on three committees in local government — Social Services, Education and Management Services. Though his ward constitutes 8,800 people, his sphere of representation is said to extend over 234,000 constituents of Redbridge.

Maravala's parents hail from Navsari. Settled in the UK since 1967, Maravala joined the Labour Party in 1985.

[From FED Newsletter, October 1995]

Naoroji Street in London

"Insurance Street" in Finsbury (near London) was renamed "Naoroji Street" in honor of Britain's first Asian Member of Parliament, Dadabhai Naoroji, at a special ceremony at Finsbury Town Hall on February 27, 1996. In attendance were the Mayor, the High Commissioner of India, H.E. Dr. Singhvi, and leaders of the London Zarthushti community.

Mr. Faridoon Madon, originator and prime mover of the street renaming idea, was recognized for quietly but persistently propelling the project to its successful conclusion. Another promoter of the project was Omar Ralph, who had earlier created the mobile exhibition depicting Naoroji's Parliamentary career and achievements.

[From ZTFE Circular, March 1996]

Please check your address label. If your subscription has expired, please use the form on the back cover to renew it. Multi-year renewals are available, and preferred.

Felicitations on FEZANA'S Tenth Anniversary

On Being Severed from the Mainstream

As an outsider I have been watching keenly (and not without some envy) FEZANA grow from its modest early beginnings into a powerful Zoroastrian body with limitless potentials.

Having spent a large part of my life outside Bombay and India, I have always secretly harbored wishful ideas of the possibility of a cohesive force such as yours, outside the 'Old World'. As the years passed by, these ideas often seemed as much remote (if not impossible) to me as Cyrus the Great's initial thoughts and hopes of re-uniting all the Indo-Iranian peoples in the vast hinterland of Eurasia.

My observations and my experiences over the decades, in Western societies have, however, convinced me that we Zoroastrians, while trying to progress (with all good intentions) have somehow appeared to miscue the basic truth that we are not in the millions. Our total global population does not reach one million, or half a million or even a quarter of a million. In no one country of the world do our numbers reach even 0.1 million.

We are only a few thousand left on the good earth — scattered widely apart. The same conditions under which other religious and cultural communities organize themselves and prosper, obviously does not (and I believe, should not) therefore apply to us. There are myriads of negligibly small pockets of Zoroastrians helplessly, and most times irreversibly, severed from their mainstream cultural origins by time, distance and natural dilution. Dilution, in a relentlessly expanding world population is, I believe, our most formidable enemy.

Such calamities are now unlikely to occur on your continent of North America.

To you, men and women of vision in North America, I send heartfelt congratulations and profound salutations. God Bless FEZANA.

Sam Kerr
Sydney, Australia.

Happenings in the New World

Greetings and Congratulations to FEZANA on reaching the two digit age. It is indeed an honor to send a message to you for your special Tenth Anniversary issue.

Allow me to introduce ourselves to your readers. The Karachi Zarthushti Banu Mandal is now an octogenarian lady, run by women since its inception. We give assistance to the community in a number of ways: monthly aid, medical, payment of education fees for schooling and college, assisting our youth to go abroad for higher studies, teaching children extra curricular activities and a monthly entertainment program. Our motto has and will always be *Seva* and *Sakhavat* — Service and Charity.

Your Journal today is read not only in North America but world wide with interest, and we in Karachi especially look forward to the issues, as it keeps us abreast with what is happening in the New World. FEZANA is to be congratulated on its achievements in this short span of time under the Presidentship of Mr. Rohinton Rivetna, and now having Dolly Das-toor as your able and dynamic leader. The Congresses organized by FEZANA both for the Youth and the not so young have proved invaluable,

[Continued on page 20]

Building The Zarthusti Nation

By Dolly Dastoor
President, FEZANA

This issue of FEZANA Journal is dedicated to all the Zarthusti community leaders past and present who have guided this community through troubled and smooth times, who have been both visionary and reactionary, who have endeavored to put this small community of ours on the North American map. It is a salute to all their efforts and dedication.

As we begin to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the establishment of FEZANA, we must stop to think and reflect — Who are we? What do we want? Where are we going? Why are we going there? And, most importantly, how are we getting there?

Understanding FEZANA. FEZANA is an all-encompassing word which activates different images in different people. It creates an image of an organization which has tremendous power to enforce decisions. It creates an image of a competing organization which may take over the functions of local geographical organizations. And for some, it creates an image of a toothless tiger which can neither roar nor bite.

The usual questions often asked are: "Can I join FEZANA?", "Can FEZANA give an opinion on a contentious issue such as the definition of a Zoroastrian?", or Why doesn't FEZANA decide on the issue of non-Zarthustis wishing to embrace our religion?"

In reality, FEZANA is none of the above. Then what is FEZANA? To better understand what FEZANA is and is not, let us look at the structure and spirit behind that organization.

COVER STORY

FEZANA — FORGING A FUTURE

FEZANA President Dolly Dastoor, Founder President Rohinton Rivetna and Past Vice President Homi Homji reflect on their vision for FEZANA, the community and the religion.



Dastoor: building a nation

Structure. The Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) was born on June 2, 1987. Today there are 21 registered bodies who are all members of the Federation, 17 from the USA and 4 from Canada. In addition, several small groups of Zarthustis who have not yet organized themselves into a registered body, also belong to the Federation as Corresponding Members.

FEZANA is structured such that the Board of Directors is the 21 Member Associations. The power of decision



Rivetna: coming together

rests with these 21 associations, weighted by the size of these associations. The five elected officers, the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Assistant Secretary, serve as administrators only, with no voting rights.

FEZANA was established at a fragile moment in our history on North American soil when there was a need to reassure people that coming together does not mean losing autonomy and independence. *FEZANA has not chosen the path of developing policy based on majority deci-*

sion; rather it has chosen to take the more difficult path of consensus building, which implies informed consent at grass-root level. It is a slow and laborious process, but a solid one.

A Decade of Progress. What does a Federation hope to achieve that individual associations cannot? It must be emphasized that FEZANA is *not* another association. It is not in competition with existing associations. *It is, rather, an umbrella organization that lives only if its member associations want it to live.* It was formed to give greater visibility, cohesiveness and strength, to the Zarthusti community. And we have done that quite successfully for the past 10 years. The Committees which form the



Homji: reviewing and reflecting

backbone of FEZANA have tried very hard to bring about this stability by executing and implementing the purposes of FEZANA.

The most important achievement of FEZANA, in spite of its organizational limitations, has been the creation of a climate of trust, understanding and fellowship, areas of comfort where each association and each Zarthusti is encouraged to achieve his or her maximum potential. *The achievement of each association is the achievement of FEZANA.*

A lot has been going on in our community for which the association Presidents, together with their Boards can be rightly proud.

Progress on this continent has been phenomenal, in business, in professions, and in personal achievements. The Winter 1995 Business issue of the FEZANA Journal is living proof. Our religious awareness has also grown. Almost every association has organized religious classes for children (FEZANA is developing a standard national curriculum); the North American Zarthustis, with the generous benefaction of the late Arbab and Morvarid Guiv, have established 7 Darbe Mehrs, with one more in the building stage. Our participation in the hundredth anniversary of the Parliament of World's Religions, in Chicago, in 1993; as well as the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the United Nations in San Francisco and in New York, at both the academic, as well as the spiritual level, by adults and by the youth is a tribute to the respect our religion commands.

Controlling our destiny. But it is time to move on and beyond the task of establishing ourselves. We have now to look to growth, growth in numbers, growth in maturity, growth in economic and social strength, growth in our own empowerment to build our Zarthusti Nation.

But most important we have to develop our own identity as North American Zarthustis, carving this identity out of the solid bed-rock of millennia, finely chiseled by the social and climatic changes over the centuries; rooted in scholarship, respectful of the past but hopeful of the future.

We have to control our own destiny. We need to have a vision of a group of people, disparate but united, moving towards a goal, the goal of regaining the religion of Asho Zarthustra first for ourselves individually and then for the community,

and only after that can we regain for the religion, the recognition it deserves for its contribution to world thought and spirituality.

Each one of us has a role to play in the realization of this vision. We have to set up a road map, but we also need to know where we want this road to take us. Do we want to move in circles and come back to where we are today — in other words a 'status quo'? Or do we want to climb a hill from where we get only a fogged-in view of the valley? Or do we want to climb a hill from where we can get a more enlightened and clear view of the valley?

If we choose the third option then there has to be participation at the grass root level by each and every one of us. We all have to contribute towards building our Zarthusti Nation. We all have to do our share in whatever way we wish. We all need to educate ourselves in our religious history and scriptures. And then we need to become religiously, politically and socially more active in our own association. We need to make each of our individual associations strong and viable. A strong association means a strong FEZANA. If an individual thinks right, the association will think right, and if the association thinks right FEZANA will think right.

If each one of us puts their shoulder behind the wheel of their community, pushing it to the top of that hill, then surely we will all see a very clear view from the top.

The choice is ours, yours and mine. ■

"The Fire of Zarthustra is clearly the inner divine spark dwelling within each human being — a spark from the Universal Flame."

- I. J. S. Taraporewala

"Coming Together" In North America

By Rohinton M. Rivetna
Founding President, FEZANA

The genesis. It is now a decade since we, as North American Zoroastrians, conceded to "come together", with some trepidation, at the Fifth Congress, in Los Angeles in 1985. Those of us who were at that event, remember it as a bitter-sweet experience. Those were the unsettled years, when we were seeking direction, groping with our identity, surprised and often intolerant, to discover that we did not all think alike, and that we all had very strong, and at times differing views. All of this manifested itself at the Congress in a crescendo; and yet, out of the storm, bloomed a flower, a gift to the Zarthusti community: a consensus to form a national body, the genesis of FEZANA.

We saw, at that Congress, the hand of Ahura Mazda guide us through the storm, and bring us light, to know ourselves better, to understand ourselves, and recognize that we were each different, and yet we needed to "come together" for the greater good, in harmony, and with love, understanding and respect.

This "coming together" gave birth to FEZANA, which is as much a concept and an identity, as it is an entity. To us internally, it is a matter of the heart — an affirmation of the affection and respect for each other that we cherish and hold so dear. To the outside world, both Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian, FEZANA represents, our solidarity, our unity, and our resolve to work together in North America, in harmony, for the common good.

I could stop here, because what else can one say! But for some of us, this concept of FEZANA is rather nebulous. What is its form and structure? What is its vision?

Structure and Vision. FEZANA is registered as a religious organization, and as such, its primary business is religion: first, a secular objective, to ensure the perpetuation of the religion of Zarthustra on this continent; and second, a spiritual objective, for the enhancement of individual spirituality, which for Zarthustis means living the Good Life, a life of integrity, industry and charity.

Conceived as a coordinating and facilitating body, FEZANA is a Federation of the Zoroastrian Associations in North America. Decisions of any import are made collectively by the Member Associations that are FEZANA, and not by the elected officials of FEZANA, who serve in the Executive role, coordinating and facilitating the functioning of the organization. The strength and empowerment of FEZANA is thus derived solely from its constituent Member Associations. It's model is not that of the USA model of States with an overarching Federal government. It is, rather, the UN model of nations coming together at a common table.

Great pains were taken to ensure the complete autonomy of the Member Associations. FEZANA does not wield any institutional instruments to force change or set policy, as was initially feared by some. Rather, it is structured to take direction from its constituency, the Member Associations (and in turn their individual membership), allowing *every* individual voice to be heard, in a truly democratic forum. The various Committees of FEZANA are the 'working bodies' to take on projects of national scope.

Our vision is to see the flowering of the religion of Zarthustra in North America in all its manifestations.

Our vision is to see the virtues of integrity, industry and charity be recognized as synonymous with the word "Zoroastrian" in North America, as it is in our homelands of Iran and India. Our mission then, is to develop institutions and agenda, that will perpetuate the message of Zarthustra among our youth and our adults.

Mobeds. Our vision encompasses our Mobeds, the backbone of the community. While the Mobeds' Councils maintain their complete autonomy, the FEZANA Constitution provides for a "Continuing Conference" with the Mobeds. The community looks to them to establish a model priesthood in North America equipped to impart ministerial services and religious learning, in addition to performance of rituals.

Synergies of financing. For its financial health, a service institution like FEZANA, must develop a symbiotic relationship with its constituents — the Member Associations with their individual members. While the institution must understand the constituent's needs and develop programs that they will support, the constituents must, in turn, develop an *ethic of collective giving* to that institution. This synergy is just starting to develop. We are just beginning to realize that "the more you give, the more you receive."

While the community is indeed blessed with individuals who have contributed largely, the collective potential remains largely untapped. It is hoped that as the community matures and individuals prepare their estate plans, the service institutions are kept in mind, provided of course that the institutions develop programs that offer the needed services.

To maintain continuity and stability as our community grows, we, as first generation North Americans, must, in the not-too-distant future, sow the seeds for a sound and central administration/secretariat/office.

Harnessing resources. Our community has a high level of individualism. Our history has made us so. And that has resulted in a disproportionately high number of outstanding personalities and talents in the community. Communal responsibilities and high levels of individualism could essentially be antithetical elements; the structure of FEZANA attempts to capture individualism for the benefit of the community as a whole and offers the potential to recognize committed and visionary leaders who can lead the community into the next millennium.

Succumbing to politics, we sometimes fail to recognize the difference between selfless, dedicated service, and self-serving service. The former is a precious commodity, and we must grab it and nurture it at any cost, at least as long as our institutions are run on volunteer services, and even afterwards, because no amount of money can buy dedication.

We must rid ourselves of fossilized assumptions buried within us, causing us to ascribe labels to individuals. Our passion should be to promote new ideas and growth, while offering all willing individuals the opportunities to serve.

Think tank. Operation without a 'think tank' is a clear danger. While we are all busy satisfying our immediate needs, we are likely to stray from our mission at times. Attempts have been made in the past to develop a think tank — a Council of Elders, or an Advisory Council, or a Long Term Planning Council, if you will, to keep the community focussed on the long term vision.

Global network. As we in North America develop and prosper, we can never allow ourselves to forget our roots, our heritage, our homelands, and our brothers and sisters settled across the globe. We have so far shunned that responsibility. FEZANA must take a lead role in

establishing a formal global support network to link Zoroastrian Associations and Federations together, possibly structured as a confederation of federations.

Interfaith dimension. We cannot live in a cocoon insulated from the outside world. It is essential that we understand our neighbors, and in turn they understand us. It is essential that when our children identify themselves as Zarthustis to others, there is a modicum of recognition. Before we can build respect, we must build recognition. There is no better platform available than the interfaith forum. But one needs patience. It takes years of nurturing and 'waiting to be counted', primarily because of our small numbers. But we must always be present, not simply to be counted, but also to see and to know our reflection in the other faiths, and to constantly steer the course of human behavior towards Frashokereti, towards the prescription given to us by Zarathustra.

Coming together. After a decade of our existence, we can now see the river starting to flow. Things are happening. The flood gates have opened. Respect for diversity is in the air. An atmosphere of trust and respect is beginning to be felt. Calm is settling in. Internal harmony will lead to consensus building, and consensus building to convergence. Our focus must be transformative, with deep empathy for those with a differing conviction. *We must stress harmony over unity, and convergence over consensus.*

The beachhead is now firmly established. The fruits of our labor are beginning to appear. The Congresses we hold, the festivals we celebrate, the Darbe Mehrs we build, the rituals we perform, all converge to fulfill our vision.

We constantly remind ourselves that our strength is in our shared vision, our diversity and a program of joint action — light, harmony, wholeness. Our 'coming together'. ■

Reflections on the Future of FEZANA

By H. B. M. Homji
Past Vice President, FEZANA

With ten years of working experience and observation of FEZANA, it is time for us to review and reflect on the past and propose a future. This article focuses on some changes in scope and content for the future, which may enhance the ability of FEZANA to meet the upcoming challenges in North America and all over the world.

Initially we must comprehend that today in North America the Parsi and Irani Zoroastrian population put together, exceeds 13,000 and is growing as rapidly as the Indian and Pakistani populations are depleting. That places upon our shoulders serious responsibilities for reviewing de novo the conduct of not only our own affairs, but also our global obligations, particularly in the light of our (Parsi) demographic decline.

The writing on the wall clearly tells us that if serious regeneration steps are not instituted immediately, then by 2025 we may no longer be classified in India, even as a recognized Scheduled Community. Neither the Bombay Parsi Panchayet nor the Federation of Zarthusti Anjumans of India indicate any serious concern, embroiled as they are in their own internal conflicts.

If we allow in North America the same ideologically divisive processes to affect our working, FEZANA will become as much of a toothless tiger. Unfortunately, our cantankerous nature will not permit having one individual leader. Hence the need for democratically constituted joint-leadership bodies. To meet this problem, initially, the several North

American Zoroastrian Associations had to unite under one banner — hence FEZANA.

After ten years of operation, it has become evident that in such a nebulous situation, the more important overall community decisions cannot be achieved unanimously (e.g. on the Calendar issue), since Associations tend to have divergent ideologies, which inhibit unanimity in vital matters like reform, modernization, or any fresh outlook which is not in harmony with traditional values.

Constitution Revisions. (a) This points to the need for a substantial revision of FEZANA's Constitution. Whereas Member Associations can retain their local autonomy in day-to-day affairs, they must surrender part of their veto authority to a 'Higher Advisory Body' when it comes to taking decision affecting the entire North American or global community: dwindling demography, acceptance, conversion, inter-racial marriages, uniformity of rituals and beliefs, future provision of Mobeds, para Mobeds and female Mobeds, political and global consultations, changes in Constitution, immigration, community assets, Parsi-Irani amity, political involvement, and more. On such matters, Associations must be obliged to carry out their local referenda, and the results could then be consolidated by the Higher Advisory Body centrally, in order to come to a sound decision.

(b) Another issue necessary to be addressed is the autonomy of FEZANA's Committees. The Chairperson of each Committee should be very carefully selected. He/she should invite into their Committee suitable persons, after consulting Member Associations and spreading such representation over geographical areas. After that, there should be no interference with, or questioning of the autonomy of the Chair. If in the view of the Higher Advisory

Body, he/she tags on to a faulty decision, then he/she should be called upon to account for it by the President, and if necessary, terminated.

(c) FEZANA's Constitution should be treated as a sacred document, but not cast in stone. If changing circumstances so dictate, it should be very meticulously modified to meet newly arising imperatives, provided the specified number of general community membership (referendum) so desires. Proposed major changes should be widely discussed, the reasons for change clearly explained, reduced into written form and compared to the existing Article. After the referendum, and count of numbers, the decision should be presented for approval and adoption in the next Congress.

Higher Advisory Body. It has been observed that the President has been hard pressed to promote, reject or pronounce upon such a wide variety of diverse pressures with any amount of technical or moral authority; no one person really can. The Constitution should therefore provide for the President's annually inviting an ad hoc advisory group of experts in social, constitutional, legal, scholarly, religious and community development techniques, including the past Presidents and Vice-Presidents, to advise as a group on vital issues throughout the year, and to provide suitable guidelines. The agenda of the AGM, for example should be reviewed by them, and they should be invited to attend AGMs as observers. More importantly, they should be asked to review subjects/speakers for the North American Congresses, to ensure a balance of views.

Corporation or Social Service? Though registered as a non-profit Corporation, our focus is not monetary, but on the well-being of the community. This should therefore reflect in the conduct of our AGMs,

rather than swearing by Parliamentary or Robert's Rules of Conduct. Greater need is for common sense and our ethical values. At times, AGMs tend to run out of hand, mainly because of individual whims, egos, opinions or power pressure, at the cost of much time and sufferance of others. Such diversionary tactics need to be strongly curbed. Furthermore, the agenda need not strictly follow the shape or sequence of corporate meetings — it can better be used to build consensus of views on vital community and religious problems, with the views of projecting these upwards to the Congress and downwards to the local communities.

Mobeds. The two Mobeds Council chairpersons should be invited as observers at the AGMs to keep them attuned to community needs and problems, and probably to a change of role towards pastorship and guidance, in addition to rituals and ceremonies. They cannot operate in oblivion of the views of the community which they intend to serve. They should be open to scholarly discussions without any inhibition with regard to the selection of scholars, whether born Zoroastrian or otherwise. Knowledge is nobody's monopoly. "Let him who wants knowledge be taught the bold word" [Vd. IX 44]. "He who desires the light of knowledge, desires the gift of Athravan" [Zamyat Yasht L III]. "If men here come as co-religionists or brethren or friends ... to seek knowledge ... let them be given that knowledge with holy words." [Vd. IV 44].

One final advice to FEZANA: "Don't bite off more than you can chew."



Life's sweetest things are the quiet things. A happy life consists in tranquility of mind.

- Cicero

From the

FEZANA Committees

Some FEZANA Committee Chairpersons talk about their accomplishments and their vision.

Funds and Finance

*Keikhosrow Harvesf, M.D.
Chair, Funds and Finance
Jacksonville, Florida*

As we are all aware, in its present form, FEZANA is an umbrella organization with no power of enforcement and lack of financial independence. In order to achieve and carry out its designated goals, it has to depend mainly on the Member Associations. Therefore, in addition to the Member Associations, we should also get the support and involvement of each individual Zoroastrian in North America.

Proper sustainable funding is the single most important factor for our continued progress in North America. In the past, in our mother countries, our community has relied heavily on patrons and philanthropists of our community to build and support our institutions. Today in North America those patrons, philanthropists and decision-makers have to be ourselves.

Our future and the future of our children is properly in our hands. Each one of us needs to contribute to our community if we are to continue our progress. We have made a superb start. Let us join hands and make our community flower so that our children may be proud of us.

Therefore, as the Funds and Finance Chairperson of FEZANA, I would like to stress and repeat that in order to help us achieve this, we at FEZANA have established the following funds:

- ◆ Welfare Fund
- ◆ Religious Education
- ◆ Student Aid Fund
- ◆ Helping Hands Youth
- ◆ Properties Fund
- ◆ General Fund

Your financial help, individually or through your Association, is essential in order for our community to survive and flourish. So with our effort and Ahura Mazda's willingness enable us to spread our Prophet's message of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds throughout the world, and make it a better world for ourselves and for generations to come.

Research and Historic Preservation

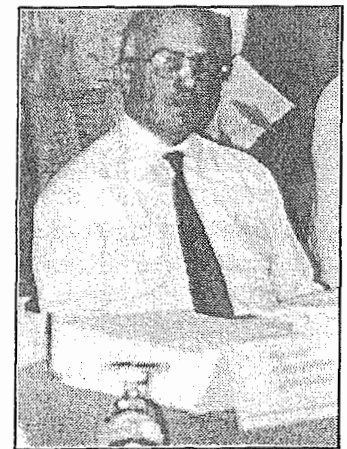
*Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia
Chair, Research and Historic Preservation
Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania*

The Committee was established soon after the Eighth North American Zoroastrian Congress in 1992, and within the short span of its existence has published the *Translation of Ahunavaiti and Vahistoishti Gathas of Asho Zarathushtra*, by Humbach and Ichaporia, which is now out of print.

Most recently, the first issue of the *Journal of the Research and Historical Preservation Committee of FEZANA* was published and is now available for sale [see *Books and Such, this issue*]. This Journal is a research tool for those who are interested in Zoroastrian studies. The



Clockwise from left: Ichaporia, Harvesf, Mehta, Langrana.



Committee plans to publish its Journal annually first, and if demand grows, will strive to publish twice a year.

The goal of the Journal is to achieve the highest scholarly standard and at the same time fulfill the needs of the Zoroastrian community in understanding the various aspects of the religion of Zarathushtra, its holy scriptures with the latest advances in philology and linguistics, as well its theology and rituals.

The long term goal is to make the general public, particularly in the West, aware of the richness of the religion of Zarathushtra. The Journal will be distributed to Universities and learning centers all over the world. ☼

Census and North American Directory

By Noshir Langrana
Census Committee
Robbinsville, New Jersey

In October 1994, the job of compiling the North American Directory for FEZANA and combine it with the census information, was initiated. With the help of Committee Members (Anahita Sidhwa and Mehran Sepehri) and constructive input from Member Associations, we were successful in developing a new questionnaire, which was published twice in the FEZANA Journal. It was also distributed by Member Associations to their membership.

The entire project was put on a PC compatible platform. The program, developed by Viraf Commissariat, was kept simple to encourage Member Associations to enter their data in identical format. Many of them cooperated, but several did not follow the instructions and developed in their own style and format. It took several long days and hard work on the part of ZAGNY members (especially Viraf and Sheroo Kanga) to generate consistent and identical versions of the data. These efforts should pay off in the long run. Now we have one directory plus census information in one format. Many eyes are looking at this information to minimize the number of errors. We would like to apologize up front for any errors that go undetected; they will be corrected in successive editions.

The Business Directory data has been collected and compiled by Cyrus Toorkey of New Jersey. He is putting the final touches to include this information in this edition of the Directory. The immediate goal is to publish the first edition of the Directory: *Zoroastrians in North America (Directory and Yellow Pages)*. It will be available at the upcoming Tenth North Ameri-

can Zoroastrian Congress at \$10 per copy. The Directory is in its final phase. It includes names, addresses and other data of participating Zoroastrians; a list of Associations with addresses and phone numbers; a list of FEZANA's current Officers; acknowledgements; FEZANA Journal subscription form and Zoroastrian Business Directory (Yellow Pages).

Once the Directory is in the hands of the printer, the Census project will continue. To make this project more viable, we have converted 1992 census data in the same format. This data is used strictly for census purposes. Local Associations will be contacted to complete missing information. The plan is to make a report on census findings at the Tenth Congress in July 1996.

Religion Education

By Kayomars Mehta
Chair, Education Committee
Palos Hills, Illinois

Religion Education is an important issue for children, youth and adults of our community. The FEZANA Education Committee has the charter to support and enhance the efforts of the Members Associations in providing Religion Education to their members.

Over the last ten years, the Committee, chaired by Firdosh Mehta and Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani, has laid a firm foundation of religion education in the North American milieu.

Present tasks. The current Education Committee, chaired by Kayomars Mehta and co-chaired by Villy Gandhi, has taken on the task of compiling a uniform Religion Education Curriculum. The goal is to provide in North America a central repository for the scope of Religion Education by developing an Education Curriculum, suggest guidelines, provide necessary resources and materials for Member Associations and individual members to draw upon as needed.

In 1995, a comprehensive curriculum consisting of six levels of instruction was drafted, and circulated to all the North American Associations, Small Groups and Mobed Councils. With the input received, this draft was revised and is now ready to go out for final review. Our plans are to present the revised Draft #3 as the suggested Curriculum for adoption by FEZANA Member Associations at the AGM in San Francisco this July.

The next step will be to identify details and build upon this Curriculum by providing existing educational materials proposed by the various organizations, as well as provide names of reference texts available for each subject matter.

Another ongoing activity is to organize Religion Camps in different cities. Plans are to organize special overview "Z-treat" sessions for young adults, young parents and other adult groups who may want to take up Religion Education study.

A pre-Congress Education Workshop has been planned at the 1996 Congress to provide opportunity for all interested in Religion Education to meet and network our future plans. A "Train the Teacher" plan needs to be discussed and developed.

Vision. We have embarked on a journey that has a distinct and bright future for our community. We have a vision of an educated Zarthushti community with stimulated minds based upon acquiring knowledge of our religion. This will satisfy the needs of our younger generations.

Beyond the establishment of regular Religion Classes for various age groups, we are looking into correspondence courses, so that we can communicate with dispersed members. We envision the establishment of a Web Page for disseminating information in an electronic forum. Interesting educational materials can be prepared on CDROMS for Zarthushti families at home. For such

[Continued on page 20]



Communal prayer ceremony at the Darbe Meher in Chicago, by some of the mobeds attending the North American Mobeds Council meeting in April 1996.

MOBEDS COUNCILS

Leaders from the The North American Mobeds Council (NAMC) and the Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America (CIMNA) give a flavor of their activities and their vision.

Vision for NAMC and the Community

*By Ervad Jal N. Birdy
President, NAMC*

Long Term Vision. What do I see as the vision for NAMC and our community? To do this, let me first share a little secret with you. Every morning after prayers my final request to Ahura Mazda is: "O! Lord, preserve my community and its faith; and

Lord, grant me the strength and courage so that I can help preserve my community and its faith." I do not know if I am asking too much from Ahura Mazda, but I know that he usually grants all our noble desires.

Now, imagine we are to ride in a time machine and go only 100 years into the future. I am sure most of us would want to see our community progress and prosper and at the same time retain our faith and identity. However, what would you really expect to find, only a 100 years from now?

- Will you recognize our faces as belonging to Parsis or Iranis or even a mixture of the two?
- Will you find us still running our Associations or will you notice that we have become a minority in our own community and are being dictated by outsiders.
- Will you see Zarthusti beliefs and practices still being followed or will you see our faith having become an unrecognizable amalgam of several different faiths, beliefs and practices? Will you see a single Mobed around?

● Will we be like the Parsis who survived and prospered almost intact for 1300 years, or will our people have suffered the same fate as migrants to Europe, South India, China, etc. who disappeared without a trace?

● What would you like to say to those so-called 'scholars' who persuaded you to abandon your age-old rules by mis-interpreting our Gathas in a way that was sure to harm our very existence in the long run?

What we will see in a 100 years will depend on what we do or not do today. How do things stand today?

● Are we slowly forgetting the basic rules of survival taught by our Parsi forebears? The times and the environment in which we live may have changed, but is this any reason to abandon the basic tried and tested guiding rules that have served us so well?

● Are our Mobeds acting responsibly in safeguarding the community identity? Or are they also forgetting the basic rules and flowing with the tide to avoid hassles or to satisfy their egos?

● Are we teaching our children faith and devotion towards Ahura Mazda and Zarthusra which came to us so naturally because of the environment in which we grew up?

● Are we teaching our children their responsibility towards their community, in addition to themselves, their parents and to society in general?

● Why are some of our children drifting outside our community to seek their life partners? Are we spending enough funds and effort to provide opportunities for them to mix with their own kind, and feel proud of belonging to our community?

These are some of the questions we must ask ourselves to achieve our long term vision before we start planning for the short term. The answers as to what we should be doing will emerge automatically.

NAMC Meeting. The ninth Annual General Meeting of the North American Mobeds Council was held April 5-6, 1996 in Chicago. Some issues deliberated during the meeting are:

1. NAMC has received a request from one association asking for guidance on what to do if non-Zarthusis want their Navjotes performed. Another association has a problem with a non-Zarthusi sitting on their board and have asked for guidance on the term 'Zoroastrian'. While we think we can satisfactorily respond to the first association, for the time being, our deliberations on the second issue were inconclusive after almost a whole day of debate.

NAMC holds an influential position with our associations and with FEZANA. The question of the definition of 'Zoroastrian', as it pertains to our survival, is not trivial and cannot be dismissed quickly in a flippant manner. We are aware of the vast spectrum of definitions which our associations themselves use in their constitutions. Perhaps the time has come when we should be thinking of separating the term 'Zoroastrian' or defining it in such a way so as not to bring harm to our community. We bear malice to no one, but are we really obliged to take into our community anyone who call themselves 'Zoroastrian'? We have therefore decided to hold an Extraordinary General Meeting in 1997 to be able to adequately debate and resolve this matter so far as it pertains to NAMC.

2. Kayomars Mehta, Chairperson of the FEZANA Education Committee, gave NAMC an excellent description of the curriculum and material he has developed from lec-

tures given by the Late Dasturji Minocher-Homji and also from feedback received from other associa-

tions. This material provides a structured course without expecting the student to be a 'scholar'. We thank and commend Kayomars for his efforts and enthusiasm in tackling this task almost single-handed. NAMC has pledged active involvement in his efforts. We have allocated funds to provide the correspondence course material to all our members so we can examine, digest, learn and provide feedback to Kayomars before the course is generally

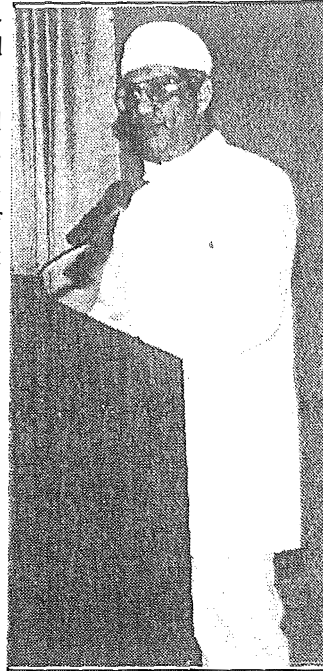
released to the community.

3. We have formed a sub-committee to organize a summer camp for our young Mobeds in Summer 1997. In this country, it is vital for our upcoming Mobeds to know more about our religion than we had to know.

4. We will shortly announce a training program for Mobedyars. Any Athornan or Behdin who would like to learn how to perform emergency funeral services, etc. either in a remote community, or where Mobeds are not readily available, can contact NAMC for more information.

I would like to thank NAMC member Mobeds for their confidence in electing me as their President for the next two years. The remainder of our new committee comprises of Ervads Adi J. Unwalla of New Jersey (Vice President), Nozer S. Kotwal of Ontario (Secretary), Gev Karkaria of Quebec (Treasurer), and Yezdi P. Antia of Ontario (Member-at-large).

I ask for Ahura Mazda's blessings and guidance and hope my committee and all NAMC members will support me in doing an effective job. ■



Council of Iranian Mobeds, Kankash-e-Mobedan

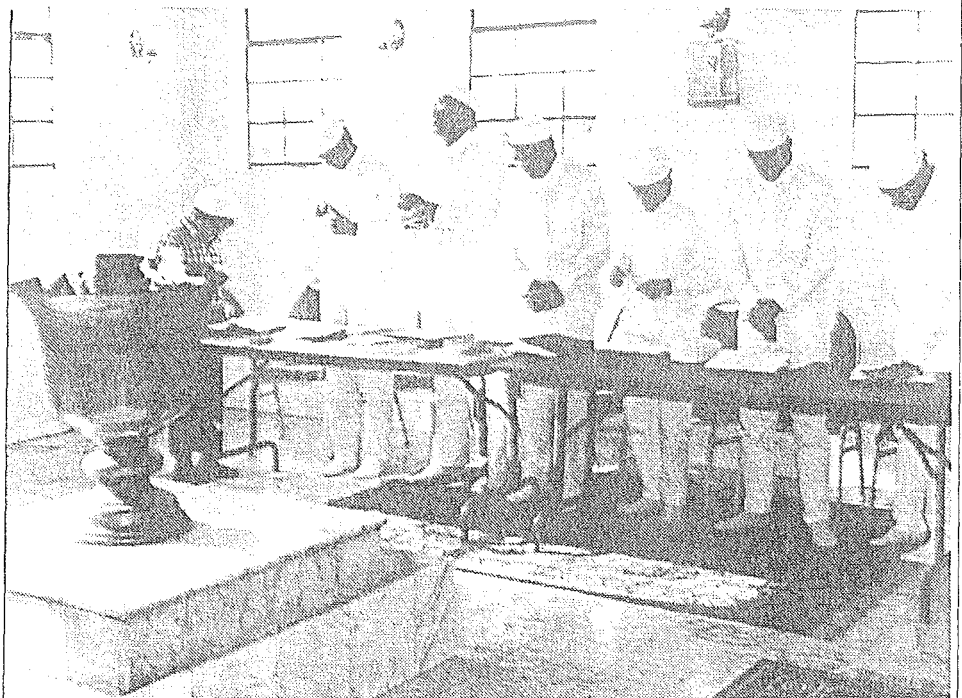
By Mobed Fariborz Shahzadi
CIMNA

Mission and goals. The long-term mission of the Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America, also known as Kankash-e-Mobedan, is to provide the North American domiciled youth and their parents with a system of religious education and practice, that can help re-establish the 'religion' in the Zartoshti religion. The ultimate mission of the Kankash is to be a model that other religious organizations can learn from on running a religious education and practice Center. The primary audience would be the youth and parents finding a place to receive religious education, religious motivation and religious re-armament.

The goal of the Kankash is to involve over 1,000 families, both Iranian Zarthusti and Parsi, regularly in the activities of the Kankash, by the year 2,000. This will be accomplished in six stages, with the seventh stage involving the world Zartoshti community.

Goals will be achieved through two segments of the Kankash — Zartoshti Religious Corp (ZRC) and the traditional Mobed organization. Both arms will work together to achieve a harmonious transition into the activities to support the mission. The Religious Education arm of the Kankash will be called ZRC, while the practice of Zartoshti rituals and ceremonies arm will include ordained Zartoshti priests of the Kankash.

Seven stage program. In Stage 1, the Kankash was established (in 1988). Activities included election of original members, setting up of P.O. Box, incorporation as a non-



Pre-Mobedyars in action, with Mobed Fariborz Shahzadi, third from left.

profit organization, publication of the *Payk-e-Kankash* newsletter, and setting up an infrastructure to receive donations.

In Stage 2, liaison was established with the North American Mobed Council; four books were published: "*Story of My Zoroastrian Religion*", "*I Am Ready for my Sudreh-Pushi*", Khordeh Avesta in English, and Ahunavaiti Gatha in English and Farsi; audio tapes were made of recitals of Khordeh Avesta and Ahunavaiti Gatha. Further, a "Kankash-e-Mobedan" annual day was set up.

In Stage 3, the Kankash offered services to the Zartoshti community in North America, including: religious seminars, prayer classes, camps, the youth "Torch-Bearer" program, and pre-Mobedyar and Mobedyar programs. A 24-hour fax-line was set up for the Kankash.

The Kankash is currently in Stage 4. It is starting a once-a-month "Zartoshti Devotion Day" to coincide with a Gahambar or other religious day in the Fasli calendar, offering two 25-minute English/Farsi religious Prayer Service with mean-

ings, in an audio-visual format, a talk on morality of religion, a children/youth chorus. Also, during this time, Irani and Parsi Mobeds will be available for further service, computer will be set up for instruction, and Pre-Mobedyar training will be offered. A snack bar, baby-sitting and playground facilities will be available. This program will be offered to the Zartoshti community in a central location (preferably at the California Zoroastrian Center).

In Stage 5, set up the ZRC, whose members will be Mobeds, Mobedyars, Pre-Mobedyars, Torch-Bearers and others interested in becoming a core group interested in spreading Zartoshti religious knowledge to the world community. They will develop public speaking abilities, explore leadership and languages (preferably Persian and Dari), develop Press Releases on the Zartoshti religion, set up communication opportunities via Internet, fax, e-mail, computer-based instruction, and more.

ZRC will liaise with religious schools and colleges, with FEZANA and other Associations, with religious libraries, with Rotary Clubs

and Kiwanis and other organizations. It also hopes to set up facilities for Navar/Martab (Nouzadi), and teaching and setting up a Zartoshti religion university, offering Zoroastrianism 101 at college level.

In Stage 6, Kankash hopes to provide the North American and World Community with a centralized location to get their religious questions answered. This would include a computer bank of Zartoshti religious information scanned on disks, reference sources, Junior College offering Zoroastrianism 101, a Religious Center to offer summer training, and a central religious library.

In the works are: production of cassettes for various occasions, interactive religious software and games, Gatha on a computer floppy disk, a book on "101 things to do instead of watching TV", Zartoshti devotions for youth, and video-teleconferencing seminars.

In Stage 7, they hope to provide a model that the world Zartoshti community can use to shape their own Zartoshti Religious Corp and other activities.

Working Together towards a New Millennium

By Ervad Jehan Bagli
Princeton, New Jersey

Human behavior in this Getig (physical) world is modeled by natural and social environments coupled with beliefs in the notions of 'beyond the physical'. It is the comprehension of the metaphysical that comprises the knowledge of religion. The understanding of the religions in general and the Zarathushtrian faith in particular, can have a profound impact on the social environment of the North American Zarathushtrian community. It is therefore incumbent upon the religious and social organizations on this continent to work in close collaboration with each other. The con-



certed efforts of the North American Mobed Council (NAMC), the Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America (CIMNA), and FEZANA can go a long way to weave the unified fabric of the Zarathushtrian community on this land.

There is a clear paucity of knowledge of the historic evolution of the Gathic faith of Zarathushtra within the grass root community. Often doctrinal concepts that are distorted in the syncretic Zarathushtrian faith we have inherited, are erroneously attributed to the Message of the Prophet and to the Gathic era. It is indeed the responsibility of the priesthood, to uncover these situations and in concert with the social organizations find effective means to disseminate such information, to transcend the awareness of the true message of the Prophet within the community in general, and to the hearts and minds of our future, our youth in particular.

We must realize that a complete understanding of a religion can only be reached through historical, phenomenological, and social scientific studies. Any attempts made in isolation can lead to distortion and bias, and consequent fragmentation. It is therefore crucial that the religious and social leadership of the Zarathushtrian sow the seeds of Unity, not necessarily Uniformity, within diverse cultural background of communal groups.

Love, respect, tolerance, and moderation for all human beings is the very conscience of Zarathushtra's message. Understanding and practice of these attributes is the challenge that must be met collectively by the religious and social leadership in collaboration with the grass root community.

Happenings

[Continued from page 9]

giving an opportunity for all to meet and voice their opinions.

Our only hope for this microscopic community is to have unity, not in thinking, as that is not possible, but for achieving progress and tolerance of each other, together.

We Karachi-ites take this opportunity to wish all the Zarathushtrians who have emigrated from Pakistan and to say to them how proud we feel when we read about their achievements in their new country. We thank FEZANA Journal for publishing various tit-bits about our activities in Karachi, from time to time, as in this age of globalization, such exchanges empower our tiny community.

Toxy Cowasjee, President
Karachi Zarthosti Banu Mandal

Religion Education

[Continued from page 16]

intellectual and attractive multimedia instruction materials, we have quite a few ideas and content materials; however significant amounts of financial investment is needed to be channeled.

Eventually, we envision the establishment of a certified University in North America, where one can engage in research and study for a higher degree in Zarthusti Religion.

Errata

The Editors regret the following errors in the article "Zarthushtis in Post-Sassanian Iran" by Daryoush Jahanian, M.D. [Spring 1996, p.32]:

- The name of the dynasty is Paduspanian, not Faduspanian.
- The town names are Nain and Anar, not Main and Amar.
- Nasser (not Masseri) Anjumans.
- Yaghoub (not Yougoub) Leisse.
- S. H. Nasr (not Masr).

Paths to Success

Zarthushti thinkers and leaders offer their thoughts on the future of Zoroastrians in North America.

FEZANA — A Wish for Path to Success

By Dr. Jehan Bagli
Former Editor

Gavashni and FEZANA Journal

It takes true devotion, committed dedication and unswerving perseverance to nurture a cause that some believe, is a losing battle. The Zarathushtrian religion and its perpetuation in the world today is one such cause. Why is it worth the effort? If for no reason, other than the fact that Zarathushtra's message and the syncretic Zarathushtrian religion that followed, is the one single cultic root, that has inoculated and consequently played a major role in shaping the ethical and doctrinal infrastructure of all the principle world faiths in the history of mankind.

We owe to the fidelity and the devotion of individuals such as Rohinton Rivetna and Dolly Dastoor, the genesis and nourishing of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA). Looking at the balance sheet of major achievements of the organization it is difficult to pinpoint them in numbers. The fact that it was successfully organized and has weathered a decade of existence is an achievement in itself.

However, focussing globally, the one single important accomplishment of FEZANA in the past decade was, to bring much needed visibility of the Zarathushtrian religion, in the eyes of the social fabric of the world in general and of North America in particu-

lar. This advanced perceptibility puts a high order of responsibility on the Zarathushtrian community. For better or for worse, their actions and their character can be the subject of microscopic scrutiny by western society.

Character by definition is a sum total of the essential qualities, that emanates from the material and spiritual knowledge of an individual or a group. Zarathushtrians are historically noted for their progression and success in the material arena. Equally well noted, is the lack of desire and the deficiency among the grass root community of the true knowledge of history and culture of the Zarathushtrian religion. This apathy — the 'enemy within' — can potentially achieve what the massive strength of Macedonian and Egyptian armies could not — the total extinction of the Zarathushtrian faith.

A major focus for FEZANA in times to follow, is to attack this 'enemy within' through an efficient network of dissemination of factual knowledge of the historic evolution of the Zarathushtrian faith. This is not an easy undertaking. It requires vast human and financial resources. We in North America are well endowed with human resources, however the full impact of this cannot be felt without proper complement of finances.

This is a grass root responsibility. In a doctrinal sense, the Divine Essence, Fravashi, is a part of every human being, so in a material sense, a part of every individual asset must belong to the spiritual asset. Until

and unless Zarathushtrians realize that a part of their material wealth rightfully belongs to the Divine, and donate their share, all the great ideas and lofty visions will remain just that, with no meaningful consequence.

More than two decades ago the seeds of propagation of knowledge were sown through initiation of *Gavashni* by the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec. Today the second generation publication, FEZANA Journal is doing yeoman service through the immense efforts of Roshan Rivetna, Rustom Kevala and their associates. *[It should be recognized that Dr. Bagli served as the first Editor of FEZANA Journal and nurtured it through it's formative years].*

However much remains to be done. We have to realize that in the passage of millennia nothing is constant as the change itself. Set pattern of thinking of a generation cannot change overnight. It requires at least a generation of evolution. We have to target youth as a starting point to truly disclose the role of the Gathic, Younger Avestan, and Pahlavi times on the message of Zarathushtra.

FEZANA can play an integral role in this educational journey. The future task of FEZANA will be greatly facilitated if the grass root community recognizes that the Zarathushtrian religion is synonymous with moderation, sacrifice and tolerance, and implements these principles in practice through their local Associations and Anjumans to smoothly evolve an effective educational framework.

I wish FEZANA greater successes in the new decade of the new millennium. ■

You are no bigger than the things that annoy you.

- Jerry Bundsen

A Thousand Points Of Light

By Mehran Sepehri, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary, FEZANA

What is the secret of the survival of Zoroastrianism over the past 3,000 years? What would be the guarantee that our small community in North America will survive and flourish? What is it that makes our community's religious and social infrastructure different from others? How can we motivate and involve our younger and intellectual generation?

These questions, frequently pondered, point to our community's strong sense of closeness and dedication. This may bring ownership and protection and then prejudice and closed-mindedness. However, such unbreakable ties are invisible community networks in times of need and emergency, which reach beyond the formal family and social structure.

Arab armies killed many of our countrymen and religious leaders. But they could never kill other thousands of men and women who carried on the torch. The temples were destroyed, but the holy fires continued to live on in our hearts and our souls. A thousand points of light remained and continued to brighten our way back.

Do we need a strong and structured leadership to move on into the 21st century? Do we want a Western style democratic election process? Do we need a paperwork factory with appointed committees and regulations? Or do we prefer conventional religious and state combined figure heads? I am not certain about the correct answers.



But I am certain about what makes our community strong and who does the real work. Two thousand years of Zoroastrian survival history is filled with lifelong sacrifices and selfless individual contributions. The traits of honesty, hard work and righteousness, for which Zarthus is known in Iran and India, have not come easily.

A single association may not have the strength to maintain or lead our diverse and spread-out community in North America. In the new age of freedom and technology and in the land of individuality and non-similarity, how can one organization find new answers from the old models, and achieve unity while keeping diversity?

No community can flourish without grass root efforts, informal leaders and thousands of volunteers who care and strive to deliver. It is the work of unknown soldiers and anonymous donors, who start from within and lead themselves before taking on outside and group responsibilities. It is the individual leadership which makes things happen.

Ardibehest Amesha Spenta teaches us self-control and self leadership. The Gathas promote individual thinking and self-initiation. Every man and woman chooses individually to fight against the bad forces. With good thought, good word and good deed, one can shine and lighten the path for others as well. The answers lie in community empowerment, bi-partisan work and consensus building. The solutions come from us, all of us.

On Leadership. Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way! We are at a turning point in our multi-thousand year history when we all feel a need for a new and visionary leadership to deal with

ever increasing degree of change surrounding us. The only thing constant is change, in new technologies and lifestyles as well as in new-generation mentalities and choices. We need to manage the change rather than the change manage us.

The worst thing we can do as a community is to do nothing — by inaction, stagnation, staying put or resisting change. Closing your eyes or putting your head in the sand will not reduce the danger. It is not what we do. It is what we don't do that will hurt us the most.

In stormy weather, you can reach safety by pedaling together in harmony and by following the leader's signals. There is no time to debate, to experiment, or to compete. Following and contributing are as critical as taking the lead role. Getting in the way will only cancel other energies, and will not accomplish much, even if there were good intentions.

It is much easier when people have a common goal, which has paramount importance. They can then set aside differences and undue competition looking for the fastest and most assured way to achieve their shared goal. Without a common goal, there is no reason and justification to act, no direction and organization to follow, and obviously no leadership to lead.

Zoroastrians have a tendency to be very individualistic, opinionated, and sometimes even stubborn. Such qualities are helpful to producing and advancing on an individual basis. But these behaviors would not particularly contribute much when teamwork and unity are needed for building up and maintaining a community.

The very first requirement is to believe in a golden future. It is to believe in our survival and revival, our potential and abilities, and in collective wisdom to overcome our challenges. This requires creating and communicating a vision and a

[Continued on next page]

TWO MODELS TWO PATHS ONE COMMUNITY

By Farokh Mistree
Atlanta, Georgia

TWO ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION

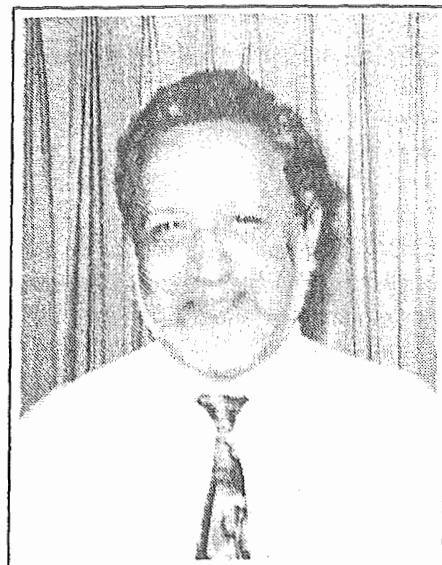
I am a Zoroastrian. I am married to a non-Zoroastrian and we are the parents of two Zoroastrian boys. I carefully listened to what people said and have read what people wrote, regarding the development of our community, at several North American Zoroastrian Congresses and was honored to present a paper on this subject in 1992 [1]. In that paper I postulated four possible courses of action bounded on the one hand by a Gatha-based fundamentalist tradition, and on the other by a ritual-based fundamentalist tradition. In this paper, I identify two of those four alternatives and then invite you to think aloud with me. Both alternatives, I hasten to add, have as their foundation, our Gathas:

Alternative 1: Gathas plus underplay rituals and work towards removing them as well as reject Middle Persian texts and the later Parsi/Irani tradition. The essence of this alternative is to base the future of our religion exclusively on the Gathas.

Alternative 2: Gathas plus accept the Middle Persian texts, precepts and practices, and accept the later Parsi/Irani tradition. This alternative is one in which the Gathas are seen as the bedrock of Zoroastrianism and the Middle Persian texts are used to understand the principles which lie deeply embedded in the Gathas.

MY DILEMMA WHICH ALTERNATIVE?

I recognize that change is part of life. I have to accommodate and cope with change. But I do have some concerns. If I transform Zoroastrian-



ism's precepts and practices, then will I not move away from its revelatory existential form or reality? As Zoroastrianism is a relativist religious ideology, there is a danger in the process of this change, of introducing or rejecting paradigms not in conformity with the spirit of the religion. After all, why should we change the rituals merely to make the ceremony more acceptable to a Western audience or way of life?

However, if I accept the supremacy of the Gathas, I must be intellectually honest in terms of rejecting all the rituals and community practices whether it be of the Gahambar, NavRoz, Jashans, Navjotes, or even the after-life rituals. If I accept some practices of the latter tradition then how can I be sure, that those rituals which have been accepted are the right ones and have remained unchanged since the Prophet's times? Am I or anyone else in the community ready to pass judgment on this critical issue? If change is the essence of time, then in 20 years time, a new group of community activists will emerge, and may want to change even further some of the original precepts and practices till the religion bears no semblance or reality to the original revelation by its constantly changing new form.

[Continued from page 22]

sense of mandate and urgency for everyone to unite and join in the community. It is to show the light at the end of the tunnel.

Secondly, we need to appreciate and treasure our youth and to recognize their current and potential contributions. Many of them are already donating their time and their energies to the community. Giving them a helping hand or a simple word of thanks will make the youth feel wel-

comed and part of the community. The youth are our investment and insurance for our future.

It takes a lot of communication to understand common goals, despite persistent differences. It takes courage to speak up at discussion time and to unite at action time. It takes maturity to learn how to speak and how to listen, when and why to agree and when and why to disagree. It is fair to choose a leader, but it is essential to follow the chosen leader and not get in the leader's way. ■

But, I have learned by studying history that change is necessary for progress. This belief is rooted in my training at the University of California at Berkeley and is part of my professional being (I am a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech). Then what causes me to suggest caution? I have also learned from history that not all change has survived the test of time. The whole of North America is a land of new immigrants save for the American Indians, yet why is it that some communities out here are doing their best to preserve their religious heritage and culture, whilst we seem to be wanting to move in the reverse direction? Why cannot a greater effort be made, albeit an extra effort, to preserve our heritage and culture?

If, when our forefathers arrived in India in 936 AC, they had taken the attitude of seeking indiscriminate change in the name of being progressive, then I submit that very little of Zoroastrian orthopraxy would have been left as they would have been totally assimilated into the new milieu. Instead we find that the Indian Dasturs in order to maintain their continuity with Iran, asked meticulous questions in writing to their more learned Iranian counterparts appertaining to the traditions and practices of the faith. This faithful correspondence, which lasts from the 14th to the 18th centuries, came to be known as the *Persian Rivayets* which were ably translated into English by the great Pahlavi scholar, Ervad B. N. Dhabhar. The lessons that we can learn from this earlier Parsi migration from Iran to India is surely one of preserving as best as possible, what we have, than to inject something alien and new into the faith.

But does change necessarily mean giving up what has been intrinsic to my value system and religious heritage? If I choose to follow a specific pattern of beliefs, no one can stop

me doing so, but if as a community, we initiate a move of promoting the Gathas at the expense of all else, then I believe we have a serious problem. I hasten to add that never before have the Gathas been seen in isolation from the rest of the religious tradition. This is my concern with Alternative 1.

In this alternative, I promote the Gathas, but decry the later corpus of religious scriptures and yet I want to accept some rituals which suit my needs. Whilst there is nothing wrong with such an approach, I sense a bit of religious hypocrisy here. The contradiction takes place when I decry rituals all my life and yet I want all the after-life prayers and rituals performed, in order to religiously safeguard my soul. What is the point, for example, of performing the Navjote ceremony of the child, if after the ceremony the sudreh and kushti can be discarded, for reasons of fashion, embarrassment, the possibility of indifference or peer pressure?

Alternative 2 does offer the possibility of bringing about change through sustained learning; a change that is rooted in knowledge and wisdom. But, this alternative could well be a way of maintaining the status quo without any intellectual or spiritual benefits to the community.

Well, you now understand my dilemma — I see no clear single alternative to recommend. So what now?

TWO MODELS AND TWO PATHS

I have to face the truth (*Av. Asha*) and realize that Alternative 1 is not compatible with Alternative 2. It would be difficult and indeed would require theological wizardry to find a mutual common point between those who promote the Gathas at the expense of all else, and those who are keen to preserve an ethno-religious identity through the precepts and practices passed down to them.

Therefore I think the time has come for me to consider a two model struc-

ture for the development of worldwide Zoroastrianism.

Model 1: In this model the Gathas alone represent the core of the religion. The role of inner rituals is, in the main, irrelevant to the living of the religion.

Model 2: In this model the Gathas together with other religious texts and rituals form the core of the religion. The role of inner ritual is to enhance understanding through spiritual development.

Thus I suggest, that for those who wish their religion to evolve within the established framework, they develop Model 2, and those who promote the Gathas as the central philosophical realization of Zoroastrianism, devoid of rituals and community practices and traditions, they develop Model 1 as a neo-Zoroastrian church.

If one develops the first model, then in this structure, issues deemed to be relevant to the North American experience can be created and that in my opinion could include various reforms such as conversion, abandonment/substitution of rituals, etc., for those who support such a move. This would mean starting a parallel church from scratch, as indeed the Protestants did in the evolution of the Christian church. This would involve establishing one recognized translation of the Gathas within the reform church, which presently does not exist. The establishment of a coherent unified doctrine accepted by all the adherents of the new reform church would surely be an important move in order not to further fragment the new church. This would also clearly underline in concrete black and white terms to the followers what is the precise theological base-line of the new church. The next step would be the formulation of a new set of rituals prescribed according to the wishes of its followers.

For those proposing the development of Model 2, they would need to address issues that are similar to those addressed in the second model, but in the context of an existing infrastructure. Specifically, they would need to bring to the fore a way of worship that establishes the intrinsic link between Zoroastrian theology and practice and how this message and experience is passed to the next generation.

The development along two paths, based on different starting paradigms embodied in the two models, will lead to answers to the following questions and it is unlikely that the answers will be the same:

- (1) Who is deemed to be a Zoroastrian?
- (2) How should new priests be trained for service in North America and indeed whether priests are needed at all?
- (3) What are the inner and outer rituals (if any) that will be performed?
- (4) What changes (if any) in the composition of the community will be accepted? For example, the change in the ethno-social fabric and identity, through the acceptance of mixed marriages.
- (5) How should the new institutions be built? Printing a new prayer book with only the Gathas and a few prayers and infrastructural changes required to support such a move?
- (6) How will the message and practice be passed to the next generation?
- (7) What is the relationship of these North American Churches to those in the old Countries?

The preceding represents only a fraction of the total number of questions that must be posed and answered.

I would like to ensure that historians studying our community a hundred years hence do not accuse the North American Zoroastrians of being short-sighted and foolish in terms of changing a system based upon a

prophetic revelation whose scripturally established traditions have been secured by the formulation of ritual celebration, for a system which leaves no custom or practices for the educated laity to follow. Or even worse introduce new ideas, customs and practices, which are alien to the faith, resulting in a religion which has little relation to traditional Zoroastrianism as known through history.

To ensure a fair review in history, much work needs to be done. And so instead of acrimony and gridlock, in my opinion, it would be more constructive to develop both models in North America and give those interested to choose the path they wish to follow.

ONE COMMUNITY

For those who suggest that there will be a break in our community if my suggestion is adopted, my response is that the differences already are irreconcilable. How can we bring about a meeting point between those who may reject the rituals, and are advocating conversion, and those who do not subscribe to such a view point? Have we not argued and debated over these issues meeting after meeting, without arriving at any consensus?

In my opinion, Congresses are not the forum to take unilateral decision and nor do such gatherings have the authority or the mandate to promulgate ordinances which affect the ecclesiastical fabric of the community. Issues such as these need to be studied with a time-frame by specialists, as I suggested earlier, as these issues will affect the well-being of the community in the future.

If a clear break is made with the tradition, then we have to develop an autonomous structure and we should not expect support from our traditional brethren. A parting of the ways, on the other hand, will bring about two very important developments:

(1) It will reduce the confusion, bitterness and acrimony which hitherto exists within the community.

(2) It will help to reduce some of the problems and anxieties faced by Zoroastrians in North America where we will have to build a new structure.

Moreover, it will take the pressure off the traditionalists who feel threatened by the actions of the reformists. Once the pressure is eased, the two groups should be able to develop the means to coexist peacefully. The reformists will have a purpose, build a Church of their own choice, whilst the traditionalists will be able to retain their old structure and evolve within it, similar to what the Jews have done.

If both groups are to survive without either retreating in defeat, then the need for the reformists is to synthesize the elements derived from the older patterns, together with the diverse needs of the new demands and create a structure which is a new departure with perhaps the same baseline, yet with distinctive features of its own. The challenge for the traditionalists is to be able to understand and evolve within the confines of their traditional structure in order to preserve their heritage.

My generation of Zoroastrians are immigrants to North America; we embody the past and carry the seed for the future. How we deal with our past, our traditions and each other will determine the future of Zoroastrianism in North America. I believe, the major challenge for us all is to develop the means to pass on our message to the next generation of Zoroastrians, for it is they who are the true North American Zoroastrians.

So what is my message on the tenth anniversary of FEZANA? The move toward two parallel systems, would not only ensure the survival of Zoroastrianism, but would secure the welfare of Zoroastrians in North

[Continued on page 39]

YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING

fostering ideas and stimulating innovative thought among Zarthusti youth

Editor's Final Column . . .

The Challenge of

by Jim Engineer
Youth Editor

I have come to the realization, as most of my friends and colleagues have through the years, that we can talk all we want about the way we feel; about our noble causes, our differences and our ongoing saga of conservative versus liberal schools of thought. But beyond the talk, we must think and make responsible decisions using our own good judgement.

Through e-mail, literature, respectful debate, and congress lectures and roundtables many of us gain insight to the messages and views of others.

We are unable to make conscious decisions without these vehicles of communication. We as human beings tend to have an insatiable appetite for expressing our thoughts. Without mechanisms for new and fresh ideas, free and healthy exchanges of dialogue, and channels for leadership development -- the cultivation of ideas would be lost.

That's why I chose to be a contributing editor to the FEZANA Journal -- to help provide a channel for youth expression. And now as I offer you my final column, I realize the responsibility I have in turning my section over to new blood. We are looking for someone who is young, energetic, skilled in expressing his or her thoughts, and someone with an attitude and passion for consistently providing a voice for the Zarthusti youth of North America.

We are looking for someone who can ask why things are the way they are, foster new ideas and stimulate innovative thought.

As youth, we must recognize the need to be responsible as we position ourselves for growth and shape our culture. We owe it to ourselves, our families and our community at-large to be able to distinguish growing trends, recognize news and provide creativity.

For example, there are many among our "influential" circle of leaders that still haven't learned the meaning of the word responsibility. Instead, they resort to in-fighting, entangling themselves in beaurocratic red-tape and being engrossed in political squabble.

Why do some Zarthustis resort to this prolonged and slow death-style of leadership?

Maybe because it is human nature to feel somewhat threatened by change? I don't know. What I do know is that in 25-30 years from now there will be a new generation of Zarthustis running the show.

But will the next generation be any different? I don't know. I have had the opportunity of working with some true leaders through the various congresses and I am encouraged by what I've seen. On the other hand, I have also worked with young people who continue to breed nothing more than rumor, gossip and in-fighting. If we are to change and better ourselves in any way it is by working together as a unified

YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING

fostering ideas and stimulating innovative thought among Zarthusti youth

Responsible Continuity

generation with our own prescription for progress as we head into the next century. We must recognize that we will always have our differences, but work together by treating each other with mutual respect.

In concluding my six years of contribution to the *FEZANA Journal*, I'd like to think that I myself am making a responsible decision in providing another youth with talent to continue "Youthfully Speaking," because being responsible involves recognizing when it is time to move on to bigger challenges. Each time I attend a congress I see hundreds of youth that could make a difference, youth that can put their many thoughts into meaningful words and inspire others to do the same.

If you feel you have the urge or spark for expressing thought, I encourage you to call either *FEZANA Journal* Publisher Roshan Rivetna (708) 325-5383, or *FEZANA Publications* Chair Rustom Kevala at (301) 948-1777.

Anyone interested can also call me at (215) 636-9493. But think hard before you do so -- *don't commit and then just quit*. Be sure of yourself and your ability to grow with your talents. Most importantly, take a chance at making a difference — no one can blame you for trying.

I will continue to contribute articles to the *FEZANA Journal*; a publication that has earned unsurpassed respect among Zarthustis in North America and abroad.

In closing, I'd like to thank Roshan and Rohinton Rivetna for being incredibly

positive role models, and for setting an example through their tireless effort in trying to bring progress within reach. I'd also like to thank my father, Adel, for editing my articles, and Rustom Kevala for his advice without censorship; both of whom recognize the true power of the written word.

Thanks for reading!

"Many ideas grow better when transplanted into another mind than in the one where they sprang up."

-- Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

"Youthfulness of spirit is the twin brother of optimism, and optimism is the stuff of which American business success is fashioned.

Resist growing up!"

-- B.C. Forbes, Publisher

"Man can learn nothing except by going from the known to the unknown."

-- Claude Bernard, 19th-century French

YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING

fostering ideas and stimulating innovative thought among Zarthusti youth

2nd N. American Gatha Conference

"Gathic Vision in the Next Millennium"

What does it mean to you?

An assembly of some of the world's most renowned Gathic scholars, the 2nd North American Gathic Conference will feature presentations on various aspects of our holiest and most poetic scriptures. From an analysis of grammatical and poetic technique to its wealth of interpretations, the Conference is aimed at presenting teachings relevant to living a life of fulfillment, truthfulness and good thought. Additional topics include a focus on Gathic teachings relevant to the younger generation, and a look at the visionary and poetic style in which the Gathas are composed.

Prof. James Boyd

Prof. Jamsheed K. Choksy

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Prof. William M. Malandra

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Ervad Dr. Rohinton Peer

Prof. James R. Russell

Prof. Martin Schwartz

Prof. Prods O. Skjaervo

Prof. Gernot L. Windfuhr

Prof. Ron G. Williams

other speakers include:

Dr. Ardeshir Anoushiravani, Dr. Jehan Bagli, Kek i. Bhote, Dolly P.

Dastoor, Kaemarz Dotiwala, Khorshed F. Jungalwala, Dina G. McIntyre,

Rohinton Rivetna, Mobed Fariborz Shahzadi, Ervad Kobad Zarolia

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YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING

fostering ideas and stimulating innovative thought among Zarthusti youth

ZYNA: Reviewing Two Years of Progress

The Zarthusti Youth of North America (ZYNA) was created by FEZANA in June 1994 to provide the next generation of Zarthustis with a mechanism for meaningful change.

Since our terms as co-chair officially draw to a close this summer in San Francisco at FEZANA's annual general meeting, we thought we'd provide you with a retrospective on what we have accomplished and what challenges we must overcome to be a successful and cohesive youth organization in the next century.

ZYNA has conducted two surveys. The first measured the opinions and mindset of youth with regard to congresses; the second survey focused on establishing a biographical record of youth and their educational and professional backgrounds, highlighting networking and relationship building as we grow into a young professional and collegiate population.

We called the latter survey our Professional Database Survey (PDS) and began recording the information into computer format with the hope of establishing a foundation for future biographical and statistical reference. Through the PDS we will be able to identify career paths and trends, tap into our resources and enhance our position in the working world. More importantly, we will be able to use Zarthusti knowledge and business to stimulate our own cultural economy.

ZYNA also has spearheaded a drive to raise awareness for an endowed chair position at a major ivy league institution. We have identified education as one of the primary contributors to a conscious, healthy and educated Zarthusti society, and by studying our rich religious history we will keep alive the need to never stop learning.

We have made presentations to various congresses and seminars. At the last youth congress in San Francisco we presented an interactive workshop focused on teaming youth by their talents, expertise or what they enjoyed doing in their daily life. High school and university students got to know and work with one another by pooling their shared strengths and then put their thoughts together by answering questions on how confident they were about their role in the future and what lay ahead.

Still in its infancy, ZYNA has helped lay a foundation for progress and future growth among young Zarthustis. But **we can not work alone as a team of two** -- we need more dedicated young people to share in our cause, as well as the support and partnership of our elder Zarthustis to nurture and develop our future endeavours.



Mazda Antia
Co-Chair



Jim A. Engineer
Co-Chair

THE MAKING OF FEZANA

An Early History

By Rohinton Rivetna
Founding President, FEZANA



The late Mr. Jamshed Pavri of Vancouver, Canada, traces the earliest presence of Zoroastrians in North America to the American Civil War era [*Keynote Address, Fourth North American Zoroastrian Congress, Montreal, 1982*]. The early history of Zoroastrians on the North American continent has been researched by Mr. Pavri, who made it his singular mission to visit local libraries, museums and historical archives on his travels, looking for references and anecdotal information on the presence of Zoroastrians. To Mr. Pavri we owe a debt of gratitude for giving us our identity as North American Zoroastrians and for the inspiration for a North American Federation. He was, and is, a role model for Zoroastrian leaders that followed. Although a resident of Vancouver for many years, and a willing provider for any Zoroastrian who sought his help, Mr. Pavri was at heart a North American Zoroastrian. He had the larger vision of Zarthushtis settling and prospering in North America, and worked tirelessly to make Zarthushtis a part of the North American scene. This historical record is dedicated to Mr. Jamshed Pavri.

Earlier Attempts. There were at least two earlier attempts to form a national organization, one advertent, and the other, in retrospect, perhaps inadvertent, prior to the mid-1980s, when the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America was seriously conceptualized. The first [*also see page 32*], a vision of Keki Bhote and others, started in 1965 in the Chicago area, was perhaps pre-

mature and functioned primarily as a local Association for a few years, before it gradually ceased activities.

A second attempt to form a *United Zoroastrian Associations of North America (UZANA)* was made between 1976 and 1978. The effort was primarily orchestrated by the Montreal Zoroastrians, in particular, Dr. Jehan Bagli. At least one meeting of Association representatives from Toronto, Chicago, New York and Montreal was held, in Montreal to discuss the formation of this body. Mr. Lovji Cama was assigned the task of pursuing the development further. Due to lack of interest and lack of a mandate from the people, UZANA never took off.

An idea takes root. The genesis of FEZANA can be traced to the Fifth North American Zoroastrian Congress, in Los Angeles, in 1985. The organizers of that Congress, Mrs. Farangis Shahrukh and Mrs. Dhunmai Dalal, had the foresight to place on the Congress agenda, a session on: "Proposal for the Organization of a North American Zoroastrian Body," chaired by Rohinton Rivetna of Chicago, with speaker Mr. Homi Minocher Homji of Toronto, who presented a proposal for a well-structured, hierarchical North American Federation. Earlier papers presented by Mr. Homji, projecting the idea of a federation, first at the Fourth North American Zoroastrian Congress in Montreal in April 1982, and again at the Fourth World Zoroastrian Congress at Bombay in 1985, resulted in no actions. But this time, the idea took root.

After the presentation, Farangis Shahrokh walked on to the stage and took a straw poll at the plenary with a show of hands, to gauge interest level in the creation of a North American Federation. The response was overwhelmingly in favor, with a small but vociferous group objecting, presumably fearful of a Federation squelching the voice of the local Associations.

The mandate. The Congress gave the mandate to Rohinton Rivetna to write a draft constitution, and carry the proposal forward. A core group was chosen to sound off the ideas, taking pains to include individuals from the objecting groups. The greatest surprise was that this was a Congress that will be remembered for its direct confrontation on critical issues ranging from conversion and acceptance, to the formation of a federation. Never before was witnessed such open hostility in a public forum. Yet, from this heavy confrontation was wrought a consensus on the federation. This was diversity at its best.

Following the Congress, the work proceeded at full speed. Within four months a draft constitution was prepared by Rohinton Rivetna and circulated to the core group for comments.

Constitutional Convention. After a couple of iterations with the core group, a Constitutional Convention was called in Chicago in May 1986 to review the draft. Representatives from nine Associations came and deliberated round the clock for two long days. The delegates were: Firdosh Mehta (Alberta), Furrokh Dastur (California), Bomi Damkevala, Kayomars Mehta, Keikhusroo Mobed, Rohinton and Roshan Rivetna (Chicago), Hushtasp and Perviz Bhumgara (Manitoba), Kaikhosrov and Peroja Irani (New York), Homi B. M. Homji and Sam Vesuna (Ontario), Dina G. McIntyre (Pennsylvania), Kaemarz Dotiwala

(Texas) and Rohinton M. Tengra (Washington, DC).

Each delegate was given the responsibility of chairing the discussion for one or more sections of the draft constitution. Every line and every word was debated (without regard to pride of authorship) with frankness and mutual respect until a consensus was reached on the content of the section. To Alberta, represented by Firdosh Mehta, goes the credit of adding the letter "E" to FEZANA (the original draft used FZANA). To Washington DC, represented by Rohinton Tengra, goes the credit of word-smithing the text of the Preamble. Attorney Dina McIntyre of Pittsburgh lent her legal expertise at every step. In the end, the collective wisdom of the delegates had evolved the original draft (though keeping the essence intact) into a strong, viable document.

Building consensus. After the convention, the composition was completed and typed, after much consultation with a number of persons. The crossing of "T's" and dotting of "T's" was finalized, the language was polished, and the document was now ready for the real test — getting signatures from the Founding Member Associations.

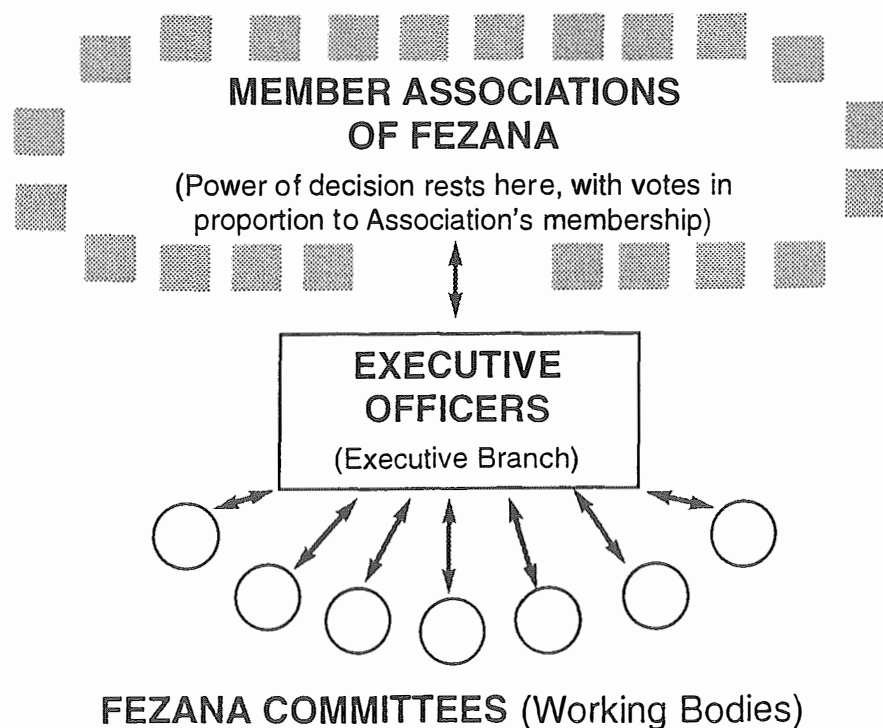
It was a daunting task to get consensus from Associations that covered a spectrum of ideologies. Maintaining complete neutrality was a challenge, as one Association after another argued for or against a particular point. Finally, after several iterations of drafts, a multitude of phone calls and mailings, consensus was reached on the final content from every one of the 16 Associations of record in 1986. It was like seeing a flower bud emerge and blossom before one's eyes. A final parchment copy was

sent to each Association, with a signature page that was returned with the Association President's signature.

FEZANA is born. FEZANA was subsequently registered in the State of Illinois on June 2, 1987, as a not-for-profit religious and charitable corporation. The first elected Officers were: Rohinton Rivetna, Chicago (President), Homi B. Minocher Homji, Toronto (Vice-President), Framroze Patel, New York (Treasurer), Dolly Dastoor, Montreal (Secretary) and Sabar Balsara, Toronto (Asst. Secretary). The first Annual General Meeting was held in Toronto on April 1, 1988, in conjunction with the Sixth North American Zoroastrian Congress.

Now ten years later, FEZANA forms a strong infrastructure for the growing Zoroastrian diaspora in North America. ■

ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL OF FEZANA



COVER STORY

Zoroastrian Association of America, Chicago, 1965



While the goals were lofty and thinking visionary, the first attempt to form a Zoroastrian organization was perhaps, a few years ahead of its time. In their newsletter, Founder President Keki Bhote

of Chicago says: "...it is time now, for those of us in the vanguard of this migration, to plan on ways and means to preserve our identity and our heritage while participating fully in the American way of life ... therefore thirty of us in the Chicago area have started the *Zoroastrian Association of America* on May 23, 1965."

This drew the wrath of the Vancouver group who were then just starting to organize their Society of British Columbia. In an Open Letter addressed to Mr. Bhote and Mr. Jim Modi, they wrote: "How can a handful of Chicago Parsis meet one fine evening and, just like that, over a 'glass of whiskey', form the 'Zoroastrian Association of America', to embrace all Zoroastrians across the continent? Were you all deranged by a severe attack of ego-mania? Did Ahura Mazda appear to you in a dream and say 'Arise and lead my lost people in the New World'? Or was it a Chicago-gangster style move to muscle in before say Toronto, Montreal, New York or Los Angeles? The Association functioned, primarily as a local Association serving the Chicago area for 3 or 4 years; then gradually folded. ■

To North American Zoroastrians, scattered as they are in pockets across the vast continent, it is the Darbe Mehrs and Associations that draw the community together and provide an identity and stability to the second generation. This is the story of the men and women who came to this country with barely a suitcase and a scarce \$20 in their pockets, put themselves through college, got jobs, opened businesses, raised families, and started building their community structures. While Zarthushtis may have first come to the U.S.A. and Canada many decades ago, it was only in the 1960s that the first Associations of record started forming (though there may have been earlier attempts that did not take root). Today, there are 21 formally organized Associations, 8 Darbe Mehers, and numerous 'Small Groups', all federated under the banner of FEZANA.

KEEPING THE A profile of North

Zoroastrian Association of Quebec, 1967

3765 Malo, Brossard
Quebec J4Y 1B4, Canada



The ZAQ was formed in late 1967 when a handful of Zoroastrians who had settled in Montreal decided to form an Association in order to keep alive our ancient religion and our rich cultural heritage. This first group of dedicated people consisted

of Dr. Jehan Bagli, Homi Daruwalla, Dhunjishah Surti, Edul Kanga, Ness Lakdawalla, Freddy Lakdawalla, Lowji Bharucha and Nowzer Kotwal. Zarthushtis however, had been immigrating to Quebec since the late 1950s and one of the earliest ones to call Montreal home, is the well known photographer, Sam Tata who came in 1956 and still lives here.

One of the original aims and objectives of this Association was to help newcomers settle down in their new homeland and this continues to be our goal today, as well. To this end, the various executive committees of the Association have been organizing religious and socio-cultural events for the past 29 years. The Jashans

and the religious discussion groups, both of the adult members as well as the children and youth, have inculcated a sense of pride and continuity in the members of our Association.

The year 1974 was a landmark year for our Association as it saw the birth of a new Zoroastrian publication, the first of its kind in North America, *Gavashni*. The architects of this publication were: Dr. Jehan Bagli, Freddy Lakdawalla, Edul Kanga and Rohinton Sethna. They envisaged *Gavashni* as a vehicle that would serve to disseminate the message of Zarthusra to the Zarthusri community across the North American continent. To quote from Lakdawalla's first editorial: "Today Parsis ... are migrating to other lands ... Those of us here in North America live reasonably comfortable lives but we are missing out on something. Our children are absorbed in a materialistic culture. They are losing touch with

our mother tongue ... the Zoroastrian faith is dissipating slowly but surely ... what we need is another miracle to salvage our faith and our identity ... It can come from within our community ... pitch in your bit to help form our race into a cohesive group with a strong and clear identity."

For the next two decades *Gavashni*, under the auspices of ZAQ and the expert editorship of Dr. Jehan Bagli, continued to be the vehicle for bringing about discussion among the different Zoroastrian Associations of North America on pertinent religious topics. It has certainly been a major force in helping form our community "into a cohesive group with a strong and clear identity."

The year 1982 was another important one in the growth of ZAQ as we hosted the Fourth North American Zoroastrian Congress which also was a huge success. At that time, the ZAQ felt that it would be appropriate

for us to compile a directory of all Zoroastrians living in Canada, thus offering us all the opportunity to have easy access with each other across the Canadian continent.

It is heartening to report that our Association has indeed achieved some of its initial goals. Five of our young men have undergone the Navar ceremony, thus ensuring that our community's needs regarding the availability of priests, will be met.

Our children regularly attend religious classes with enthusiasm and have developed a justifiable pride and self-assurance in their heritage. This has encouraged them to present articles and projects on Zoroastrianism in their various schools, thus ensuring recognition of our religion and our presence, in modern day Quebec.

In 1991 McGill University formally recognized "The Zoroastrian Students' Society of McGill" and this

HEARTH FIRES BURNING

American Associations and Darbe Mehrs

Presented in the order of their establishment



student body has already organized various activities and lectures on Zoroastrianism, which are very well attended. In spite of being a small organization, the ZAQ has become a leading force in matters concerning Zoroastrianism in North America. We have also achieved our goal for ourselves and our children, of integrating into the Quebecois mosaic,

Left, current Board of the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec: Kelly Gheyara, Perviz Moos, Dinaz Lakdawalla, Jehangir Gagrati, Dolly Dastoor (President), Parvez Patel, Leena Lakdawalla.

while retaining our rich religious and cultural heritage. This is indeed an indication of our maturity and our feeling of permanence in Quebec. It also places a collective responsibility on all of us to ensure that this pace is maintained for the future.

In this relatively short space of time, the different presidents who followed Dr. Jehan Bagli, namely, Edul Kanga, Adi Daruwalla, Dolly Dastoor, Nari Madon and Khushroo Mirza, have left their own stamp of special qualities and abilities in the development and maturation of our Association, but this growth would not have been possible had it not been for the very special people who are the strength, the integrity and the very life force of our Association. ■

Submitted by Dolly Dastoor

Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia, 1968



Jamshed K. Pavri

*Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr
6900 Halifax Street
Burnaby, BC, V5B 2R5, Canada*

The ZSBC was incorporated as a Society under the Societies Act on

February 22, 1968. The spirit and force behind this was the late Jamshed K. Pavri, who was instrumental in establishing the society. The Constitution and By-Laws were framed, describing the society as a charitable body, and granting the society income-tax exemption status. The signatories to the Constitution were J. Bacha, H. M. Engineer, N. M. Fitter, S. Irani and J. K. Pavri. The official records of that year show that there were 20 families (51 individuals) registered as members of the Society. At that time, there were over 1,000 Zoroastrians in Canada and the U.S. We now have approximately 300 families (850 individuals) in B.C. alone.

The Society has seven Directors. The current Directors are: Faredoon Amrolia, Rukshana Engineer, Farroksh Namdaran, Poulad Poulad-Noshirvan, Mahvash Pourbaharami, Fariborz Rahnmoon and Rostam Shahrokh. The Directors organize and plan the very many events that are held each year. These events include celebrating important days and gahambars, conducting religious classes, inviting guest speakers, and holding educational, motivational,

sports, fund-raising events, etc. The Society's religious needs, such as performing Jashans, Navjotes, Sudreh-Pushi, weddings and death ceremonies are met by Mobeds Jehangir Panthaky, Adil Antia, and on occasion, Mehraban Zartoshty. The community is indeed grateful to these people for their services, in particular Mobed Panthaky, who has served the community for a very long time.

Avesta classes for children 5 - 14 were first started in three areas in 1982: North and West Vancouver, Burnaby and Vancouver, and Richmond. Mrs. Roda Jamshed Pavri was responsible for co-ordinating and organizing the syllabus, so that the prayers and material used in the three locations were the same. When the Darbe Mehr was established, for a few years, Mrs. Pavri continued to provide the syllabus and, along with others, teach the children prayers, the important aspects of our religion, and songs. These classes, now called Zoroastrian Studies since 1995, are held every two weeks, from September to June.

ZSBC produces a quarterly publication, *In Search of the Truth*, which is widely circulated regularly to mem-



In the hall of the Darbe Mehr in Vancouver

bers, and on an ad hoc basis to non-members, Associations and individuals. In 1969, an agreement for the purchase of 32 burial lots was entered into with Valley View Memorial Gardens in Surrey, and at the moment, we have a total of 273 burial lots, bought and totally paid for at different prices.

Although the need for a Zoroastrian House or Centre was felt and considered from the inception of ZSBC in 1968, this idea was abandoned in 1975 as the possibility of financing such a venture appeared to be beyond the means of our community at that time. However, with the advent of the Iranian revolution and exodus of a large number of Iranian Zarthustis to the west, ZSBC experienced an influx of these Zarthustis in 1978 and 1979, and the need to have a Centre was felt again. In early 1982, the late Dr. Rostam Sarfeh, who was Chairperson of the Guiv Trust in California, visited Vancouver and urged our members to vigorously pursue the idea. He said it was the wish of the late Arbab Rustam Guiv to assist those who assisted themselves for such a venture, and that monetary assistance from the Guiv Trust would be made available to those who produced concrete results. Subsequently, Mehraban Zartoshty, who was also a trustee of the Guiv Trust, pursued this matter seriously with the late Madame Morvarid Guiv.

On November 30, 1985, the property at 690 Halifax Street, which was owned by the First Church of Christ Scientist, was bought by the Trust and leased to ZSBC. It was officially opened on March 26, 1986 by the late Madame Morvarid Guiv. It has given the community its roots, and is a 'home', enabling the community to gather for functions, networking and to enjoy one another's company.

ZSBC has continued to support FEZANA and its initiatives, and send representatives to the various congresses which have been held. A commitment was made by ZSBC at

the Houston Congress in 1990 to host the next Congress. As a result, the Eighth North American Zoroastrian Congress was held at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre from September 4-6, 1992, with Bella Tata, Chairperson, and Mehraban Zartoshty, Vice Chairperson, taking the reins. Thanks to the tireless and productive efforts this community was capable of, and the excellent work of the Executive and Steering Committees, "Looking Ahead to the 21st Century" was a tremendous success.

As a result of a straw poll taken at the Congress regarding the need for a unified calendar, in February 1993, a Special Meeting was held, when the members present passed a resolution to adopt the Fasli calendar as the Society's official one. To celebrate its Silver Anniversary, NavRoz and the observance of a single calendar for our community in BC, a grand event was planned at the Coast Plaza at Stanley Park, on March 28, 1993. In September 1993, the Executive Committee organized group Sudreh-Pushi/Navjote of ten of our children.

It is people who make a community, and dedicated and enthusiastic community members can do much to keep an institution going. The fact that ZSBC is 28 years old is a tribute to all those who founded it, and those who have nourished it over the years. However, carrying on this service cannot be left to just a few people; each member has to feel he or she belongs to a big family, and make a contribution to the best of their ability. We all should feel the need to be of service, for this is part of what our faith teaches us.

On FEZANA's tenth anniversary, ZSBC wishes it the best in its efforts to fulfill its mission, and gather sufficient strength to be an organization empowered to provide guidance and support to its Member Associations in North America.

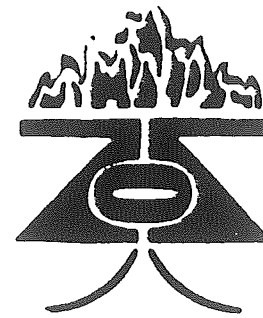
Submitted by Bella Tata

Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, 1971

*Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr
3590 Bayview Avenue
Willowdale, Ontario M2M 3S6, Canada*

From 1953 onwards, Parsis began to come to Canada, but the number was rather insignificant. From 1960 the momentum picked up and five years later, Jehangir Paymaster (Medora) was instrumental in inducing the Canadian Immigration authorities to

send a representative to Bombay to hold interviews with prospective immigrants. As a result of Mr. Paymaster's efforts several Parsis were able



to obtain immigration visas to Canada.

In 1966, sixteen individuals started a 'service group' called the Zoroastrian Fraternity, whose purpose, as stated in a letter to Jame Jamshed and other Bombay papers was "to assist new Parsis to settle down in the Canadian stream of life with the least difficulty." They go on: "Once a Parsi immigrant arrives in this city, we will further guide him towards acquiring employment, accommodations, etc. and try to give whatever help (barring financial) that is needed to settle down ..."

In the late sixties, with an influx of Zoroastrian immigrants, the community felt the need for formalizing the work under a registered corporate body. In 1971 the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario was registered. The first elected committee laid down their priorities as:

1. Obtain Government of Ontario's recognition of marriage ceremonies performed by Mobeds. (This was obtained a year later).
2. Organize religious classes.

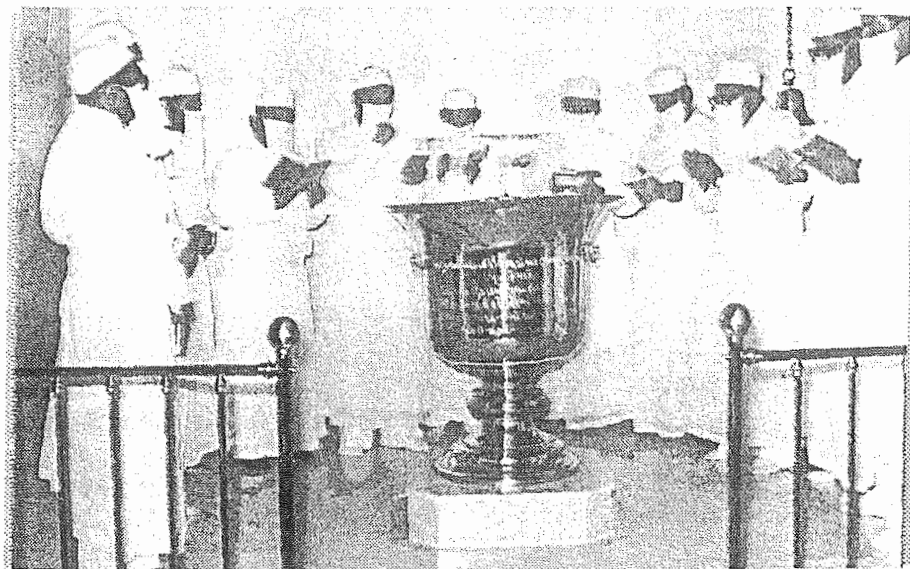
3. Perform Jashans, Gahambars, and other ceremonies.

The community recognizes the yeoman services provided by the priests, who in the early years helped the community settle down and carry on their religious traditions. Yezdi Antia, Boman Kotwal, Kobad Zarolia, Minoo Kanga, Nozer Kotwal and others provided solace to the community on sad occasions and contributed to enhance the joys on auspicious days.

Since the Society did not have any premises of its own, Jashans and other festivals were held in various church halls. The first public Jashan was held on January 20, 1974 in a hall at the University of Toronto.

Religious education. Living in a Society that is predominantly Christian, there was a growing anxiety that our children will be deprived of knowing their religion and their rich heritage. Also, Canadian society until the 1960s, by far and large, was not familiar with our Prophet Zarthusra nor aware of the Zoroastrian religion. Work was undertaken on both fronts — first to organize religious classes for our children, and second to have knowledgeable Zoroastrians undertake to speak at public forums and through the media familiarize Canadian society with Zoroaster's message. Yezdi Antia, Bomi Boyce, Jamshed Mavalwala and Minoo Treasurywalla gave radio and live TV talks on CBC and local stations.

In 1972, classes were organized by Minoo Treasurywala, and were held first in private homes, and later at premises offered by the University of Toronto. In 1977, with interest growing, a more structured curriculum was developed by Noshir Parakh, Boman Kotwal, Putli Byramjee, Putli Mirza and Minoo Treasurywala. Car pools were organized to take the children to a rented school hall in Mississauga in the West or to the Darbe Mehr in the East of Toronto.



Top, Happy group of volunteers at annual ZSO Mukhtad ceremonies. Above, Installation of the Holy Fire in the newly extended Atash Dadgah at the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr, Toronto, by 12 Mobeds on September 25, 1983.

Encouraged by the success of these classes a detailed syllabus for the Religion in Life Emblem for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides of Canada was submitted by Putli Byramjee. It was due to her untiring efforts that the proposal was accepted, and as a result several scouts and guides have qualified for this emblem.

Mukhtad prayers. The first traditional Mukhtad prayers and rituals were performed in 1982, at the Darbe Mehr during the five holy days of the Gathas. Youth and adult volunteers

cleaned and prepared the prayer room, and washed and polished all the utensils and the big afargan. The fire was lit early in the morning of the first Gatha and was attended by priests throughout the five days. Ceremonies of the Afargan, Farrokshi and the three Satums were recited daily, remembering nearly 200 names of departed souls. Food for the satum prayers was prepared at the Darbe Mehr. The Darbe Mehr underwent a magical transformation during those holy days. Our seniors make a great

contribution. Some stay at the Darbe Mehr for 5-6 days, help and cook for the various prayers, and also prepare a lunch and dinner for those who attend the prayers. Muktdas are now celebrated every year, thanks to the many volunteers who devote their time and effort: Coomi Bhathena, Boman Kotwal, Yezdi Antia, Nozer Kotwal, Putli Mirza and others.

On September 25, 1983, the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr bulged at the seams when over 500 Zarthustis attended the Jashan ceremony and installation of the Holy Fire in the newly extended Atash Dadgah room at the Darbe Mehr. It was heartening that non-Zoroastrian spouses were also present on this auspicious occasion. The Jashan was performed by 12 mobeds. There were three afargans burning sukhari and lobban offered by the community. After the Jashan the youngest and latest novitiate led the Hum Bandagi. The three afargans were carried by the Mobeds through the aisles past the congregation, to the Atash Dadgah room. The fires were then transferred with communal Atash-ni-Niyaishe prayers, to the large afargan.

Seniors. The Seniors Group forms an active segment of ZSO. Included are regular health and exercise programs, nutrition and cooking demonstrations, workshops, and socialization, all at the

Darbe Mehr. The seniors have visited places of interest in Toronto and elsewhere, including a 14-day trip to Mexico this year.

Goals. The First North American Zoroastrian Conference (Congress) was convened in Toronto, in 1975. This was the first of its kind to be held in the New World. The objective was to bring together members of the community, to discuss current status and goals for the future. The question the community faced was how much of our past customs and practices do we have to change to adapt successfully here, and how much of the rich heritage that has served our forefathers since Achaemenian times, can we retain. The Conference concluded that though adoption of all past practices may not be possible, it is essential that the community adopt as many as possible and accept changes as warranted under different living conditions in North America.

Establishment of the Darbe Mehr. In March 1975, the ZSO appointed a committee — Bomy Boyce, Adi Dastur, Katy Khambatta, Kawas Nanavati (Chair) and Kobad Zarolia, chartered to "pursue suitable action to establish a Community Centre in or around Metro Toronto, as a focal point of meeting for all Zoroastrians and their friends."

In 1976, we became aware of a provincial government program (Wintario) which could provide a substantial portion of the capital costs for certain projects such as multicultural activities and heritage conservation. We would have to find the first one third of the capital costs, Wintario would provide the next one third, and the final third would be raised by commercial financing. Many plans were made and presented to the community and to Wintario, but there was not much progress.

Then fortune suddenly smiled on us! Arbab Rustam Guiv found out about our project. On their way from Iran to the USA, Arbab and Dr. Rostam Sarfeh had stopped in the UK and visited Dr. and Mrs. Kutar. Arbab was shown a copy of the ZSO Newsletter of August 1977, wherein there was a full project progress report. Arbab was very interested. Mrs. Kutar conveyed Arbab's wishes to Toronto in a letter: "Arbab Rustam has shown a desire to donate a sum of money towards your ZCC. The amount offered is in the region of \$500,000, to buy the land and build the Centre, in memory of the person named by him ... provided the ZSO has also collected enough money in a bank for the maintenance of the Centre ..." A few days later, Arbab Guiv and Dr. Sarfeh visited Toronto, and promised the full amount of



100th Toronto is the first and only Zoroastrian Scout Group in North America. In its sixth year of active scouting, it has a 'Beaver Colony', a Cub Pack for 8-10 year olds, a Scout Troop, and a Venture Company that participates in 'adventures' like rock climbing and white water rafting. 100th Toronto is one of the few Co-Ed Scout Groups in the Greater Toronto Region.

\$600,000 needed for the Centre, to be named in memory of his late nephew Mehraban Guiv.

In January 1978, a property was located — a large house on a superb wooded setting, the former home of Mazo de la Roche, well known author of the Jalna series of novels, on sale for \$500,000. Arbab Guiv signed an Agreement to Purchase and paid a deposit.

Unfortunately, 1978 was a sad year of dissension! The community was upset that the property had been almost accepted without their prior approval. Further, Arbab had decided that the property would be owned in trust by the Rustom Guiv Foundation, but operated by the ZSO. It was later agreed that the property would be leased to the ZSO for 999 years at 1 cent per year!

The project also ran into problems from the Borough of North York, who under pressure from local residents, took the unusual step of zoning the building so it could not be used as a temple. The problem was solved effectively by the Ontario Supreme Court Judge who, in a scathing judgement, stated: "... I am satisfied that ... the By-law was enacted in bad faith and is discriminatory ... For these reasons, I declare the By-law ... null and void and order that it be quashed."

A gala official opening ceremony was held on September 21, 1980, with Chief Guest Attorney General of Ontario, and the Mayor of North York. Due to ill health, Arbab was not able to attend. Barely two weeks later, Arbab Guiv passed away.

Wintario were once again approached for a grant. A year later, approval was received for a grant of \$279,850 from the Wintario program, and the financial health of the Darbe Mehr was secured. Today the Darbe Mehr is a successful community centre and a place of worship for all Zoroastrians.

Submitted by Kawas Nanavati & ZSO

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York, 1973

*Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr
249 Weyman Avenue
New Rochelle, NY 10805, USA*

The first Zoroastrian Association in the New York area was formed in 1929, with seven persons present among them the organizer Mr. Phiroze Saklatwala and Mr. Rustomji Wadia (who lived long enough to also be a member of ZAGNY for 15 years). It folded after Mr. Saklatwala's death, which coincided with the arrival of the great depression which wiped out other affluent Zoroastrians of New York and so also the original association.

In 1965, Erach Munshi, Lovji Cama, Dadi and Katy Dhabar, Homi Dalal and others started organizing formal Jamshedi Navroze and Shenshai Navroze dinners, to which every Zarthusti whose phone number was known, was invited. The first such dinner, at International House in New York, attracted 60 Zarthustis. In 1973, a need was felt to formally organize ourselves into an Association and about 20 individuals came to a meeting at the home of Naval Sidhwa on Staten Island. The first Board of Directors, elected in 1974 included Erach Munshi, Naval Sidhwa, Framroze Patel, Lovji Cama, Khushroo Patel, Rohinton Cama, Jehan Daruwala, Nancy Daruwala and Rusi Sanjana. Succeeding Presidents were Lovji Cama, Framroze Patel, Faroke Gandhi, Ivy Gandhi, Erach Munshi, Astad Clubwala, Kaikhosrov Irani and Gev Nentin.

In 1975, Dr. Rostam Sarfeh attended the Navroze dinner, and, impressed by the number of Zarthustis, both

Parsi and Irani, and lack of their own place, approached Arbab Guiv on a trip to Iran. Arbab committed an initial donation of \$100,000 for a Darbe Mehr in the New York area; subsequent donations brought the total to over \$250,000.

After a long search, the present property in New Rochelle was bought, and Arbab Guiv offered to renovate it to serve as a community center and place of worship. The

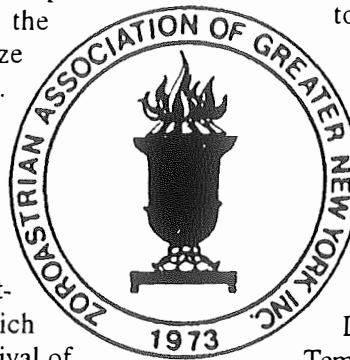
Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple (DMZT) was formed

as a Religious corporation under Section 10 of the Religious Corporations Act of New York State.

Thus in 1977, the first Darbe Mehr in North America was inaugurated, in the presence of Arbab and Morvarid Guiv, with Guest of Honor Mr. Nani Palkhiwalla, Ambassador of India to the USA. Here Zarthustis could gather to worship, to reinforce their identity, to meet regularly for religious classes, perform Navjotes and weddings and celebrate the festivals of NavRoz and Pateti.

In 1979, ZAGNY was host to the Third North American Zoroastrian Conference. Because of Professor Kaikhosrov Irani's connections with the academic world, ZAGNY has been able to organize nineteen conferences on various aspects Zoroastrianism in the past so many years. ZAGNY also co-sponsored the first two International Gatha Conferences (in U.K. and Los Angeles) and the Yasht Conference in 1995.

Religious classes started by Ervad Pervez Patel, Nancy Daruwala and Lovji Cama in 1974 in rented facilities at the UN International School, have run regularly every month at the



Darbe Mehr. Concurrently, Prof. Irani runs an adult education and discussion group. ZAGNY has a good library, including reference sets of many important works. Initial donations to the library were made by Khanum Morvarid Guiv.

A Young Children's Camp was started by Ivy Gandhi in 1979, and continues to be a yearly feature. Following Ivy's death in 1995, the camp has been renamed in her memory. A similar camp for older youth was initiated by Lovji Cama in 1982, and is now a yearly feature.

In 1980, Fred Morris, active with the Boy Scouts administration, pointed out the need to develop a Zoroastrian Religious Emblem, and thus, the "Good Life" program, which has now become a part of scouting in the USA, was developed. This emblem can be earned by anyone between 12 and 21, by completing the 50 page course book and a service project. ZAGNY has organized three Gujarati natak, the last one, "Pestonji na Parakram" netting \$10,000

After 1980 there was a large influx of Iranian Zarthushtis who emigrated from Iran and became members of ZAGNY. However the differences in language, customs and even festivals, led them to forming their own Association — the Iranian Zoroastrian Association (IZA) in 1986. IZA shared the use of the Darbe Mehr with ZAGNY, though its management remained with the latter.

Some time after the passing of Arbab Guiv, the Guiv Foundation discovered that the Darbe Mehr, by the nature of its incorporation, was owned by the community, and demanded that ownership be transferred to the Foundation. They filed a quit claim. Since the DMZT had no funds other than the property itself, ZAGNY became the main defendant. After 5 years of litigation and appeal to the Supreme Court of NY state, the court's verdict was in favor of DMZT as the legal owner of the Darbe Mehr property.

During this time of uncertainty, a committee was formed to collect funds for a New Zoroastrian Temple and Cultural Center. The Committee, led by Erach Munshi, Farokh Tarapore and Farrokh Deboo collected nearly \$300,000 and pledges for another \$150,000, but was not able to meet the goal of nearly \$1,000,000, necessary for the project. At the same time, with the final court decision that made the ownership of the Darbe Mehr secure, enthusiasm for a new Darbe Mehr waned. The funds collected were returned to those that wanted them back. The interest collected in the account could not be legally returned to the donors. The money left with ZAGNY was sufficient for a complete renovation of the Darbe Mehr, which was completed by the Board under the able leadership of Astad Clubwala, in 1994.

The Boards of ZAGNY and IZA have worked out a formula by which representation on the Board of Trustees of the Darbe Mehr, and the cost of running the Darbe Mehr would be divided between the two Associations in proportion to their membership, which worked out to 5:1.



ZAGNY contributes to FEZANA both in terms of finances and time of some of its members. Framroze Patel was the Vice-President of FEZANA, Rustom Kevala is editor of the FEZANA Journal, Kaikhosrov Irani chaired its Education Committee, and Dr. Noshir Langrana is involved with organizing the North American Directory and Census.

ZAGNY has a scholarship fund which helps college students with small grants and loans. ZAGNY also supports the efforts of a group led by Erach Munshi that annually collects

donations for the Udvada Atash Behram, and another group led by Jamshed Ghadially and Farokh Tarapore that raises funds for the Parsi General Hospital in Bombay. Donations of around \$8,000 are sent to each, annually.

The present membership of ZAGNY is about 170 households, representing over 370 individuals, mostly in the tri-state area, with some members from as far away as Florida, California and Japan. It is a vibrant community that rallies in times of joy and sorrow. It is a democratically run institution where all officers are elected by majority vote. It has not been possible to name all the individuals who have contributed their time, energy and finances to the success of ZAGNY.

Submitted by Lovji Cama

Two Models

[Continued from page 25]

America who are presently being torn by the convulsive forces of bitter acrimony. One advantage of following the two paths, is that if the reform structure collapses, then at least the traditional structure which has survived the vicissitudes of time, will be there. If on the other hand, the traditional structure breaks down, then at least the new reformist model will be there for Zoroastrians to turn to. I believe that dynamic needs of the New World should be tempered so that it becomes a unifying and stabilizing force and not a destructive force. This can be done by combining the merits and avoiding the defects, that the agenda of both systems display.

[1] This is a condensed version of a paper of the same title presented by the author at the Ninth North American Zoroastrian Congress in Vancouver, Canada in 1992.

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, 1975

Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr
8615 Meadowbrook Drive
Hinsdale, IL 60521, USA

The marble plaque in the foyer of the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr in Chicago reads: "This Darbe Mehr is

a memorial to the men, women and children whose inspiration, determination and courage manifested itself in the realization of this Center, and is dedicated to their children

who shall carry the torch of Zoroastrianism for future generations in North America." It is now over a decade since the Darbe Mehr was inaugurated, and the second generation of Chicago area Zoroastrians is just emerging, to live up to the promise of "carrying the torch" and holding it high.

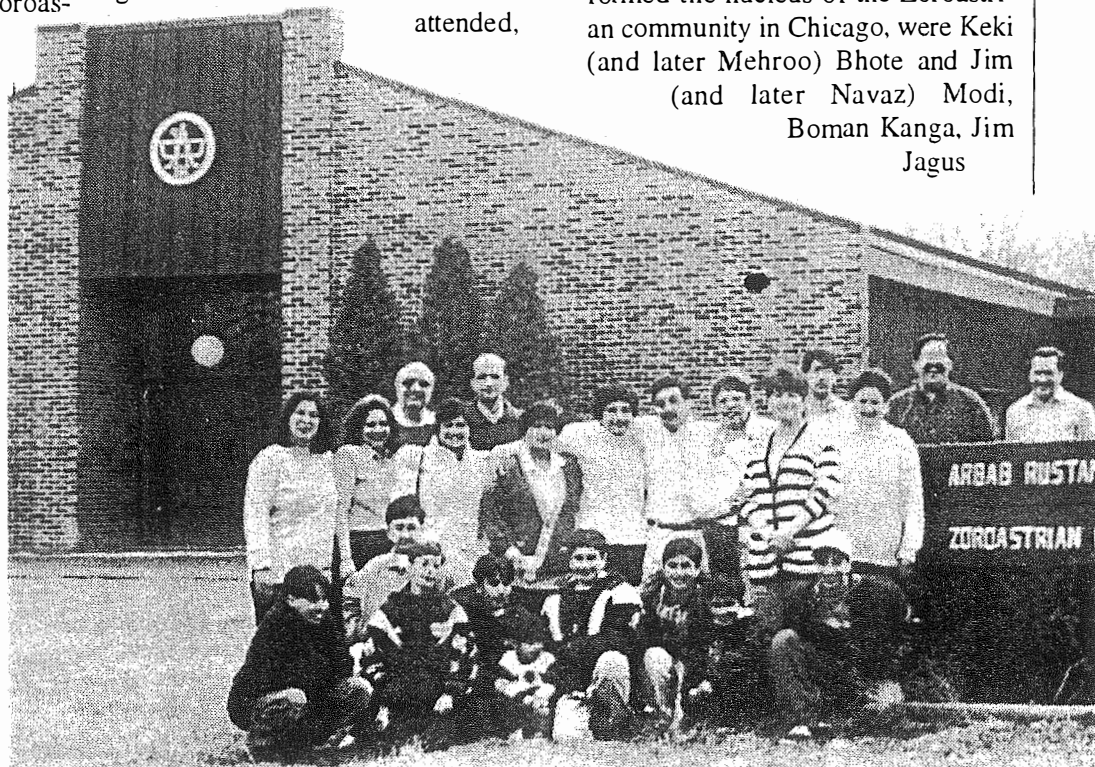
While not one of the largest in size (the ZAC directory lists about 600 men, women and children in Illinois and neighboring mid-Western states — Michigan, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin), the Chicago community can certainly claim to be one of the more enterprising, involved, dynamic, and most importantly, cohesive, groups of Zoroastrians in North America. Parsis and Iranis together have contributed to perpetuate their traditions and enrich the American community.

Today, the Darbe Mehr is a focus for the community's spiritual, religious and social growth. The ZAC calendar is packed. Jashne Sadeh, NavRoz, Mehrgan and Gahambars, are celebrated with Iranian flair, usu-

ally orchestrated by Iranian families. Parsi traditions prevail at the Pateti function in August, and for the preceding five days of the Mukhtad ceremonies. There is "Couples Night Out" to celebrate Valentine's Day, a Halloween Party with costumes, a Graduation Party in June, an annual picnic and camping trip, a children's Christmas Party and a New Year's eve dinner dance. At Avan-Ardvisur-Parab, ladies (and some gentlemen) gather at the Darbe Mehr for an all-day session making *Dar-ni-Poris*. The second Sunday of each month is reserved for a ZAC Board meeting followed by communal prayers, Dhansakh lunch and a lecture program. Senior outings are held once a month. The monthly children's Religion Education classes are well-attended,

Mazda and Jimmy, Jamshed Antia, Behram Daboo, Neriosang Karanjia and his son Zarvan, Ardaviraf Minocherhomji, Keikhosrow Mobed, Jamshed Ravji, and Pesi Vazifdar and his sons Hoshi and Neville. They serve on a voluntary basis, performing Navjotes, Weddings, Jashans, Funerals and other ceremonies for Zoroastrians in Chicago and across North America.

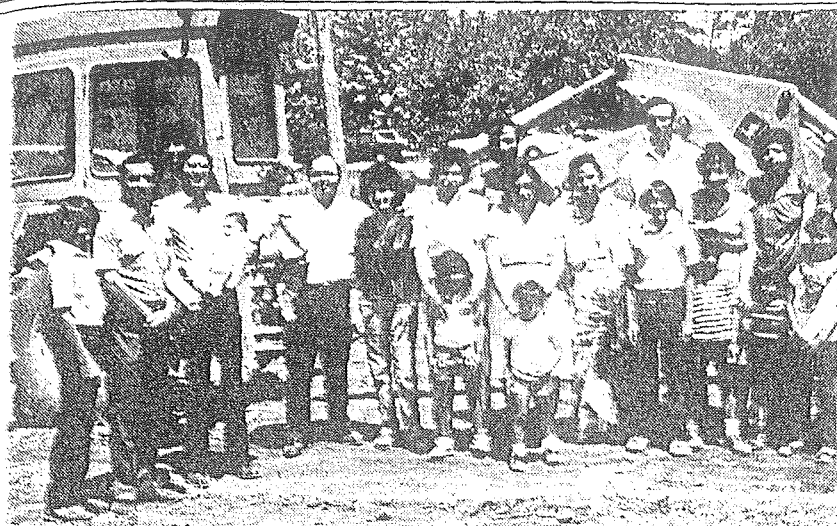
Early Zoroastrian presence. While there may have been a few Zarthushtis in and out of the Chicago area in the early part of this century, on a recorded basis, Zoroastrian presence began in the late 40's (post World War II) attracted primarily by the prospects of higher education and better jobs. Among the earliest of those who formed the nucleus of the Zoroastrian community in Chicago, were Keki (and later Mehroo) Bhote and Jim (and later Navaz) Modi, Boman Kanga, Jim Jagus



preceded by 'sleepovers' at member's homes.

The cornerstone of the community is formed by its priesthood. Chicago is fortunate to have the services of Ervads Dr. Kersey Antia, (who was honored with a shawl by ZAC in 1977, as Head Priest of the Chicago area Zoroastrians) and his sons

(now in Pittsburgh) and Farrokh Das-toor (now in Los Angeles). But there are always surprises. Just last year, contact was accidentally made with a Mr. Rustom Dalal, in his 80's, who came in the 1930's to study engineering and has lived in Chicago since, quite unaware of the Zarthushti community.



(Left) Some ZAC Board and community members at the Darbe Mehr. (Above) At the ground-breaking ceremony, Hinsdale, June 1982. (Right) Community members coming together weekend after weekend, clearing the debris, sanding, scraping, painting, varnishing and cleaning their Darbe Mehr, the first Temple construction in North America.

The pattern of Zarthustis coming from India, Pakistan and Iran, as students to Universities in and around Chicago, then finding jobs and settling down, has by and large continued. In the fifties, the migration was just a trickle — maybe 4 or 5 students a year.

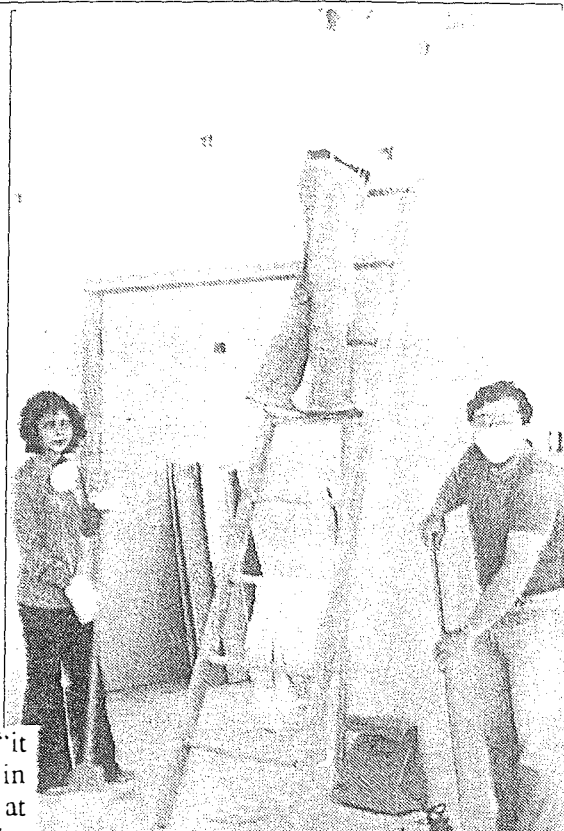
The rate picked up in the sixties, and reached a crescendo in the 70's. Today, the rate of new settlers to Chicago has diminished to a handful of families each year. In the past thirty years, the Zarthusti population in Chicago has increased 10-fold, from around 40 in the 1960s to

over 600 in the 1990s.

Early efforts to organize in the Chicago area were made by Keki Bhote and Jim Modi [see *Zoroastrian Association of America*, this issue, page 32] in 1965. The Association functioned for a few years, and then gradually ceased activities.

In 1974 some Zarthustis, feeling "it was time for a re-synthesis in Chicago", made another attempt at organizing. In a letter to "The Parsees of Greater Chicago", and signed by Kersey Antia, Keki Bhote, Godrej Billimoria, Nari Patel, Dara Rivetna and Rohinton Rivetna, they wrote: "Our hope is that we can graduate from the purely social interface that has characterized our contacts in the last few years. We have children growing up in a totally American milieu, who have no knowledge of the rich heritage of their great religion ... It is important that we begin to attack the inertia and atrophy of the interregnum ... we are therefore calling a meeting of all Parsees in the greater Chicago area on August 11, 1974. About 40 Zoroastrians showed up at the first meeting. The model of "Monthly Meetings" caught on, and has continued to this day, first in member's homes, and then at the Unitarian Church in Hinsdale, until the Darbe Mehr was built (in 1983).

The ZAC was officially chartered a year later, on December 31, 1975. Dr. Bahram Farhadih was elected the first President. Under subse-



quent Presidents — Rohinton Rivetna (1980-86), Kayomars Mehta (1986-1990), Bomi Damkevala (1990-1994) and Pesi Vazifdar (1994-1996), the ZAC has grown from strength to strength.

Unique to the ZAC constitution is the "Open Door Policy" — all willing workers are opted to the Board of Directors, after a 'show of hands' election by the general membership. The Executive Officers are then elected by the Board, from within the Board.

Shortly after the formation of the Association, thoughts turned to setting up proper facilities for rites and ceremonies for the departed. 20 burial plots were purchased in a section of Elm Lawn Cemetery. Subsequently, many additional lots were purchased, partly with a grant of about \$20,000 from the Rustom Guiv Foundation.

In 1977, ZAC hosted the Second North American Zoroastrian Congress. The 1981 Gala Banquet with Guest of Honor Zubin Mehta, was a major fund-raiser for the Darbe Mehr. ZAC has also hosted two Youth Congresses, Mobeds Council Meetings, and a plethora of conferences, lectures, seminars and camps. In 1985 ZAC was the seat of planning for the FEZANA Constitution which was formed and approved in the ZAC library.

In recent years, ZAC has made a significant presence on the Interfaith scene, among the more memorable events being the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions, in which ZAC members played a leading role.

The Darbe Mehr. The Inauguration of the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, on September 3, 1983, was a proud moment in the history of Zoroastrians in North America. In a two-day celebration, filled with social and sacred events, the fire was installed in the Prayer Room, in the large silver Afargan that had been shipped from an agiary in Surat. The

first piece of sandalwood was offered by Madame Morvarid Guiv, for it was through the vision and philanthropy of Arbab Rustam and Morvarid Khanum Guiv that this dream had become a reality.

The Chicago community of 100 families worked against tremendous odds to raise funds and build the Darbe Mehr, the first Temple construction on the North American continent. The realization of this dream was made possible through years of dedicated service by the Chicago Zoroastrians with the inspiration and motivation of Rohinton Rivetna. He had the vision, conceived and designed the building, served as General Contractor, and nurtured the dream through the many crises from conception through inauguration.

Fund Raising. In 1980, Arbab Guiv made an offer of \$150,000 towards a Darbe Mehr in the Chicago area. The community immediately started a massive fund raising effort to supplement the offer. Many banquets, raffles, bake sales, car washes and telephone drives later, they purchased a beautiful, wooded, 2-acre property in suburban Hinsdale, for \$55,000. During this time Arbab Guiv passed away and the Guiv Trust ran into difficulties releasing the funds, some of which were tied up in real estate property in Mettawa, 30 miles Northwest of Chicago. The 20-acre Mettawa property had been purchased by Arbab Guiv in 1978, for a center in Chicago, but had laid unused due to lack of construction funds and due to its non-central location. The community came forward, formed a partnership, the "Parsi Partners", and purchased 5 acres of the Mettawa property from the Trust for \$60,000. The Trust was then able to turn over \$150,000 to ZAC. \$20,000 was donated by Mehraban and Fareedoon Zartoshty for the Library; over \$16,000 by Dr. and Mrs. Abou Mazdai for the Prayer Hall, \$10,000 by Mehroo and Minu Patel towards the

Library to be named in honor of their elders, Nania-Kanga-Patel Library and Learning Center; and \$5,000 by Mr. and Mrs. Zubin Mehta. A \$5,000 donation was made by the Mobed Family—Boman, Jehangir and Keikhosrow, who have been strong supporters since the inception of ZAC.

Construction. On June 13, 1982, in a simple but moving ceremony, ground was broken for the Darbe Mehr construction. Many alternate architectural plans were reviewed and debated, until a design acceptable to both the community and the zoning authorities, was approved. The land was cleared of brush and trees, surveyed, concrete foundation poured, well and septic laid, underground heating, plumbing and electrical work performed, and the erection of the building shell proceeded smoothly.

A major setback occurred in September 1982, when during the roof construction, one of the 50-foot trusses fell, bringing down 30 others. With the grace of Ahura Mazda, the project quickly picked up again, with the installation of the roof, brick masonry walls and floor slabs. The doors, windows, siding, insulation, drywall, floor tiling, electrical, heating and alarm systems were installed. The exterior site grading, landscaping and parking lot were done. Community members worked on weekends, clearing the debris, sanding, varnishing, painting, and polishing, to get the building ready in time for the Inauguration.

Nothing of course happened in the smooth chronology that this account may convey. Events meshed into one another, plans were revised a dozen times. There were times when deep despair was felt, when the project seemed interminable. But out of those storms arose the Darbe Mehr, as testimony to the spirit of the Chicago Zoroastrian community. ❖

Submitted by Roshan Rivetna

Zoroastrian Association of California, 1974

2641 Veteran Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90064, USA



The earliest known migration of Zarthustis in the Los Angeles area, and for that matter, in California, started with the arrival of the late Dr. Maneck Anklesaria in 1922. More Parsis gradually settled in the area, especially in the late 1940s, such as the late Mr. Nani Moos, Dasturji and Mrs. Bode, Minoo Neterval, and Keki Gandhi, and Farrokh and Najoo Dastur in the late 1950s. Initially, a few families socialized, mostly at Dasturji Bode's home. In the 1960s, the LA Zarthustis had formed an informal group which organized social get-togethers, especially for Parsi New Year and Jamshedi Navroze. One of the popular sites for such gatherings was the home of Farrokh and Najoo Dastur in Brentwood. The Dastur family's spacious outdoor facility provided ample room for young and old to play games, dip in the swimming pool, and walk around while enjoying the delicious Dhansakh and sweets prepared by Najoo and her helpers. Keki (and Rose) Gandhi had also compiled a directory of all the Zarthustis living in the area.

As the population of Zarthustis continued to expand, Maneck Bhujwala started proposing the idea of having a formal organization to better serve the growing needs of our community. With my previous experience in

forming the Society for Rapid Advancement of India, in LA, with a group of fellow Indians, I offered to guide our community in the formalities of holding elections, drafting a constitution, and applying for tax-exempt status.

At first, there was some resistance to changing our informal status. There was a valid concern that a formal organization would introduce politics and its negative side-effects. But I was able to gain the support of some people for my proposal, including Jiju and Roshan Motivala, who encouraged me to go forward. As my wife Mahrugh and I were still living in an apartment in Pasadena, the Motivalas offered their house for holding a meeting.

I drafted and mailed a letter to all Zarthustis, on August 23, 1974, inviting them to attend a meeting, for the purpose of creating a formal organization that would, among other things, raise funds for needy Zarthustis. The meeting was held on September 29, 1974, at the Motivala residence, and was attended by Noshir Bahadurji, Maneck and Mahrugh Bhujwala, Farrokh and Najoo Dastur, Dhun Engineer, Minoo and Pesi Katrak, Homai Madon, Rashid and Havovi Lilaowala, Jiju, Roshan and Farida Motivala, Gulbanoo Sukhia, and Burjor and Alamai Vaghaiwalla.

The new organization was named "Zoroastrian Association of Los Angeles", and officers elected to the

first Executive Committee were Noshir Bahadurji, Maneck Bhujwala, Farrokh Dastur, Dhun Engineer, Keki Gandhi, Minoo Katrak, Rashid Lilaowala, Jiju and Roshan Motivala, and Burjor Vaghaiwalla.

A constitution for the organization was later drafted. Mrs. Gulbanoo Sukhia (Najoo Dastur's mother) was the first to donate \$40 to the treasury, I mailed a second letter to the Zarthusti community on November 26, 1974, inviting them to the first General Body Meeting on December 14, 1974. At this meeting the draft constitution was reviewed and updated.

In later meetings of the executive committee, before registering with the State of California, we decided to change the name to "Zoroastrian Association of California" in order to extend it to all Zarthustis of California, as there was no other formal group in the State. In the beginning Zarthustis migrating from Iran became members of our organization and added their lively Persian music at our functions. Later, under the leadership of Mrs. Farangis Shahrokh (formerly wife of India's Air Marshall Aspi Engineer) they formed their separate organization, the California Zoroastrian Center, for language and other reasons.

From about 6 or 7 in 1967, the number of Zoroastrians in 1994 has grown to about 450 individuals from India and about 680 from Iran. ■

Submitted by Maneck Bhujwala

The Whole is Greater

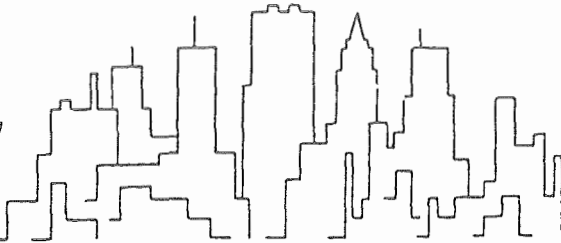
Synergy is everywhere in nature. If you plant two plants close together the roots will co-mingle and improve the soil so that both plants will grow better than if they were separated. If you put two pieces of wood together they will hold much more than the total weight held by each separately. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Zoroastrian Association of Houston, 1976

2105 Olympics Avenue
League City, TX 77573, USA

Houston, the emerald city of the Bayou, sparkles when it comes to its dynamic and successful Zoroastrian community. It all started thirty years ago when Adi Desai came to Rice University from India. In the ensuing years, Adi, other students and young professionals would meet at Mehli and Zenobia Behrana's house on Sunday for dhansak. It was from these Sunday gatherings that the need for an association was felt. By 1976 the community grew to 30 families and at this time the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) was formed. The pioneers included Maneck Chichgar, Sarosh Collector, Kaemarz Dotiwala, Piloo Elavia, Adil Godiwalla, Katie Irani, Hoshang Karhai, Aspi Sethna and Khurshed Wadia.

In the next five years (1976-1981) Houston became increasingly popular with the Zoroastrian immigrants from the Indian subcontinent. The climate was conducive and the oil boom offered great opportunities. Most of all there was Nargesh and Aspi Sethna who helped new families settle in Houston. Since then, the community has steadily increased. Today, the Zoroastrians in the metropolitan Houston area exceed 500. With the increase in numbers, the first generation immigrants felt the need for religious education for their children. This resulted in the formation of a Sunday School in 1981 by Farrokh Mistree. Since then the Sunday School tradition has continued with help from Vahishta Kaikobad,



Ground breaking ceremony: Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center, Houston.

Kaemarz Dotiwala, Sarosh Maneckshaw and Sarosh Collector. Arnava and Roshan Sethna continue to open their home to the community for Sunday School. New programs such as "Let the Children Speak", navjote prayers by Katy Patel, and Gujarati lessons by Yasmin Medhora are currently being offered at the school.

Manashni, started in 1987, the newsletter that has kept Houston Zoroastrians well informed through the years, is edited by Arnava Sethna. These newsletters wouldn't be possible without the generous help of Boyce Engineering, K. Walji attorney, and Collector & Dart who provide copying services and postage.

In 1982 Yezdi and Magdalena Rustomji took members of the youth on

a camping trip and subsequently that year the Youth Group was formed. This group since its inception has actively played a role in the affairs of the Association. Under the guidance of the Rustomjis, Kaemarz Dotiwala and Sarosh Collector the Youth Group has interacted with other youth groups in North America. The first North American Youth Camp was held in Houston in 1987. The Youth Group continues to study our religion, traditions and culture along with other activities such as learning about finance, leadership and organizing, in a fun filled atmosphere with their present sponsor Pervin Sagar.

1987-88 were the recession years and even though a few Houston families moved to other places in search of jobs

there was a significant event that took place and was a clear indication of maturity and cohesiveness within the group. This event was the formation of the Zoroastrian Building Fund, a sub-committee of ZAH. This group was entrusted with the responsibility of fund raising, investments, planning and designing a Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center. Purvez Rustomji and his managing committee have collected over \$400,000, and the Center will be completed this year. This stellar achievement would not have been possible without the help of 41 Zarthustis headed by Kersi Engineer who purchased 20 acres of land in the city of Houston and donated 4.3 acres to the Zoroastrian Association. The remaining 16 acres is planned for a residential complex for the benefit of the community.

Another event which exhibited the dynamism and maturity of the community was the hosting of the Seventh North American Congress in 1990. This Congress not only showed the internal strength of a small community but also located Houston as one of the vital cities in North America for Zoroastrian growth.

1993 saw the start of the Gatha Studies Group. A group of Zarthustis who wanted to study the Gathas started to meet once a month at Boyce Engineering. It is conducted on the basis of the 'shared enquiry' model of group study and is open to all who are interested. The group leaders are Sarosh Maneckshaw and Yezdi Rustomji.

Houshang and Fereshteh Khatibi are instrumental in getting the Irani and Parsi groups together. During the Seventh North American Congress they organized a memorable Iranian night. Along with Behram Varjavand, they organized and celebrated Jashan-e-Sadeh for the first time in Houston. A tradition we hope to follow each year now.

ZAH is proud of our Zarthusti Houstons and feel there is tremendous potential for entrepreneurs here. Within this community you will find at least 35 businesses and each one has carved a name for themselves. Mehrwan Boyce of Boyce Engineering is an authority on turbine technol-

ogy. Homi Davier started Baltic Airlines; Adil Bharucha is a success story in the fast food business; Kairasp Lashkari has earned his reputation in restaurant and catering; Kaemarz Dotiwala in petro-chemicals; Purvez Rustomji in Industrial Coatings; Sarosh Collector, FEZANA treasurer, is a CPA and owner of Collector & Dart; Feroze Bhandara of Mazda Construction is a successful developer and builder; Bapsy Sidhwa renowned author; Behram Yazdani and Kersi Engineer are successful apartment complex owners; and Zarir Sethna of Sethna Financial Group. And we have our share of professional doctors, engineers, insurance agents, educators and scientists that make our ZAH great.

Houston Zarthustis are indeed fortunate to have a number of Mobeds in the area. The voluntary services provided by Ervads Shapur Pavri, Peshotan Unwalla and other Mobeds is deeply appreciated.

Presently Roshan Sethna and her Executive Committee continue to reach and extend the horizon of an active community. The notion of a Zoroastrian community in Houston is not just a gathering of like minded people. It is a place where each Zoroastrian is encouraged to sparkle individually and where each Zarthusti becomes a dazzling vital force in what is known as the Zoroastrian Association of Houston.

Submitted by Aban Rustomji

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, Inc., 1979

2347 Hunter Mill Road
Vienna, VA 22181
(703) 242-3672

Sometime in the early 1970s, Sam Bhatena, who had arrived from India as the Fogerty International Fellow at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, made an announcement in the newspaper of the Indian Embassy and managed to

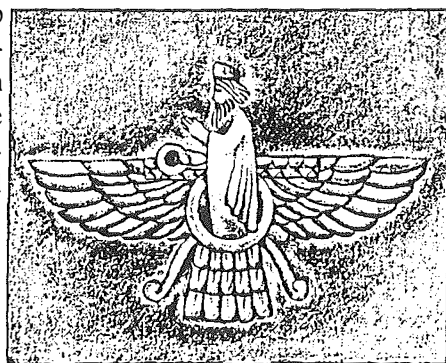
get together a group of about 20 Zarthustis. Others active in this group were Sam's wife Pauruchisty, Soli and Pearl Choksi, Banoo Gracie, Homai Pastakia, Aspi Cambatta and Farrokh Gowadia.

Gowadia provided the all-important Parsi food at the meetings. The group provided a focal point for activities and successfully organized a number of religious and social events in private homes. In the late 1970s there was a marked increase in the number of Zarthustis and the need became apparent for a formal organization.

Many individuals had been inspired by Khojestee Mistree's work urging Zarthustis everywhere to learn about their faith and history and they explored the creation of a formal Association for the entire Washington D.C. metropolitan area and adjacent states. ZAMWI was incorporated as an Association on April 30, 1979.

Goals and Charter; Certain funda-

mental principles guided the creation of ZAMWI: to promote a community spirit and cohesion, but not merely as a social club; to work towards the perpetuation of Zoroastrianism, including the teaching of prayers



and providing basic knowledge of the faith to the young; to increase the knowledge of adults about their faith; to increase the awareness of Zoroastrian history through talks and studies by both Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian scholars; to establish a center of learning and a fire temple on this continent; to increase the awareness of Zoroastri-

anism in the community at large; and to embrace non-Zoroastrian spouses of Zoroastrians and their children in the activities.

The charter welcomes non-Zarthusis to become associate members without a vote or the ability to serve on the Board of Trustees. These progressive principles were adopted at a large public meeting in 1978. The principles continue to be reflected in ZAMWI activities, its stand on Zarthusi affairs in North America, and its deliberate effort from the beginning to nurture young adults so that they could begin by taking the lead in managing the community's affairs.

The first President of the Board of Trustees was Adi Davar, who was followed by Dinshaw Joshi, Rohinton Tengra, Goshtasp Ostad, Rustom Kevala, Shehernaz Joshi Verahrami, and the present president, Kersi Shroff.

In 1985, Rohinton Tengra represented ZAMWI at the FEZANA Constitutional Convention and signed as one of the Founding Members.

Alberta Bertuzzi, wife of Kersi Shroff started the newsletter since the inception of ZAMWI, and has written it all these years, maintaining an unrivaled quality.

ZAMWI's creation coincided with the beginning of the Khomeini era in Iran. The Board gave letters to several Iranian Zarthusis on the basis of which the US State Department allowed them to stay in the US. This also enabled some of them to bring their families here. The following years witnessed a diaspora of Iranian-Zarthusis into the area and their num-

bers became almost equal to those of the Parsi-Zarthusis. The challenge of combining the culturally different Zarthusis was accepted and we feel that we have succeeded. In 1989 a bilingual newsletter was started by Rustom Kevala, which received wide recognition. The community now lives and works together. Today, all

towards a "North American Zoroastrian Center" in the Washington, DC area. The Center would be for all Zarthusis in North America, and would include a library from separate funds donated by Dr. Rostam Sarfeh.

A search for a suitable site quickly revealed that the pledged amount was *inadequate* to obtain a suitable site. At

that time, the Guiv Trust became involved in litigation with the New York Association (ZAGNY), and their interest in the National Center in DC waned. Then in March 1990, several prominent Iranian Zarthusis formed a Vansdar Committee (Vansdar is the Avestan word for 'Center') under the leadership of Khodarahm Shahryary and Dariush Jahanian. This committee was registered in Virginia under the name of Zoroastrian Center and Darbe Mehr of Metropolitan Washington.

The Trustees of the Guiv Foundation revis-

ited Washington and met with the Vansdar Committee and the ZAMWI Board and increased their pledge to \$450,000. Soon afterwards, a beautiful 7-acre tract of land was found in suburban Vienna, Virginia, and acquired for the Center.

Today, the Washington community has the use of a small renovated house on this property, where meetings and religious classes are held regularly. The family of a beloved member, Esfandiyar Jamzadeh, donated money in his memory to convert the back of the house into a Prayer Room. In Spring and Summer, large gatherings often spill over into the outside grounds. A volleyball court has been built and sees much use in the summer.



ZAMWI Board of Trustees: Ardeshir Bakhtiani, Rostam Pourushashb, Feroza Fitch, Kashmira Daruwalla, Kersi Shroff (President), General Khodarahm Shahryary (Chair, Vansdar Committee), Ervad Behram Panthaki, Behram Pastakia, Dilnavaz Bhalla, Farhad Shahryary, Cyrus Desai

publications including the newsletter and annual reports include a Farsi translation, a decision made by Rohinton Tengra; and most talks and discussions are translated into Farsi or English as necessary at all meetings

Establishment of Center. From the earliest days, ZAMWI presidents were trying to obtain pledges for building a center for Association activities. Under the leadership of President Goshtasp Ostad, communications were established with the Guiv Trust, who had expressed an interest in donating funds for a Center in the nation's capital. On July 2, 1988, Vice President Rustom Kevala made an impassioned presentation to the Trustees of the Arbab Rustom Guiv Foundation, who pledged \$250,000

Efforts are under way now to get the zoning and funds for a larger facility. ZAMWI has set aside a building fund and the Vansdar Committee has actively raised donations for building the next phase of expansion.

Friends of another member, Fali Chothia, who passed away unexpectedly in September 1987, started a scholarship fund in his memory. When Mehrbanu Behman Aidun passed away in 1989 at the age of 85, she willed 15 cemetery lots for Zarthushtis, next to where she is buried in Alexandria, Virginia.

Mobeds. For many years, ZAMWI relied on the honorary services of Mobeds Adi Unwalla and Noshir Karanjia of New Jersey, and Purvez Patel of New York. They came ungrudgingly whenever the need arose, took time off work to come and perform funeral and other services. In the last two years, Ervad Behram Panthaki, who has settled in the Washington area, has taken over the honorary responsibilities of a priest. Due to his presence, the pace of religious observances has increased greatly. In 1995, for the first time, ZAMWI held a Mukta ceremony, which was attended by nearly 100 persons.

Ervad Panthaki has also started a religious class for our very young. Adult religious discussions have been organized by Adi Davar, who has developed a 'virtual college' course for the study of Zoroastrianism. Participants are expected to come prepared and at each session, a different member takes the lead role in presenting the topic under discussion.

Youth. Our youth have banded together in a Zoroastrian Youth Club headed by Orang Demehry. They have organized suitable activities for the young, and also meet regularly in a Gatha class. The Club has also been instrumental in raising funds for ZAMWI and other causes, such as relief of poverty among Zarthushtis in Iran and India. Behzad Samya has introduced an innovative plan in which the youth provide various services to members,

part of the proceeds of which are donated to ZAMWI. Last year, the highlight of their activity was a concert of "New Age Music".

ZAMWI has truly come of age and we now look forward with optimism and

enthusiasm towards the growth and continuing unity of the Zoroastrian community in the Washington, DC area.

Submitted by Kersi Shroff

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, 1979

179 Wentworth Lane
Rosemont, PA 19010, USA

The Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware (ZAPANJ) is celebrating its 17th anniversary this year. In the early seventies, it was nothing more than a collection of a handful of Parsis meeting socially at someone's home and discussing the future or reminiscing about the good old days.

As the number of families grew in the Delaware Valley, the parents realized the need for religious education of their children. It was decided to teach all interested children collectively and the first religion class was held at the Cherry Hill Community Hall in South Jersey, and was attended by about a dozen children, a few adults and three instructors. Since then our religion classes and social activities took a more organized form and continued over the years. This informal group even hosted a Gahambar, the first of its kind, and invited Zoroastrians from New York, Washington and surrounding areas. The Gaham-

bar was a great success and has been an annual event ever since.

With a little persuasion from Khojeste Mistree, during his visit in 1977, a formal association was formed and ZAPANJ was born in 1979, under the leadership of the founder President, Mr. Cawas Desai. From a total head count of 44 in 1979, today it has grown into a vibrant association with a membership of well over 200 Zarthushtis.

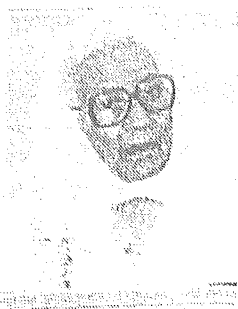
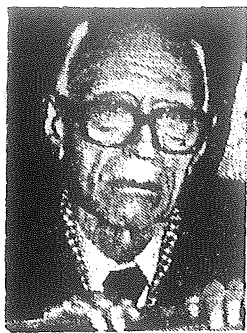


ZAPANJ Board: Dr. Khushrav Nariman, Adi Unwalla, Arnavaz Sukhia, Tehmtan Tehsildar and Jimmy Bharucha (President).

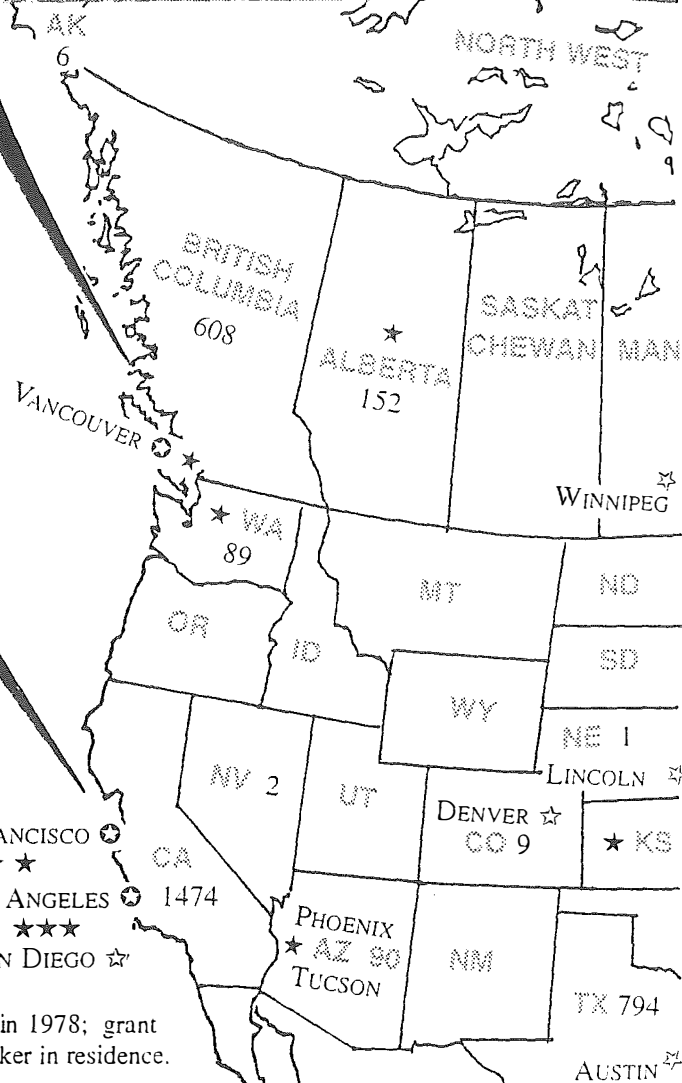
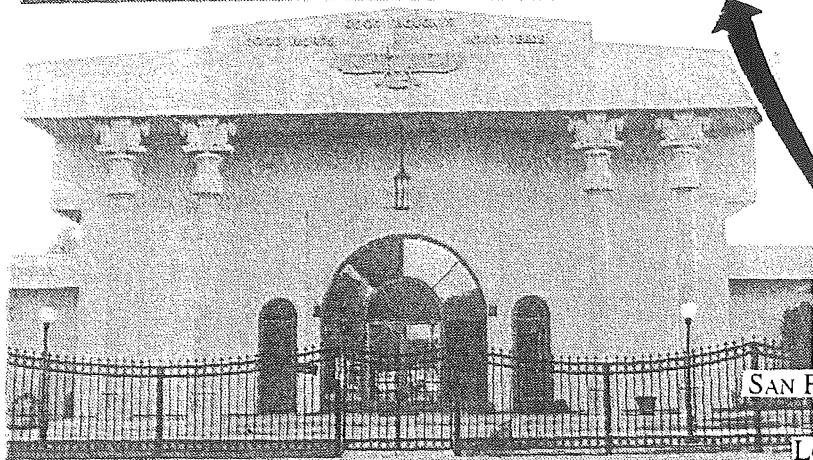
nate to have eight Ervads among its membership.

ZAPANJ conducts religion classes, invites visiting scholars for talks and holds annual religious and social functions. In the past, ZAPANJ has conducted seminars for youth and adults, and hosted the FEZANA Annual General Meetings in 1991 and 1994. ZAPANJ joined the Big Leagues when they successfully hosted the Ninth North American Zoroastrian Congress, the most prestigious bi-annual event for Zoroastrians in North America.

Submitted by Jimmy Bharucha



Arbab Rustam and Morvarid Khanum Guiv



DARBE MEHRS IN NORTH AMERICA, clockwise from top right:

Toronto: Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr, mansion, in Willowdale; purchased in 1978; grant of \$600,000 in memory of Mehraban Guiv, Wintario grant of \$280,000; caretaker in residence.

New York: Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr, purchased in 1977; first Darbe Mehr in North America, grant of ~\$250,000 by Arbab Guiv; fully renovated in 1994; caretaker in residence.

Washington, DC: North American Zoroastrian Center; 7-acre property with house in suburban Vienna, purchased in 1990 by Vansdar Committee; pledge of \$450,000 by Guiv Trust.

Chicago: Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr; first Darbe Mehr construction in North America; grant of \$150,000 from Arbab Guiv (and Parsi Partners); architect/contractor Rohinton Rivetna; built 1983.

Houston: Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center, under construction on 4.3 of 20 acres purchased by 41 Houston families; \$400,000 to date raised by community; architects Surti & Partners; 1996.

Los Angeles: Rustom Guiv Dar-e-Mehr, building constructed in Westminster; architect/contractor Iran Mavandadi/Keki Amaria; grant of ~\$600,000 by Guiv Trust; full-time priest/office manager; 1987.

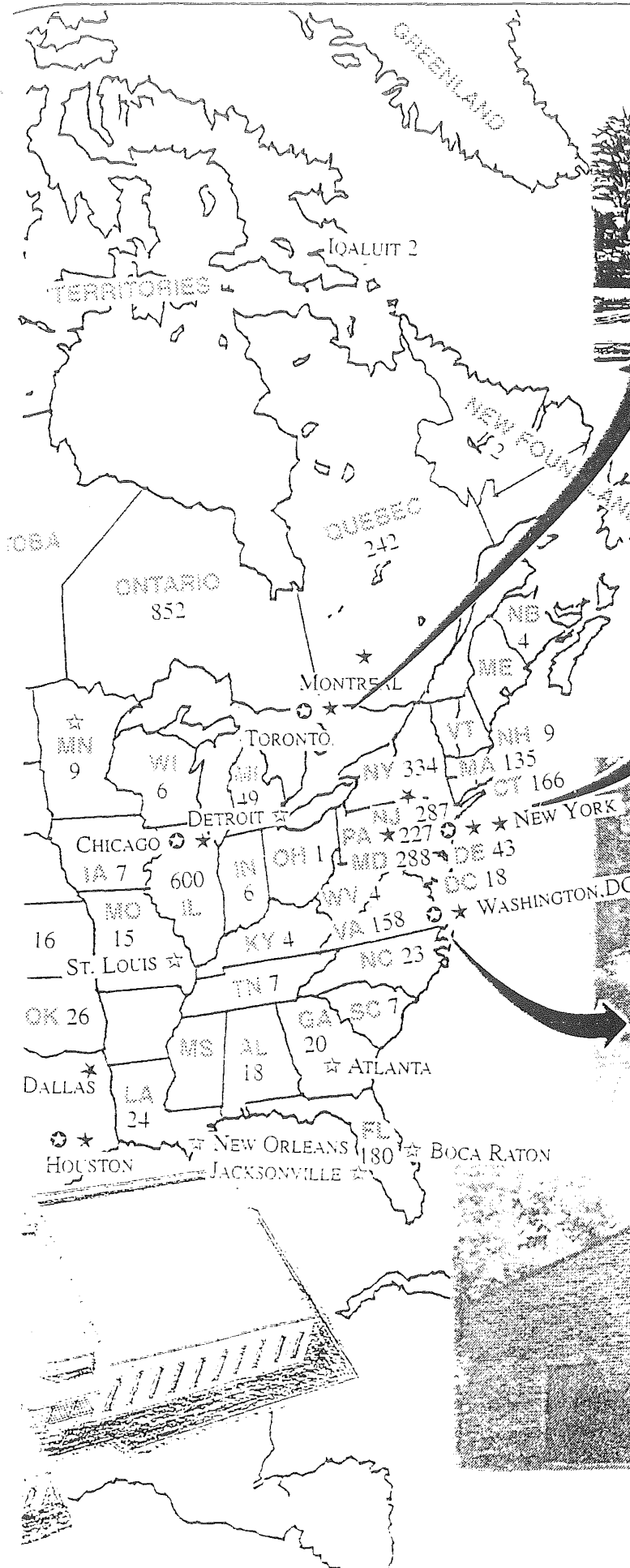
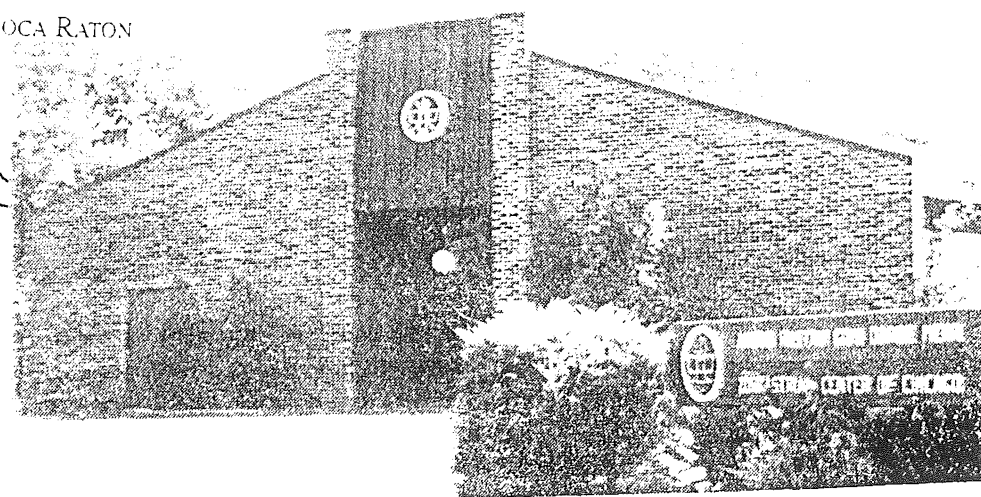
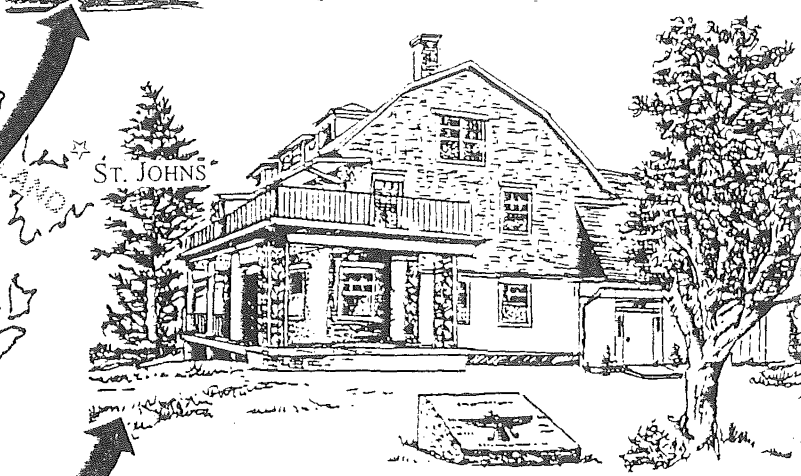
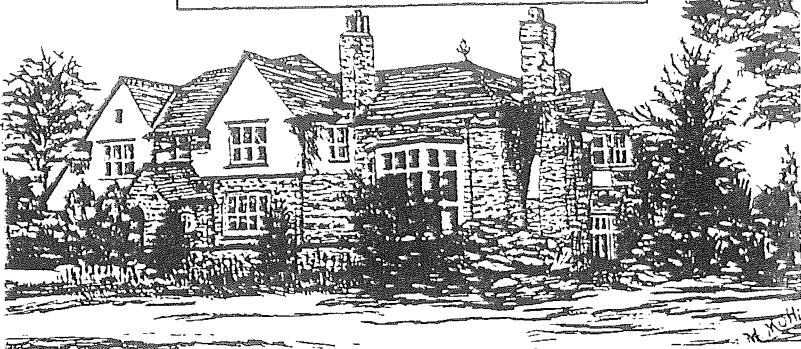
San Jose: Rustom Guiv Dar-e-Mehr; Atash Kadeh constructed on 10-acre hilltop site with panoramic view; grant of \$350,000 from Guiv Trust; leased to PZO for management; property purchased 1986.

Vancouver: Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr, formerly a church, in Burnaby, near Vancouver, purchased in 1985; grant of ~\$200,000 from Guiv Trust; leased to ZSBC.

PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA

Number of Zarthushtis per State based on partial data collected for the North American directory.

- Darbe Mehr
- ★ Association
- ☆ Small Group



California Zoroastrian Center, 1980

Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr
8952 Hazard Avenue
Westminster, CA 92683, USA

A winged figure with the inscription Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds, and four tall pillars with bull-torso tops grace this majestic building on Hazard Avenue, in Westminster, California. The sign reads California Zoroastrian Center. There is an interesting story behind it.

In May 1979, six Iranian Zoroastrian ladies met to find a way to preserve and promote their religion and culture in their new home — America. It was first formed as a subsidiary committee of the existing Zoroastrian Association of California. That did not work. It did not work either with the Zoroastrian Foundation which had its base in Bombay. The committee then affiliated itself with the Ancient Iran Cultural Society. That worked.

In May 1980, however, the Iranian philanthropist Rustam Guiv helped the committee, now registered as a non-profit, religio-social corporation under the name of the California Zoroastrian Center, to be lodged in premises he purchased on Bayless Street in Anaheim.

After a few years of rapidly growing activities, the Rustam Guiv Foundation provided the funds for the land and other philanthropists, including Morvarid Guiv, Dariush and Mahin Jahanian, Khosrov and Pari Jamshidi, Ardeshtir and Parvin Farhangi, Iraj and Mehrtaj Mavandadi, Abour and Jo Mazdai, Farangis Shahrokh, and Jamshid and Mehraban Zartoshty, contributed towards the construction of the building. The architect and construction contractor was Iran Mavandadi. Keki Amaria was the consultant architect. On March 25, 1987, the majestic building was inaugurated with prayers and festivity.

The building, Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr, covers 8,000 sq. ft. on a 47,000 sq. ft. grounds. It has a hall with a capacity of 630 persons, a prayer room with a capacity of 50 persons, an office, a library (with 4,000 books, one of the best sources of reference material on Zoroastrianism in North America), three class-rooms, a kitchen, and a guest apartment. The initial cost was \$536,000. A two-storey annex was inaugurated in 1988 as a youth wing at a cost of \$40,000. The 100-year old fire-altar was donated by a philanthropist and was brought from India. The Center is open seven days a week with a full-time priest, Mobed Shahbahram Shahzadi, and a full-time office manager, Mrs. Sohrabi, which is a rarity in America and Europe. Mobed Shahzadi also prepares the newsletter, *Mahnameh*. The library has been named Keikhosrow Shahrokh Library; a large collection of Shahrokh's books have been donated by his daughter, Farangis Shahrokh.

The Youth Wing is active with religious meetings, literary gatherings, sports and concerts. The Center celebrates festivals, holds religious, cultural and social classes, arranges talks by scholars, holds music concerts and painting exhibits, and publishes a monthly bulletin. It has published five

books on Zoroastrianism, hosted the Fifth North American Zoroastrian Congress and the First North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress. It is an active founding member of FEZANA, and has established close relations with Zoroastrian organizations around the world.

Founding Members on the Board of Trustees were Farrokh Dastur, Aspandiar Engineer, Ardeshtir Farhangi, Dariush Irani, Rostam Sarfeh, Farangis Shahrokh and Mehraban Zartoshty; and later Parviz Kiamanesh, Mehraban Khodavandi, Ali Jafarey and Iraj Mavandadi. Present Board of Directors are: Mahin Sassani (President), Rostam Akhtar-Khavari, Goly Foroughi, Manijeh Kasravi, Rostam Kasravi, Manijeh Ostowari and Banu Shahzadi. The current Board of Trustees, who are responsible for the budget, legal, construction and future planning, are: Shida Anoshiravani, Iraj Mavandadi, Arastoo Kasravi, Rashid Mehin, Banoo Mazdeyasni, Mobed Dr. Bahram Banki and Fari-borz Kamdar.

Faith, high spirits, philanthropy and team work built this, possibly the largest Zoroastrian center outside of Iran, Pakistan and India. ■

From a CZC Report

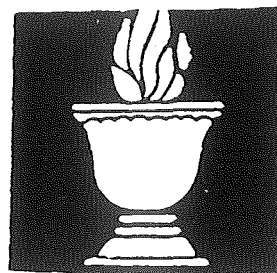
Zartoshti Anjuman of Northern California, 1980

Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr
10468 Crothers Road
San Jose, CA 95127, USA

The earliest known migration of Zarthustis in the San Francisco area started with the arrival of the late Mr. Rustom Bejonji Bana in November 1942. He actively participated in Parsi functions until he passed away in June 1989. He had three sons, Adi, Nasli (or Nowsher whose wife Shirley provided this information) and Narie.

More Parsis settled in the area, especially in the late 1960s and 70s.

One Sunday morning in 1976, as Farrokh Khambatta remembers it, Homi



Patel, who owned a small Indian restaurant, Nataraaja, invited all Parsis to get together and have Dhansak for a nominal price of \$1 at his restaurant. He got an overwhelming response from the community. A direc-

tory of Parsis was compiled, and an informal organization was started by

Mr. and Mrs. Homi Patel, Farrokh and Mahrukh Khambatta, and others, with an annual membership of \$5. Other key people involved in serving the community in those early years before ZANC started, included Jamshed and Gulmohr Gandhi, Homi and Katy Jamshed, Rohinton and Viloo Surty, and Rusi and Dolly Vasania.

As the community continued to grow, it became apparent that a formal organization would better serve its needs. Maneck and Mahrukh Bhujwala who had moved to Northern California from the Los Angeles area in 1979, got together with their old L.A. friends, Dhun and Katie Engineer, at the Engineer's home in Martinez, and after discussions with other Parsi friends, decided to start a formal association. As both families were also founding members of the Zoroastrian Association in Los Angeles, six years earlier, they had previous experience in this matter.

On March 23, 1980, on Jamshedi Navroz, the Parsi community was invited to attend a dinner meeting at a Parsi-owned restaurant, Moti Mahal, in Sausalito, for the purpose of starting the formal organization and electing a committee. The new organization was originally called "Zoroastrian Association of Northern California."

Officers elected to the first executive committee were: Maneck (Mahrukh) Bhujwala, Shazad (Dorothy) Contractor, Darius (Jerroo) Captain, Khorshed (Phillip) Dodge, Rustom (Diana) Dubash, Dhun (Katie) Engineer, Khodayar (Shahnaz) Mazda, Jimmy (Amy) Makujina, Erach (Fatima) Patel, Jiji (Silloo) Patel, and Nergish Surti. Due to the significant sacrifice and support provided by the

spouses, it is important to include their names and give them due credit. A constitution for the organization was later drafted by the committee,



ZANC Board, 1996-1998 at the Dar-e-Mehr in San Jose: (Standing) Peshotan Irani, Yezdi Unwalla, Bejan Malbari, Mehran Sepehri, Bomi Patel. (Sitting) Ernaz Irani, Dr. Jijibhoy Patel (President), Eruch Tarapore, Zarine Batliwalla. (Not in photo) Cyrus Karkaria, Dhun Engineer.

and mailed to all the members, before proceeding to register it with the State of California. Due to conflict with the name of another Zoroastrian association in California, the name of the organization was later changed to "Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California." Zarthustis from India, Pakistan, Iran and other countries became members and participated in its functions.

Dar-e-Mehr. In August 1980, on Pateti (Parsi Shenshai New Year), the newly formed association invited philanthropists Arbab Rustom and Morvarid Guiv to the function. Dr.

Rostam Sarfeh, trustee of the Guiv Trust, on behalf of Arbab Rustom and Morvarid Guiv, announced a pledge of \$350,000 to ZANC, for acquiring a community building and cemetery plot, for the use of the Zarthusti community of Northern California. On October 7, 1980, shortly after pledging his donation to the Zarthusti community, Arbab passed away.

With the increasing migration of Zarthustis from Iran, especially around the end of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi's government, they decided to form a separate formal organization called the "Persian Zoroastrian Organization", PZO.

At first, a joint Dar-e-Mehr Committee of ZANC members, Rohinton Surti and Maneck Bhujwala, and PZO members, worked together to find a suitable site for the temple. However, with its connections to the Trustees of the Guiv Trust, the temple property which was purchased by the Guiv Trust, in San Jose, was leased to PZO for administration and maintenance.

When PZO decided to build a separate Atash Kadeh (fire temple) on the property, and needed to raise funds, ZANC members after much discussion, voted to give a substantial sum of donations amounting to tens of thousands of dollars towards the building expense.

The new temple, which was built six years after the purchase of the property, was inaugurated on Jamshedi Navroz, 1992, with ZANC and PZO members jointly organizing and participating in the ceremonies. Since then ZANC and PZO have continued to have joint functions on Jamshedi Navroz. In 1984, Erach and Silloo Tarapore proposed the idea of holding religious classes, and unanimously endorsed by the Executive Commit-

tee. At first classes were held at the homes of different participants, and later moved to the Dar-e-Mehr.

Ervads Kobad Jamshed and Jimmy Makujina have served the community by performing Jashans, weddings, Navjotes, and funeral ceremonies on a regular basis. Cyrus Mirza has often served as an assistant priest.

The Parsi youth worked together with their Iranian counterparts to hold the successful 1995 Zoroastrian Youth Congress on the Stanford University campus. A fund-raising dinner for the Parsee General Hospital, Bombay, is held annually by Arvi and Homai Kasad, assisted by a host of volunteers.

Today, 15 years after its founding, ZANC continues to serve the community, with the good efforts of volunteers who give freely of their time and energy, by serving on the executive committee and outside the committee. ZANC Presidents have been Jiji Patel, Dhun Engineer, Maneck Bhujwala, Jimmy Makujina, Darius Captain, Erach Tarapore, Phiroze Bhandara, Maneck Bhujwala (2nd term), Peshu Irani, and Jiji Patel.

There is a bright future for the community due to the new interest and dynamism of our youth, who wish to learn about their Parsi Zarthushti heritage and pass it on to future generations, and the timely guidance and support of the adults who also hold religious classes and send their children to Zoroastrian Congresses. ■

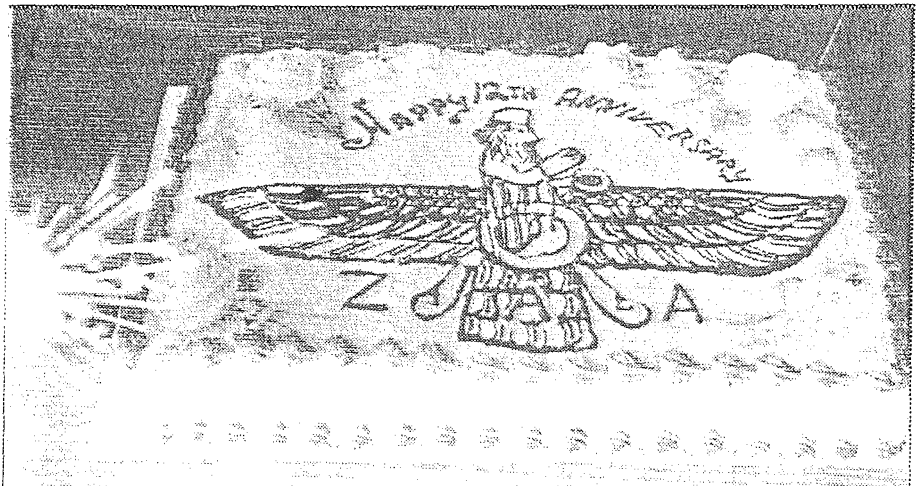
Submitted by Maneck Bhujwala



On Marriage ...

- ❖ Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, and half shut afterwards.
- ❖ Many a man in love with a pretty face, makes the mistake of marrying the whole girl.
- ❖ A woman begins by resisting a man's advances, and ends by blocking his retreat.

Zoroastrian Association of Alberta, 1980



(Top) Zoroastrian Association of Alberta celebrates an evening of Parsi culture. (Above) Celebrating the 12th anniversary in 1992 with cake and fireworks.

10444 18th Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T6J 4Z8, Canada

On January 13, 1980 a group of Zarthushtis in Calgary met at the home of Neelum and Eruch Austin to discuss the formation of a Zoroastrian association, over some doubts and skepticism. The possibility of forming the association province-wide, which would also include members from Edmonton was further discussed at Firdosh and Rashna Mehta's house on March 8, 1980.

After many of the issues of constitution formation were resolved, the association was finally incorporated with the Province of Alberta on December 17, 1980.

Ours is a unique association in many ways. The incorporation involved the formation of Calgary and Edmonton chapters with equal representation on the executive from both cities, which enabled us to be united Province-wide as well as have a certain degree of convenience to perform locally. The

Presidency is held each year alternately by representatives elected from the two cities.

One of the objectives of our incorporation, among others, is to maintain, promote and disseminate the knowledge of the fundamentals, traditions and cultural heritage of the Zoroastrian Faith as propounded by the Prophet Zoroaster, His teachings, prayers, and interpretations thereof, as laid down in the Avesta and other Zoroastrian scriptures.

Our anjuman is a 'teenager' now, and as such, it will go through the rigors of growing up and develop into a strong and united community organization for the benefit of all its members. The Association has participated in many national and international Zoroastrian activities, such as raising funds for charitable purposes, representation at various congresses, and participating in FEZANA.

ZAA has held religious seminars, organized visits of High Priests, scholars and Dasturjis for radio, television and public speaking engagements at multifith programs. We have participated in sharing information about our faith at multifith councils, interfaith meetings, high schools, and University religious studies departments, including the World Religion Day activities and India Council committees.

Over the years various fund raising activities included a Parsi Nite, sale of recipe books, tee shirts and baseball cap sales, and more. Our social programs have included plays presented by children and adults on the life and times of Zarthustra and some Parsi Gujarati comedy plays. We organized the showing of the film "On Wings of Fire" which was brought to Edmonton and Calgary by Maherji Madon in 1986.

We have established libraries in Edmonton and Calgary with books, publications and periodicals which are available at no cost to our members. The Anjuman has conducted various

children's classes, both in Calgary and Edmonton. And youth meetings are held in Calgary.

When it comes to social programs, the ZAA is second to none, especially when dinner is included. True to our religion being known as the "Religion of Good Life", the Zarthustis in Calgary and Edmonton celebrate all festivals, and Dhansak and Pullao are the main features! This includes the Gahambar celebrations and Navroz and Pateti functions. A moment of great importance in the Association's history was the hosting of the 1993 FEZANA Annual General Meeting. And FEZANA Members still remember the "Hooting, Tooting" Western Canadian welcome accorded to them.

Mobed Hosee Karanjia has always been kind enough to provide us with volunteer prayer services during various ceremonies held over the years, including Jashans, Navjotes, funeral and memorial services.

Presidents of ZAA have been Neelum Austin (2 terms), Hushtasp Bhumgara, Marzban Canteenwalla (2 terms), Firdosh Mehta (3 terms), Melie Modi, Zarrin Bharucha (3 terms), Zarrein Gohill, Farouk Khory, Aspi Mandviwala and Dinyar Amrolia. During the 1988-89 term, we had the Canteenwallas in Calgary and the Mandviwalas in Edmonton on the Executive. Someone suggested that we should change the name of our association that year to "Walla-Walla Association of Alberta."

The earliest known arrival is Mr. Dorab Wadia in 1957, in the Edmonton area as an instructor at a local technical institute. Growth has been steady, with no large swings in numbers. Edmonton has about 50 individuals and Calgary, about 80.

Submitted by Sherazade Mehta

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖
*Honor a man for what he is;
 but honor him more for what he
 does.*
 - The Talmud

Persian Zoroastrian Organization, 1981

Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr
 10468 Crothers Road
 San Jose, CA 95127, USA

The Persian Zoroastrian Organization was started by a group of Zarthustis in the San Francisco Bay area around 1979. Among those who met in the early days, and are still involved, are Jamshed Varza, Parvez Varjavand, Khodayar Mazda, Keikhosrow Khorsidian, Farzin Namdaran, Manoucher Mobedshahi and others. The current President is Efsandiar Anoushiravani.

PZO was incorporated in the State of California on June 2, 1981 and Jamshed Varza was subsequently elected as the first President. The Organization gathered for meetings and celebrations at Stanford University.

In 1986, the beautiful Dar-e-Mehr property with a panoramic view, in San Jose was purchased by late Arbab Rustom Guiv Trust and Morvarid Khanum Guiv Trust and was leased back to PZO for 99 years, under the condition that PZO respect the By-laws and regulations set forth by the two Trusts.

In 1993, the Atash Kadeh was built with an additional donation from Arbab Guiv Trust and a large amount raised by the community. The building was inaugurated with a ceremony attended by over 800 Zoroastrians from San Francisco and elsewhere. It is now used extensively by members of PZO as well as the Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California.

The PZO has a membership of about 250 Iranian Zarthusti families, within a fifty mile radius of San Francisco.

This year the Tenth North American Zoroastrian Congress, jointly hosted by PZO and ZANC will be held in San Francisco, and both Associations are looking forward to a productive Congress and a united community.

To the PZO leadership, the most important issue is our survival in this country. Many ideas have been given and many more will come, but above all we must *believe in our heritage* and do what we can to preserve and perpetuate it. We cannot afford to take it for granted. We need to build our organizations block by block, from inside out, using Zarthusti talents and potentials.

Unity is critical. We must put minor differences aside. A good place to start is with our children. In the Bay area, we hope we can work towards unity, and in the near future we can be one organization in Northern California.

Submitted by Esfandiar Anoushiravani



ZAPA Youth Group at March 21st Navroze function, 1994.

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania, 1982

2519 Collins Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15235, USA

The Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania was founded in July 1982, largely due to the vision and foresight of one of its founding members and first President, Mr. Merwan Irani, who encouraged as well as facilitated the formation of the Association. He was assisted by a group of dedicated community members who formed the first Board of Directors of ZAPA. With current membership of 75 individuals, ZAPA holds the distinction of being one of the founding members of FEZANA.

Some of the initial activities of the Association involved adult discussions on various matters of religion, which were held at various members' homes or at a church hall. ZAPA has, over the years, hosted at least three annual events. The first such event is the Navroze gathering which usually coincides with the Annual General Meeting. The next event is in the summer and is generally a picnic at an amusement park. The third event is a

Gahambar, a tradition we continue to support and enjoy. The Gahambar is held around Pateti and has always been preceded by a Jashan ceremony. Each of these events entail a nominal contribution by members and their guests. Whenever possible, a game of cricket or whist drive is conducted and has always been a major success. Since the past two years, ZAPA has also begun celebrating Unity Day. This event has been a pot-luck dinner followed by bingo or whist drive.

The religious committee of ZAPA, which is comprised of 2-3 members, arranges for talks by scholars and well read individuals. Over the years, several respected and knowledgeable individuals such as Dasturji Kotwal, the late Dasturji Minocher-Homji, Khojeste Mistree, K. N. Dastur, Kaikhosrov Irani, Jehan Bagli, Farrokh Mistree and Pallan Ichaporia, have been invited by ZAPA to share their views and knowledge on various aspects of the religion.

Because we view our children as our biggest asset, we place special emphasis on encouraging and educating our youth in matters of religion and the

Zoroastrian way of life. Religious classes are conducted on a regular basis whose primary focus is to promote the understanding and appreciation of our prayers and traditions. In an effort to promote friendships and exchange of ideas, ZAPA has strongly encouraged its youth members to attend Youth Camps conducted by other Zoroastrian Associations. ZAPA recently established guidelines for sponsoring deserving youth to the Youth Congress, thereby reinforcing its commitment to the youth.

To encourage more active participation by our youth, ZAPA revised the composition of its Board of Directors to include no less than two youth members. Concurrently with this change, the age limit for office bearers was reduced from 18 to 16 years.

ZAPA supports and encourages its members to participate in worthy causes such as sending clothes for less privileged Zarthustis in India, donations to various Atash Behram funds and to the Parsee General Hospital.

Submitted by Lily Dastur

Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area, 1983

53 Firecut Lane
Sudbury, MA 01776

This year ZAGBA celebrates its 15th year with membership of over 40 families. We have reached this strength through sincere and dedicated efforts of the 'pioneer families' under the leadership of the Jungalwalas, the Guzders and the Modis. In 1978, they undertook the arduous task of locating community members from the telephone listings and arranged a potluck brunch at the home of the Jungalwalas in Sudbury, MA. The community of the Greater Boston Area met together for the first time. The afternoon was spent in socializing, and conducting a reading of the ancestry of the Parsis from a book that Firoze Jungalwala shared with the attendees.

The challenging task of forming an association, draw up the constitution, and fine tune the entire effort was led by Firoze Jungalwala, and Aban and Rohinton Dhondi. There was a tremendous sense of achievement when ZAGBA was incorporated, in 1982. A Jashan was performed at Kashmiri and Rusi Patel's residence in Concord, MA; Dastoor Noshirwan Hormazdiar officiated at the ceremony. For many of us, it was one of the first Jashans attended in the US, as an entire community, for our children it was the first ever. Over the years, we have come together at Navroze,

Gahambars, Navjotes, Christmas parties, picnics, bowling trips, walk-a-thons, Fourth of July celebrations, etc.

We are fortunate to have in our midst the family of Parichehr and Dr. Farhang Mehr who have willingly given of their time and effort to steer the community in the right direction. We as a community are proud to claim them as our friend, philosopher and guide. We have a very easy and friendly rapport with the Iranian Zarthustis who constitute a small but an important presence in our community.

Like any Association, ZAGBA went through a phase of introspection. Yezdi Dordi, President and Kashmiri Patel, VP, during their tenure, spearheaded an effort to revamp the thinking of the Association, and set into motion a series of brainstorming sessions under the competent direction of Nasswan Dossabhoy. The outcome of this effort was the unanimous realization that the Association should be thinking ahead, more specifically, about the next generation. This has today culminated into a Children's Religion Class which meets regularly once a month at the residence of eager parents. The committed adult volunteers, Firoze Jungalwala and Jamshed Kapadia, have imparted to the children a sense of belonging to a community of which they can be justly proud. We do have a long way to go,

and though the children may not realize it now, the uniqueness of being a Zoroastrian in this country will dawn on them when they are ready to face life independent of parental guidance. There are readings of the Shahnameh conducted by Khorshed Jungalwala for adults at the Children's Religion Class.

An off-shoot of the Children's program is the Youth Group (Bawa Group) formed by Mehernosh Mody and Farseen Jungalwala. Youth members have participated as speakers at Youth Conferences, volunteered for community service, undertaken to befriend new students to ensure they have a comfortable and pleasant start in this country. The Bawas have bonded together in a strong way. This 'thinking group', as I would term it, has the capacity to blaze a trail for the coming generation for whom they will be role models.

Once a month there is a Gatha Study Class, started by Nasswan Dossabhoy and Cyrus Mehta. Members have taken up the challenge of unravelling the message contained in the beautiful verses of Zarthusra. Far be it our intention to create yet another interpretation of the Gathas. Rather, the goal is to understand the message of each verse as Zarthusra would have intended, and practice his message in our daily lives. This monthly activity becomes more rewarding when



*Boston
Zarthustis
at annual
picnic, at
George's
Island,
near
Boston.*

graced by the welcome presence of Dr. Farhang Mehr.

ZAGBA has conducted two seminars on Zoroastrianism at Harvard, the outcome of relentless effort by Khorshed Jungalwala, who as ZAGBA President for the last two terms, has taken the Association to its best ever status. As of April 1996, Khorshed Jungalwala stepped down as President after two successful terms. The mantle now falls on Parastu Dubash, our new President, who, as Vice President and the motivating force behind the Youth Group, has endeared herself to all with her energetic and enthusiastic involvement in the community.

All of these activities are undertaken by ZAGBA in the true Zarthushti spirit of using intellect, and disseminating knowledge for the benefit of others.

I may remark here that we, the first generation immigrants, would realize that the religion in which we grew up back home was no doubt a strong force in our lives, but it was primarily taken for granted by us. Migration has exposed us to many inadequacies to perpetuate our beautiful heritage.

Being far from our deep sunk roots, we ourselves need to ensure that the future generation is as proud to belong to the illustrious community, as we were back home. The ongoing dialog between the youth and the adults which we witness at present, is a welcome sign that there is a growing desire to find meaning into what the older generation stands for. It can be instrumental in fostering in the young generation, a firm assurance that there are responsible adults who have their welfare at heart, and who will ceaselessly work toward that end.

We owe this much to them, and that is what the Zoroastrian Associations established throughout the globe are all about.

Submitted by Dilnavaz Shroff

Iranian Zoroastrian Association, 1986

Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr
249 Weyman Avenue
New Rochelle, NY 10805, USA

During the early 1980s the Iranian Zoroastrian population grew considerably in the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. The need to have a cultural and religious center was a prime motive for the establishment of the Iranian Zoroastrian Association (IZA).

Our history has shown that in order to survive we need to preserve our identity. A society with a 'known identity' can unite, grow and be prosperous for generations to come. The response to the question: "What is our identity?" could take pages or books and is not the intent of this letter.

We believe that it is essential for every Iranian to be aware of the effect of our religion on Iranian culture and history. Each of us should be active to promote the divine teachings of Asho Zarhosht and preserve our rich culture and heritage.

IZA was formed in 1986. The first officers were E. Anoushiravani, K. H. Hemmati, I. Yektashenas, J. Amighi, Mrs. N. Forooghi and Mrs. F. Nejad. The goals of the Association are:

- (1) To preserve and promote Iranian/Zoroastrian religious and social activities, culture and language.
- (2) To maintain contacts between Iranian Zoroastrian and other interested individuals as well as groups here and abroad.
- (3) To foster and cultivate friendship between Iranian Zarthushtis and the people residing in the USA.
- (4) To render all possible assistance to newly arriving individuals and those currently residing here.

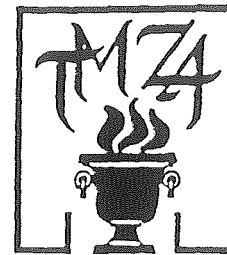
About 45 families and 19 individuals are members of IZA. Present officers are: I. Yektashenas, K. Soroushyari,

Mrs. S. H. Kiyamanesh, Mrs. S. Gojgini, Ms. M. Yazdani, D. Jamshidian, B. Koosheh and F. Bakhtyari.

Submitted by Farshid Bakhtyari

Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman, 1980s

11 Crestwood Drive
Newport Beach, CA 92660, USA



Gordafrid and Tahamtan Aresh have been the moving spirit behind the formation of the Traditional Mazdayasni

Zoroastrian Anjuman, in the late 1980s. TMZA espouses the traditional view on all matters.

Zoroastrian Association of North Texas, 1989

129 Glendale Avenue
Coppell, TX 75019, USA

ZANT, the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas is located in the Dallas-Ft. Worth (DFW) area. It serves the region of Texas that borders Oklahoma to the north and Louisiana to the east. The oil boom brought many Zarthushtis to this area around 1980. Many of us thought we would be the only Zoroastrians here, until we found someone who knew someone, and so on! At a Shenshai New Year's party in August 1982, over thirty people showed up at the Sidhwa's home, and everyone was surprised to "see such a large crowd." We are happy to say that Jamshedi Navroz and the Shenshai New Year have been continuously celebrated in the DFW area since then.





ZANT Board, 1994-1996: Adil Irani, Khurshid Jamadar, Anahita Sidhwa (President), Charlotte Kharas, Kali Buhariwalla, and Shireen Tengra (on floor). Not shown: Nancy Yazdani.

For the first few years the get-togethers were at peoples' homes, and the idea to form an Association finally took root with coining the name ZANT in 1986. A group of nine volunteers undertook the task of hosting the functions in public places since there were over 70 people coming to our celebrations by then.

We also started to write By-laws for the Association and ZANT was officially registered as a non-profit organization in March 1989. Soon thereafter, it joined FEZANA.

Today, there are about 110 families in the DFW area, with another 15 distributed between Louisiana, Oklahoma and Austin. The ZANT Board consists of seven volunteers. Most of our members are in the 20-50 age group, with about 40% of the families having children under 15.

We have been holding monthly religious meetings for children and adults since 1989. One of our most successful Navroze functions was a play

"Zarthusra's Story" performed by our children's class. We have also celebrated Mehergan continuously since 1987 and this year we did our first Jashne Sadeh. A Gahambar in Shenshai Mah Dae has been held twice, with a Jashan and Dhansak.

We are fortunate to have a priest, Ervad Poras Balsara who graciously performs all needed ceremonies for the community. Lectures by visiting speakers have been well-received, and we have been able to host at least one such event every year. Cooking demonstrations, toran-making classes, cricket matches and swimming parties for teens have been some of our other activities. Another tradition has been a membership picnic with freshly grilled hamburgers to help folks remember to pay their dues!

We have just established our Building Fund and fund-raising efforts for that are beginning to pick up speed.

The community at large is also beginning to recognize the Zoroastrian

presence in this area. For about four years now, the Indian community has enjoyed the "Shahi Falooda" we sell at the Anand Bazaar. There is an active Multifaith Group in Dallas, and we have participated in many of their activities, giving presentations on Zoroastrianism, and sharing our religious and cultural heritage.

ZANT is a growing and vibrant organization, with many enthusiastic members. Each of us is enriched by the presence of the others, and we look forward to a bright future.

Submitted by Anahita Sidhwa

Zoroastrian Association of Kansas, 1990

8413 Bridal Dale
Lenexa, Kansas 66220, USA

Kansas City — the city of fountains! 170 years old. Total population — approximately 2 million, of which 30 families are Zoroastrians. The first known Zoroastrians to settle in this area came in the late 1960s. Since then, several Zoroastrian families have made this their home. Some have moved on to other cities because of their jobs, others to get away from the cold, the rest have stayed on.

In 25 years, the community has grown to 30 families. There were doubts and skepticism to forming an Association. Would it be effective? Was it necessary? After a lot of discussion, ZAKA was born in June 1990. A constitution was drawn up, and a Board of Directors elected. The Board serves for one year, to be replaced by annual elections. Currently, the fifth Board is functioning. Today, the younger generation has taken over the responsibility through a peaceful transition and the outcome is encouraging. Some elected members travel as far as 3-4 hours to attend meetings.

We may not be able to compete with some of the larger communities, but we do have our fun, interspersed with



Left, ZAKA members celebrate Navroze. Kansas, 1996.

Right, Manijeh Deboo and Cooverbai Deboo, probably the most senior member of the community.

Far right, ZSWS Board Members, Mehraban Mehr, Parviz Hamavand, Behram Deboo and Alayar Dabestani, President,

education and religious activities. We have social gatherings, picnics, lectures, together with religious activities and monthly religious classes for the kids. The participation from neighboring states (even 3 to 4 hours away) has been enthusiastic and encouraging. Our children have developed a religious identity and take pride in their culture. Some even write and talk about Zoroastrianism. In the past 3 years, there have been 7 Navjote ceremonies in our community.

Our small community demonstrated how working together can bear results. In September 1995, we hosted the FEZANA Annual General Meeting in our city. Days and days of planning and hard work paid off. The entire community participated, and did their share, be it cooking a dish, or picking up delegates at the airport, or hosting a family, or organizing the meeting rooms. What a tremendous achievement for a tiny community.

The social activities have helped generate a spirit of cooperation. Entrepreneurship is abundant in this community. More than 20% of the families living in this area have their

own businesses. Some have even helped others in founding a business. The net result — a close-knit community where the Parsis and the Persians stand shoulder to shoulder and speak as one.

In retrospect, we heartily endorse and encourage small communities to form an Association, define goals and work together to fulfill them. ■

Submitted by Mehernosh Sodawaterwalla

Zoroastrian Society of Washington State, 1990

*11404 51st Avenue
Marysville, WA 98271, USA*

In the summer of 1957, Behram Deboo visited the Seattle area. Drawn by the beauty of the state with its snow-capped mountains, foamy flowing rivers and crystal clear lakes, he returned in 1959, to live and work as a medical technologist in Everett. By accident, Behram found at the University of Washington a Zarthushti student, a relative of Homi and Soonu

Engineer of Vancouver, BC. This could, very well, be the beginning of the Zoroastrian migration to this State. In 1965, Behram married Manijeh. He was joined by his brother Dara and his family in 1966, another brother Sam and his family in 1968, and mother Cooverbai in 1972. In 1973, late Adi Jokhi, Soonu and sons, Bomi Khambatta and Manucher Siroosi and his wife moved to the Seattle area. Alayar Dabestani, Gitty, and their children came from Vancouver in 1979. Mehraban Mehr also moved to the area.

The Zoroastrian population in Vancouver BC was increasing at a rapid pace. Zarthushtis from Washington State associated closely with them, traveling 120 miles to attend functions there, and became Associated Members when their Society was formed.

Genesis of ZSWS. In the early 1980s, after the revolution in Iran, jobs (the Boeing plant in Everett is famous for being the biggest factory in the world) brought more Zarthushtis to the State. They started meeting socially. Behram Deboo was request-



ed to be chairperson of the ZSBC Education Committee, and served for almost 5 years commuting to Vancouver for meetings, seminars and conferences. Late Jamshedji Pavri also suggested it was time to form an Association. Thus the idea was born.

On June 22, 1988, Behram Deboo sent out a letter to all known Zoroastrians inviting them to a meeting to discuss the feasibility of forming an Association. The meeting was held at Atrium, at the Greenbaum furniture store in Bellevue. 32 Zarthustis came, including 4 from Vancouver. We needed a bigger place for meetings, prayer and sharing fellowship. While most were for the formation of an Association, a minority felt we should wait a little, and get to know each other first. For the next six months we met at the Atrium for social and educational activities. As the number of attendance dwindled, we ceased meeting at this place.

Interfaith participation. Behram and Manijeh joined the Committee of ministers, rabbis and other religious leaders to form the Interfaith Council of Washington. In 1986, the first Interfaith Memorial Day Worship Service took place at the Seattle Buddhist Church, where Behram recited a Gathic canto, and others sang a Monajat. Every year, the Deboos partici-

pate in Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, gave lectures and a radio talk show. During these encounters we found out to our surprise that many did not know who Zarathushtra was and had never heard of a religion called Zoroastrianism. Again the need for an organization surfaced.

On February 3, 1990, Behram Deboo sent out a letter inviting Zoroastrians to attend the first formal meeting on February 20, 1990 at the Dabestani residence. Alayar Dabestani and Behram Deboo emphasized that the prime objective is to form a religious, cultural, social and educational organization for the advancement, appreciation and preservation of the religion of Zarathushtra. Among the advantages presented were: nonprofit tax status; interfaith representation; joining other Zoroastrian organizations and getting informed; the strength of group effort versus individual; getting help from other charitable entities; establishing relationships with State and Federal governments, Congress, Mass media and UN; and above all to know each other, perform religious ceremonies, and preserve our great heritage and beliefs for our future generations.

It was unanimously agreed to form a Society and Behram Deboo was nominated to write the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws. Five directors

were elected to pursue our goals of incorporation: Alayar Dabestani, Behram Deboo, Dara Deboo, Mehraban Mehr and Farhad Namdaran. Using the charters of other Associations including FEZANA as a guide, Deboo and other members met for weeks to come up with a workable draft. On August 5, the Articles were approved and signed by the incorporators. On August 10, 1990, Behram drove up to Olympia and filed the Articles with the Secretary of State of Washington. On that very day the Society of Washington State was registered as a nonprofit organization.

About 50 adults and 17 children (some from Vancouver) attended the Jashan Ceremony at the Dabestani's on September 14, 1991, to celebrate the foundation of the Society. The Jashan was performed by Ervad Bomi Khambatta. In 1992, Behram applied to IRS for tax-exempt status. The lady in charge had not even heard about our religion. She seemed to be perplexed. Behram gave her a short history and told her about Cyrus the Great, mentioned in the Bible. She was fascinated, as she was herself Jewish. Tax-exempt status was later granted.

Present Directors are Behram Deboo (President), Mehraban Mehr, Mah-

banoo Mehr, Mehrdad Mirzarian and Khodi Kaviani. A Committee under Azita Namdaran is in charge of children's education and social activities.

Today, the interfaith work continues; we get together and celebrate festivals; have a variety of religious, social and educational activities; in 1993 we hosted a conference on "Development of Zoroastrian Thought from Achaemenian Times to the Modern Era"; organized lectures by Kaikhosrov D. Irani at the University of Washington philosophy department, attended by academia, students and the general public; we publish a Newsletter; we are active participants at the FEZANA AGMs and at Congresses. Because of unavailability of a priest, Behram received training from both the Parsi and Iranian priests to per-

form ceremonies and has been serving the community when needed.



Goal. Our goal is to preserve our rituals, customs and traditions. Without them, we believe that a community cannot survive. They bind us into a common heritage. We wear white caps every time we pray. We believe in Humbandagi. Thus we are creating an awareness among the adults as well as children.

All of these, we believe, create a web of Zoroastrian consciousness and cohesiveness. Parsis and Iranis are united under one society as we strongly believe that we are all Zoroastrians. We pray, may Ahura Mazda help us in our endeavor to live as a vibrant, living community, dedicated to the teachings of Zarathushtra. ■

Submitted by Behram S. Deboo

Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada, 1991



118 Riverview Cr, Bedford,
Nova Scotia, B4A 2X4, Canada

Adi and Jaloo Jagosh settled in Kentville, Nova Scotia in 1964, followed in 1965 by Jal and Amy Kazak

in St. Johns, New Foundland; and Aspy and Thrity Bhatena and Eruch and Perveez Contractor in New Brunswick. Growth in Atlantic Canada is very slow, and not many

Zoroastrian Association of Arizona, 1990

6676 Harran Drive
Tucson, AZ 85704, USA

Mr. Roshan Bhappu, a mining engineer is probably the earliest Zoroastrian to have come to the Tucson area. Along with Burjor Choksey, also a mining engineer, they were the only Parsis in this area for years.

In the early 1980s, Phiroze and Kathy Rivetna began the move towards organizing formally, and started bringing the community together for functions at their home in Phoenix. The community has grown steadily over the years to about 125 individuals: meetings and functions are now held 3 or 4 times a year, alternating between Phoenix and Tucson, which are 100 miles apart. A library is being developed at a member's home, and there has been some interest in starting Children's Religious Education Classes.

The Association was formed in 1990, with Mr. Bhappu as the first President. Succeeding Presidents have been Darius Ghaswalla, Phiroze Rivetna, Dinshaw Contractor and now, Roda Mistry. ■

Nova Scotia 1994: Zarthustis at one-day seminar with Mobed Fari-borz Shahzadi (center, back).

new Zarthusti families have moved in. However, in the last 10 years, about 12 new children have arrived. There are currently 13 families in Nova Scotia, 1 in New Brunswick and 1 in New Foundland. The Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada was formed in 1991; though it is not formally registered. Functions and community gatherings are hosted by families at each other's homes.

Though far in distance, the ZAAC is in touch with other Associations and with FEZANA. ■

Submitted by J. A. Jagosh

PERSONAL PROFILE

Interview with Dr. Mehraban Shahrviní Editor-in-Chief, Payk-e-Mehr

Payk-e-Mehr is published in Vancouver, Canada and distributed in over 138 cities.

Dr. Shahrviní, can you please tell us for how many years has Payk-e-Mehr been published, and what led to its conception?

Payk-e-Mehr has been published since February 1987 from Vancouver B.C., and this is its tenth year. The aim of the magazine is to promote Persian Culture and the Zoroastrian religion, which are both part and parcel of each other. The magazine was started to fill the need of the Iranian population abroad for a Persian magazine, especially with the influx of Iranians to the Northern Hemisphere due to the revolution. Payk-e-Mehr filled this void and was a connection with the homeland and the various pockets of Zarthustis all over the world, keeping them informed of each other, thus keeping them united.

What topics are covered by Payk-e-Mehr, and what is the scope of their coverage?

The main topics discussed in Payk-e-Mehr are cultural, social, news, religious, historical and sometimes critical. We try to avoid politics as far as possible because our aim is the perpetuation of Zarathushtrian Culture and Religion, based on the Gathas, and the spread of our tradition, free from superstition, and finally to act as a network between all Zarthustis — Parsis and Iranis.

Who are the writers of Payk-e-Mehr?

Our writers are mostly Zarthustis — Dr. Harvesf, Mr. Peshdadi, our learned Mobed-e-Mobedan (High Priest) Rustom Shahzadi, Mobed Dr. Oshidari, Prof. Mehraban Khodavandi, Dr. Dinyari, General Shahryari, General Aryaban, Mr. Sohrab Dahmobe, Ms. Turan Shahryari, Ms. Shahin Bekhradnia and many more. There are also non-Zarthusti scholars like Prof. Reza, International scholar from Ottawa, Prof. Dr. Yashetar, publisher of Encyclopaedia Iranica, Prof. Bakhtiari from Rome, Prof. Ayni from Tajikistan, Dr. Vahidi from Tehran, Engineer Astiyani from Munich and others who are all in love with the culture and philosophy of Zarathustra.

In recent years, many Parsis have joined us like Ms. Bella Tata, Mr. Rohinton Rivetna, Ms. Dolly Dastur, Mr. Shahpur Captain and others who send articles and messages.

How do you cooperate with other Zarthusti publications like FEZANA Journal?

We have a healthy connection with most publications, especially FEZANA Journal and it is complementary. We also exchange ideas with Fravahar of Tehran and Parsiana



Dr. Mehraban Shahrviní, in 1960

pages. We publish 5-6 issues per year.

Where is Payk-e-Mehr distributed?

Payk-e-Mehr is sent to 138 cities in Asia, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Central Asia, South America, South Africa, and of course North America.

Dr. Shahrviní, are you the owner, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief? And did you have any previous experience?

Yes, I am the owner and Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Payk-e-Mehr. My son, Mahyar is the coordinator. I was on the Editorial Board of Hokht magazine which was published in Tehran for many years. I was also a writer in the Physicians magazine of Iran and the Sepahan weekly magazine. In the past ten years as publisher, I have gained a great deal of experience which I intend to use in preserving, uplifting and helping in the progress of our Zarathushtrian culture.

I hope with the grace of Ahura Mazda I will be successful in this endeavor.

A New Publication **ZOROASTRIANS IN NORTH AMERICA**

(Directory and Yellow Pages)

PUBLISHED BY FEZANA

First Edition

July 1996

This first edition of the North American Directory and Business Yellow Pages will be launched at the Tenth North American Zoroastrian Congress in San Francisco, July 1996.

\$10 per copy.

For information, contact: Noshir A. Langrana, 19 Brookfield Way, Robbinsville, NJ 08691, Tel: (609) 275-9154.

email: langrana@maya.rutgers.edu

BOOKS AND SUCH

ZOROASTRIANS IN BRITAIN

By John R. Hinnells

352 pp. Hardback

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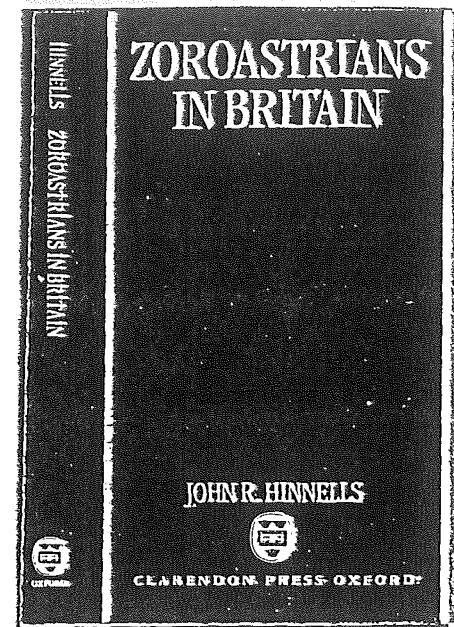
Oxford University Press, New York.

John R. Hinnells is Professor of Comparative Religion, University of London and Head of the Department for the Study of Religion at the School of Oriental and African Studies. Prof. Hinnells is no stranger to the Zarthushti community, having published extensively on the subject. This book is the first of the Ratanbai Katrak Lectures at the University of Oxford in 1985.

A friend of Zoroastrians for decades, John Hinnells is singularly qualified to write about Britain's Zoroastrians,

the oldest South Asian minority with a history going back to 1724. He notes: "my decades of contacts with Parsis in Britain and around the world have been times of great happiness because of the generosity and the *love of the good life* for which Zoroastrians are known." This book is dedicated to Dastur Dr. K. M. Jamasp Asa, High Priest of the Anjuman Atash Behram in Bombay, and the late Dastur Dr. Sohrab H. Kutar, High Priest of the Zoroastrians of Europe. These holy men made Hinnells realize why, in practice as well as in theological terms, Zoroastrianism is referred to by its adherents as the *Good Religion*.

From the contributions of MPs Naoroji and Bhownagree in the 19th century to the transmission of their heritage and concerns today, this is the first complete study of the community right up to the 1990s. Today, British Zoroastrians number over



4,000. They include a variety of members from rural and urban India, Pakistan, and more recently from East Africa and Iran, and many who are British-born. The motivations behind the migrations of the various

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groups were different, as were their perspectives of the British. For those from India and Pakistan, Britain was mainly a land of educational or career opportunities. For Iranian and East African Zoroastrians, Britain offered a safe haven.

Early Zoroastrian Settlers. The earliest Zarthusti settlers in Britain were the Parsis who came from India more than a century ago. No other religious group had such a network of business and intellectual contacts with the British prior to settlement. Parsis not only carefully recorded their contacts but produced literature for their community in India and other literature for the British to condition the British perception of their small community.

The first Zoroastrian Association was founded in London on August 15th, 1861 by Cama and Naoroji and six funds were established. Although the size and number of Associations have increased since 1861, several original concerns have been achieved and preserved: notably the burial ground, charity work and a permanent religious center. The name of the Association was changed to Zoroastrian Association of Europe in 1971, and to The Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe in 1979. The international perspective was expanded with the formation of the World Zoroastrian Organization in London in 1980. Hundred years after the first Association was established, it has become more international in its outlook and membership.

In the Introduction, Hinnells gives an excellent overview of Zoroastrian history covering religious literature, beliefs and practices, purity laws, the question of who is, and is not a Zoroastrian, traditions and main rituals and the symbolism of the fire in a temple.

Religion and a Sense of Identity. The great majority of Zoroastrians consider that religion is fundamental to their sense of identity. Further,

there is a link between race, religion and history. There is a strong pride not only in having survived oppression but also in having influenced major religions and contributed a great deal to the history of different nations. Labels like British or Indian merely indicate the country of birth; ultimately, identity depends on the strength of one's religious belief and commitment — one's Zoroastrian-ness. To preserve the Identity, a knowledge of the religion, its traditions and practices is important. A complex range of factors affect the extent and ways in which people preserve the tradition [p. 279].

To quote Hinnells: "... it would be mistaken to ignore the very strong element of continuity in the lives of most Zoroastrians: the shared consciousness of their allegiance to the prophet and to non-Islamic Iran; the ideals generally valued even by those who do not think of themselves as religious, particularly honesty (even among Iranian Muslims, Zoroastrians have a strong reputation for integrity and reliability), generosity and charitable giving, hospitality, hard work, strong family values, tremendous emphasis on individual responsibility, immense determination, and an unashamed enjoyment of the good things of life. In their image of Zoroaster, as a determined warrior for truth, they see their ultimate role model."

The last chapter lists ten factors that affect preservation of a religion in migration. These are: where people come from; their perception of the host country prior to migration; why they migrated; what people were before migration (their age, education, and skills); when they migrated (e.g. in the 1960s); who they migrated with (alone or with family); where they migrated to; what people do after they settle (education, friendships, visits to the old country); who they are (educated professionals

or business people); and lastly, events external to the community. Many of the above factors also apply to Zoroastrians born in Britain. The most significant factor here is the urge to search for their roots and to preserve their identity.

Approaching the Third Millennium.

What then is the future for British Zoroastrians? As the third millennium approaches, diaspora religions may strengthen rather than diminish. British Zoroastrianism may well be different from the religion in the old country or from what it was when it arrived, but it would be wrong to assume that Zoroastrians will be assimilated or turn away from their ancestral religion. What is striking is how traditional Zoroastrian values such as benevolence, determined pursuit of justice, individual responsibility, concern for the *Good Creation* and the *Good Life* continue to be maintained. All indications are that Zoroastrianism will continue to be a living religion in Britain.

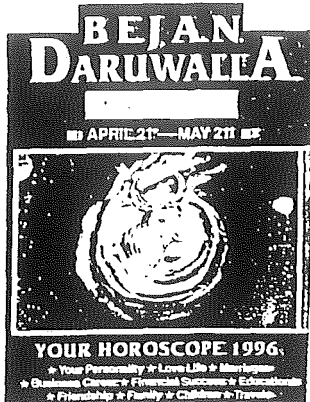
Zoroastrians in Britain is a welcome and timely addition to the range of books on our religion. John Hinnells has done an excellent job of researching the subject, and exploring many important contemporary issues such as racial prejudice, conversion and intermarriage, generational differences, purity and pollution, the aura of fire and its power and many more.

The book contains such a wealth of information on our religion that each Association can use it to produce religious instructional materials. In his extensive contacts with the community, he has laughed and learned with many and the community owes him a debt of gratitude.

The book is well researched with a Bibliography and an Index. We look forward to his next book which will cover Zoroastrianism in North America. ■

Book Review by Adel Engineer.

Bejan Daruwalla Horoscopes



The 1996 Horoscopes by Bejan Daruwalla, for each sign of the Zodiac are now available. Each booklet shows your annual horoscope,

detailed monthly forecast, detailed weekly forecast; and your lucky number, color, day, herb, flower, gem and talisman. Order (Rs. 25 per copy) from Bejan Daruwalla, 3606 Wilson Blvd., #2, Arlington, VA 22201, Tel: (703) 243-7575.

Women in Zoroastrianism: A Promise Denied?

WOMEN IN ZOROASTRIANISM
By Ketayun Gould
Chapter in Religion and Women
Ed. by Arvind Sharma,
State University of New York Press,
Albany, New York
ISBN 0-7914-1689-5
290 pp, 1993, \$19.95

Could Zoroastrian women, even the highly educated, accomplished, professionally successful ones you know, *not* be equal to the men they stand by? Ketayun Gould's study of women in Zoroastrianism examines religious literature and social customs to reveal that sadly the prophet's promise remains unfulfilled and our women are not equal participants in the religious and social experience.

As a distinguished sociologist and a Parsi Zoroastrian, Gould is in a unique position to comment on the issue. Her approach is historical, her perspective is feminist. She takes as her premise the view that although religion can shape a new social order, socio-political institutions influence a religion much more than religion shapes society.

The ancient Iranians (pre-Zarathustra) had an ambivalent attitude towards women. Heaven, for them, was a patriarchal paradise which mortal women were incapable of attaining. And yet, the soul of a dead man was seen as meeting "the maiden of the bridge" on its heavenly journey. Gould observes that patriarchal soci-

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The Journal is a research tool for the needs of scholars, students and the general public interested in Zoroastrian studies and other related Iranian subjects, and can be used as an available reference source dealing with history, culture, religion, archeology, geography, literature, linguistics and philosophy of pre-Islamic, Zoroastrian Iran and modern-day adherents of the religion living in Iran, India, Pakistan and in diaspora in America, Europe and other parts of the world.

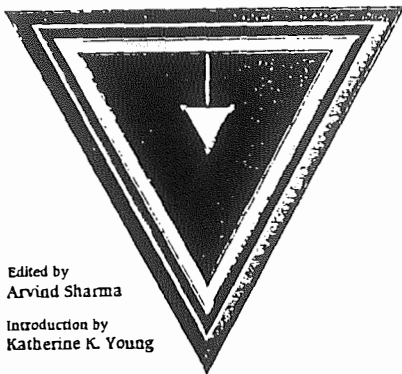
This first issue is the result of field research conducted by three prominent members of the Zoroastrian community of North America, Mr. Adi Daver, Mrs. Khorshed Jungalwala and Dr. Pallan Ichaporla. Future issues will seek to publish research conducted by international scholars and academics.

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Please send check, made to FEZANA, marked "Research Journal", to Mrs. Dolly Dastoor, President, FEZANA, 3765 Malo St., Brossard, Quebec J4Y 1B4, Canada, tel: (514) 462-4638, or to Mr. Rohinton Rivetna, 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, tel: (708) 325-5383.

eties like that of the Indo-Iranians often developed misogynist religious traditions.

RELIGION and WOMEN



Edited by
Arvind Sharma
Introduction by
Katherine K. Young

Zarthusra challenged this pagan tradition by promising the hope of salvation to both men and women. The Avestan texts present men and women as participating equally in the religious experience. Zarthusra preached that Ahura Mazda needs both genders to fight against evil. Gould makes connections between social mores of the time and religious imagery from the scriptures to show "how far the prophet went in presenting new ideas" to help followers accept his message.

Although Zarthusra's enlightened views did not transform ancient Iran into an egalitarian society, they elevated the status of women in religion and in everyday life in that the traditional roles of women became recognized and appreciated as never before. Although society continued to be male-dominated, "the religion emphasized the *mutual* responsibilities of husband and wife." Now, the woman's work in the home, ranging from daily cleaning to nurturing the family, was considered an act of prayer in itself. The housewife's role became "part of the larger cosmic picture."

From the feminist point of view that Gould takes, "confining women's activity to the private sphere" is perceived as having a "negative impact." A woman could be a domestic goddess, but she was still secondary to man. Still, Zoroastrian women in the ancient period did enjoy social, economic and legal rights. They did not wear the veil; they accompanied men to religious and social events; they owned and managed property, including the affairs of their husbands; they could seek redress in a court of law for mistreatment by a husband; they could be legal guardians for a son disinherited by the father; and they could be witnesses as well as judges in court.

In the section on the medieval period (third to sixteenth centuries) Gould shows how Zoroastrianism's original vision of liberation for women turned into a highly ambivalent view towards women. She accounts for this step backwards by explaining that "the male ecclesiastical authorities must have realized that the initial equality preached by the prophet was at great odds with the male control of religious institutions, congregations, and households in the medieval period." In the post-Sassanian period, also, Zoroastrianism's change in status from State to minority religion resulted in a "rise in male patterns of dominance toward women — an easy target since females are the most powerless members of a victimized group." An outcome of this was menstruation taboos which are still prevalent and which contributed to religious inequality.

Although in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the socio-economic independence of women increased, evidence relating to the Parsi Zoroastrians of India supports Gould's contention that to regard women in Zoroastrianism as the religious equals and partners of men is misleading. The evidence she cites

ranges from the bitter controversy over intermarriage and the children of such unions, to discriminatory inheritance laws. The Bombay Parsi Panchayet, she notes, decrees that "only three of its seven trustees at any given time can be women — a very positive venue to decide issues of concern to Parsi women."

Gould's conclusion, arrived at with none of the shrillness often associated with feminist writing, is clear and thoroughly documented. "Zoroastrianism, like all religions, needs to write a new script whereby the religious and societal lives of *all* individuals can take on meaning," she concludes.

Her point is not about Zoroastrian women abandoning the home fires to demand the opportunity for priesthood. It is about them taking leadership roles in *all* aspects of spiritual and communal life.

Review by Zarine Weil

OUR ZARATHUSHTI RELIGION SOME RELEVANT POINTS

By Dr. Goolcheher D. Coyaji
Available from G. D. Coyaji
32 Sassoon Road, Pune, India 411001
Paperback, 55 pp, \$3 plus postage

OUR ZARATHUSHTI RELIGION

by
Dr. G. D. Coyaji

After a short chapter on Zoroastrian history, Goolcher Coyaji covers prayers and ceremonies in a simple and practical manner.

She describes the proper times and methods of reciting prayers and performing simple rituals, including daily prayers and prayers for the Muktds, Gathas, Navjote and Death ceremonies.

A GARLAND OF PRAYERSBy *Pareen Lalkaka*

Published by WZO Trust for Women and Children

Available from R. P. Chinoy
Union Press, 13 Homji Street,
Fort, Bombay 400 001

36 pp, 1995.



by

Pareen Lalkaka

Published by

The W.Z.O. Trust for Women and Children

In the Pious Memory of
Bai Maneckbai P.B. Jeejeebhoy

There are numerous translations of prayers by eminent scholars, but few read like a prayer or inspire the devotee. This little monograph presents common prayers in English in poetic, inspirational language. They are not a literal translation; however, they have captured the spiritual essence of the original. in English. A great little booklet for those who wish to pray in a language they understand.

Mazda Publishers**Home Page on the Web**

Mazda Publishers of California, publishers of books on Iranian and Zoroastrian topics, are inviting people to visit their new home page on the World Wide Web, at:

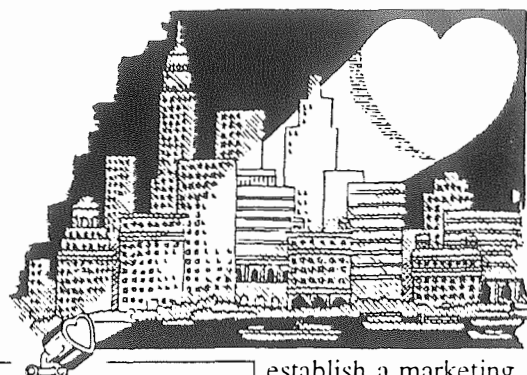
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A truly inspired work, by a man with a natural-born gift for coming up with pithy sayings, Meher Amalsad's *Gifts That Lifts, Shifts & Uplifts* is packed with thought-provoking little gems, all packaged in a good-looking leather-look pocket book with gold lettering on the cover.

Amalsad inspires the heart and motivates the mind, with his humorous and fun-filled messages, focussing mostly on parenting, unconditional love, spiritual consciousness, success and excellence.

This book makes an excellent personalized (there is a dedication page in the front) gift for children, family and friends. It is also an excellent networking tool for businesses. For example Eagle Pest Control of California ordered 200 copies. "It is our goal to

**Gifts That Lifts
Shifts & Uplifts**Words You Can Share,
With People Who Care

By

Meher D. Amalsad

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establish a marketing program which will focus on understanding the needs of our customers and delivering quality service", they wrote, "We would like to incorporate your book into our marketing strategy."

The Wellness Center of California also purchased 200 books as gifts for their patients: "Your book is an

extraordinary tool for helping our patients discover the keys to a joyful and healthy life. Thank you for your awesome contribution to this confused and unhappy world."

The book sells for \$7, plus \$1 for shipping. Special quantity discounts are available, and shipping costs will be waived for orders of more than 20 books. Amalsad will donate \$2 for each book sold to a Zarthushti, towards the FEZANA Welfare Fund.

RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY*Virginia DeVitre Shahninian D.M.D.**Rustam K. DeVitre D.M.D., M.D.S. (1)*

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PRAYER ■ CORNER ■

*Ye urvanem men gaire
Vohu dade hathra manangha
ashimcha shaothananam
vidush mazdao ahurahya
yavat isai tavacha avat
khsai a-aeshe ashahya.*

Yasna 28.4

Poetically, Yasna 28.4 is one of the most beautiful yasnas. I first learned of this yasna at the Vedanta Society in Boston. The choir members of the society were singing this yasna to instrumental accompaniment, composed by one of their musical talents. This was a prelude to a guest lecture given by the late Dasturji Minocher Homji. I was so moved by their rendering reverberating in my mind. The meanings of the words are as powerful and deep.

"I lead my soul (*urvanem*) to the House of Song (*gaire*, Sanskrit: *gir*, mountain top; *garothman behest*)' through the power of Good Mind and Righteous (*ashimcha*) deeds (*shyaothananam*), which are known (*vidush*) to you, O! Ahura Mazda.

"As long as (*yavat*) I continue to have the will and the strength (*tvacha*), until (*avat*) then I shall teach (*khsai*) others to strive (*a-aeshe*) for righteousness (*ashahya*)."

In the previous verse, Ys 28.3, Zarthustra praised the blessings of Armaiti (peace, divinity) one can achieve through Asha and Vohu Manah. Here he introduces a new concept of leading one's soul or conscience (*urvanem*) to higher elevations (*gaire*) through Good Mind and righteous deeds, in the image of Ahura Mazda himself. We are asked to make a conscious choice to live a life as Ahura Mazda himself would have like us to lead.

THE ESSENCE OF GATHAS

By Firoze Jungalwala
Sudbury, Massachusetts

The higher elevation mentioned in the verse is interpreted as 'heaven' or 'paradise' (*behest*), which can be glimpsed or get access to in the present life, right here, and also be the reward in life after death.

How Can one reach the mountain top? One may ask

what is the nature of this higher elevation?

Who can have access to this House of Song? How can one reach the mountain top? Zarthustra

states that this is simply achieved through the power of the Good Mind and by performing righteous deeds. *The Mountain Top is reached through disciplined contemplation and precise moral actions.* One is expected to foresee the consequences wisely, before discharging words and rendering deeds.

Clearly, being in perfect heaven in the present world is a matter of mental state. The human mind has complete freedom to create this state with the right choice, courage and determination. One has to develop a mental state and perform actions so that one is no longer affected by lies, contempt, criticism, anger, revenge and other evils. Thus ...

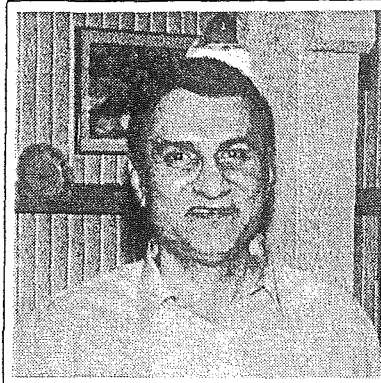
One who is free of evil and responds to evil with goodness;

One who is free of lies and responds to lies with truth;

One who is free of hatred and responds to hatred with love;

One who is free of revenge and responds to revenge with forgiveness

Has already reached the mountain top!



One thus develops a dominion in which Asha — truth, love, generosity and joy, prevail and propagate. *The mountain top is reached simply by devoting to true spirituality and committing to Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.*

One who develops highly moral and spiritual mind, words and actions; one who loves all people without consideration for color, creed, race or religion; one who respects, recognizes, be-one-with and supports all living and non-living creations of Ahura Mazda, has reached the House of Song.

On the mountain top ...

There is eternal joy and no fear
There is serene humility and no ego
There is benevolent charity and no greed

There is comforting pleasure and no pain

There is everlasting creativity and no destruction

There is cheerful action and no reaction
There is vital exhilaration and no despair

There is perfect honesty, and no deceit.

On the mountain top, one rejoices with spirituality and inner glow

One sees eternal beauty in all Ahura Mazda's Creation

One is conversant with physical and spiritual knowledge

One is unattached to material gains
One responds to others needs and comforts them

One does not seek rewards, honors and glory

One is secure, free, forgiving and

tranquil

One is aware of ever changing
times, circumstances and events.

On the mountain top, one accepts
happy or difficult milestones of
life with calm and courage

One has mastered control over emotions

One has subdued hostility, anger and pain

One is non-judgmental

One always sows Good Deeds

One is fearless in the presence of the
mighty and is aware of destiny

One has fully recognized the power
of Ahura Mazda, his cosmic crea-
tion, eternal time and infinity itself.

In the House of Song

Radiance of knowledge removes the
darkness of ignorance

Sweetness of music silences

cacophony of harsh noise

Joyous affection wins over discor-
dant opposition

Objective reason rules over passionate
emotion

Brilliance of Asha triumphs over
forces of Ahriman

Zarathustra thus illustrates that if one
has to lead one's soul and conscience
to higher elevations, now, during the
limited life and beyond life, as Ahura
Mazda expects us to do, then there is
no other way except the Path of
Asha; Ashavan souls like Zarathustra
are rewarded with Ameratat (immor-
tality) and Haurvatat (perfection).
and continue to live on in our minds
and hearts, forever. ■

ASHEM VOHU

*Asha is God's Law of Good-
ness, Truth and Purity. It is
the best and the highest. By
following Asha in being good
and truthful and pure in mind
in all you do each day, you
will be very happy.*

- A Garland of Prayers by Pareen Lalkaka

■ READERS FORUM ■

*This column is a forum to present
information and opinions. Letters
(under 600 words) may be submitted
to the Editor, Articles and Letters.
The Journal reserves the right to edit
all materials for clarity and space.*

Rekindle that Flame

I recently came across a poem which
is an epilog to a play in four acts
called "Zarathushtra, Prophet of
Ancient Iran." I would like to submit
this poem for publication in
FEZANA Journal.

This is a tale eight thousand years old
When the Aryans were drawn into
Zarathushtra's fold

When men probed deep into spiritual
treasures

They had hardly time for worldly
pleasures

Zarathushtra's religion took luster
and fame

And Iran was proud of Zarathushtra's
name

Today that blaze is reduced to
embers

Behold its dying gasps and falling
members

Wake up Zoroastrians —

Rekindle that flame!

Fan it and fawn it

It's brilliance proclaim

Take up the cudgels

Fight for ASHEM

Teach all tender shoots

To sing Zarathushtra's fame.

Dr. Homi P. Nanavaty
Dusseldorf, Germany

Need to Inform and Educate of Paramount Urgency

The need to produce literature and
information for distribution country-
wide and even worldwide, to elimi-
nate ignorance about our faith,
appears more paramount and urgent
now than at any other time. More
often than not, Zarthustis are mis-
quoted by Western and non-Zoroas-
trian scholars and philosophers and
by the press media as well.

London's *Sunday Observer Life
Magazine* of May 14, 1995 printed
an article titled "Cults A-Z", and
included Zoroastrianism as a cult!
Needless to say, a large number of
Zarthustis were outraged and wrote
letters. Strong letters of protest were
written by individuals as well as the
ZTFE. The following letter from our
Association was subsequently pub-
lished in the *Sunday Observer*.

"... I am writing to record our mem-
bers' outrage at the denigrating of
our noble and ancient Zoroastrian
religion to the level of a 'cult'. ...
Zoroastrianism is the oldest, estab-
lished, prophetic religion, which,
during the centuries influenced
Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It
flourished long before the conquest
of Babylon by Cyrus the Great Per-
sian, in 539 BC, all the way to 652
AD when the Persians were con-
quered by the Arabs ..."

Rusi Dalal, President
Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe
London, UK

*YATHA AHU VAIRYO By following Asha, God's Law, I become
like You, O God, for Vohu Manah, the Good and Loving Mind in me,
guides me and helps me to become perfect. You give me your great strength
and power, Kshathra, so that I can help all who are gentle, poor, helpless
or sick and who pray to You for help.* - A Garland of Prayers by Pareen Lalkaka

Forgotten Again!

According to an article in the San Jose Mercury of March 16, 1996, "Huston Smith's *The Religions of Man*, first published in 1958 when he was just 38, and since re-issued as *The World's Religions*, is used in more introduction-to-religion courses than any other text. Translated into 14 languages, it has sold more than 1.5 million copies.

"This month TV award-winning TV interviewer Bill Moyers is about to launch him into media orbit. The multi-part series *Wisdom of Faith with Huston Smith: A Bill Moyers Special* debuts on PBS nationwide"

Once again Zoroastrianism was forgotten! While all other great religions of the world, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam and related Chinese systems are discussed at length in Smith's book and in the TV series, there is no mention of Zoroastrianism.

We should send communications to the TV stations, producers of the series and to Huston Smith himself, about this serious omission ...

Maneck Bhujwala
San Jose, California

[The following letter was sent by Rohinton Rivetna in a similar circumstance, to producers of the 8-week series "Chicago Matters: Questions of Faith". with John Callaway, where only glancing mention was made of Zoroastrians. Zarthus-tis are urged to write letters when they see such omissions and inaccuracies. This letter may be freely used if appropriate - Ed]

"Conspicuous by its absence from the front cover of the brochure Questions of Faith, was the symbol of the Zoroastrian Religion. ... It is regrettable that the producers did not see fit to, at the very least, acknowledge

Zoroastrianism, the religion preached by Prophet Zarathushtra (Greek Zoroaster) over 3,000 years ago.

"The contribution of Zoroastrianism to western religious thought has long been recognized by scholars of religion. Many concepts found today in Judaism, Christianity and other major religions, can trace their roots to the religion of Zarathushtra, e.g. the concepts of Heaven and hell, Good and Evil, Life after Death, a Savior to come, the final Resurrection, and Life Everlasting.

"Religious leaders have for long underplayed the role of Zoroastrianism and we expect them to continue to do so. But we were surprised, and rather disappointed to see this suppression fostered in an interfaith forum.

"While small in numbers, (there are possibly 15,000 Zoroastrians in the USA and Canada, and less than 200,000 in the world), Zoroastrians have made significant contributions to the business and professional scene. As a miniscule community in their mother countries of India, Iran and Pakistan, Zoroastrians contributed to industry, technology, sciences and the arts, way out of proportion to their numbers. And there is every indication that they will make similar contributions to this nation as well. Already Zubin Mehta, a Zoroastrian, who is featured frequently on WTTW, is a notable example, and his brother Zarin Mehta is Music Director at Ravinia. The Zoroastrian Temple in Hinsdale is home to a very vibrant community of about 600 Zoroastrians. And there has been a significant Zoroastrian presence at other Chicago interfaith forums, notably the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, in 1993....

"We feel your program series will be incomplete without a segment on Zoroastrianism and the Zoroastrians who live, worship and contribute to the Chicago scene ..."

FROM THE INTERNET

In this section, FEZANA Journal will publish selected news and articles from Zarthus-tis that have recently appeared on various Internet media. The idea is to provide a flavor and inform readers about the great diversity of information available now on the Internet. The editors reserve the right to select, edit, and abbreviate items to meet FEZANA Journal standards and space limitations.

Pagrees to Order

Yes! We have it all in New Zealand (Gods Own!). A friend of mine, Mrs. Gulshan Kolah makes pagrees to order. You can get in touch with her at 64-9-489-7649 or send me email.

tehmus@ai.co.nz

Tuition Turmoil

As a graduating senior, I have just dropped off my final tuition payment for college. Over the past four years, I, like many of my peers, have worked during the school year and summers to earn money for school, but could not have made it without the help of my parents. We are so fortunate that our culture encourages such a strong commitment to education that our parents are willing to sacrifice family vacations, new cars or other material goods, to send us to school. We are truly lucky ...

It is wonderful to see that our community's tradition of commitment to education is being passed on to our youth, and we all have our parents to thank for that. This is one more way in which Zoroastrians are prospering in North America.

Roxana Mehta
rmehta@nwu.edu



Shah Nama at Sotheby's

I don't know whether to feel proud or sad, reading this UPI report ...

LONDON, APRIL 24 (UPI) - Four leaves from a 16th century manuscript of the Persian Book of Kings have been sold for \$2.9 million at an auction at Sotheby's ...

One of the four pages from the Shah Nama was sold during the auction Tuesday night to an Indian collector who lives in the United States for \$1.2 million. This is a world record for any Persian miniature and any single leaf from an Oriental manuscript, according to a spokeswoman.

The Book of Kings, a classic Persian epic by the poet Firdowsi, was written in the 11th century and relates the myths and legends of the ancient kings of Iran. The leaf that brought the record price depicts a scene from the legend of Rustom, the Persian equivalent of Hercules ...

The Shah Nama of Shah Tahmasp was one of the most luxurious illustrated manuscripts ever produced in the world. Its pages remain today both spectacular and awe-inspiring," said a Sotheby specialist.

Three other leaves from the manuscript that were included in the auction sold for \$637,640, \$604,200 and \$537,320 respectively. The four leaves were part of a collection of 59 Persian and Indian miniatures in the auction, which were sold for \$3.7 million, more than double the pre-sale estimate.

Mehran Sepehri
sepehri_mehran@amat.com

Zarthusti Plays Spanish Music in UK

Narius Patel (Guitar and vocals) and Antony Edwards (Cajon) of the *Pan Y Queso* band play music from Madrid and Rio in the UK.

Narius, a computer systems analyst has been playing guitar and singing solo in London for the past six years. He started by taking English, Spanish and French poetry and putting it to music. Over the years, he learnt songs by Caetano Veloso and Joao Bosco. Even though he cannot speak Portuguese, he learnt the songs from words in the CDs booklets.

Narius and Antony spent two years in college every weekend playing cajon (a wooden box for percussion in Flamenco music) with two guitarists, in a bar in London, and listening heavily to New Flamenco music, that originates from Madrid and blends traditional Flamenco with Latin, Brazilian, Rock, Reggae and other styles.

They now play a mixture of New Flamenco and Brazilian songs. The music is lively and rhythmic, and the songs are wonderful. They are looking forward to bookings for parties and other occasions. ■

Narius Patel
narius@patel.zor.demon.co.uk

SECRETARY REQUIRED AT ZOROASTRIAN HOUSE, LONDON

The ZTFE is looking for a person capable of performing general secretarial tasks, including management of correspondence, liaison with members and public, banking and simple book keeping. Contact Jt. Hon. Secretaries, ZTFE, Zoroastrian House, 88 Compayne Gardens, London NW6 3RU.

New Mexico Research and Study Council

University of New Mexico
117 College of Education
Albuquerque
New Mexico, 87131

In late summer of 1991, a most extraordinary thing happened to Sharon Faith Wehrle. An atheist for most of her life, she had never been interested in religious studies and had never heard of Zoroaster. She had an 'out of body' experience, completely unanticipated, in which she saw and did remarkable things, guided by a mysterious stranger. Near the end of the experience, she asked him who he was. His words were: "I am Zoroaster, I am your father, I am you, and you are me."

Her life was forever changed. Since that time, Zoroaster continues to visit her and has given her many messages.

In November 1994, He appeared to her and said: "Music is the bridge between humanity and Divinity, and every person in the world understands the language of music." She began writing songs thereafter. The first songs are praises to Ahura Mazda and Zoroaster. She has produced a tape of these first songs.

The audio tape is available for \$15 (including shipping) from:

Sharon Wehrle
1625 Rio Bravo, SW, #26-126
Albuquerque, 87105.

■ ZARTHUSTI ■ ENTERPRISE

Please support our Zarthusti entrepreneurs and advertisers. Enquiries and submissions about this column may be made to Dr. Rustom Kevala (see back cover).

Opportunities Available Mechanical Engineers

Contract Engineering Services Company, based in Illinois is looking for Mechanical Engineers (BS/MS), with experience in Pro/Engineer (CAD Software). Immediate openings in the Chicagoland area. \$27-\$32 per hour. Behruz Rustomi, (309) 497-3580, Fax (309) 497-3583, email: behruz@bradley.bradley.edu

Engineers

Dialogic Corporation, New Jersey, market leader in computer telephony components has several job openings: Sales Managers, Financial Planning, Firmware Engineers, Device Driver Engineers, Field Application Engineers, Windows Programmers, and more. Openings are listed on the Web Page at: <http://www.dialogic.com>. Contact Jamsheed Wania at (201) 993-3000, ext. 6341, email: waniaj@dialogic.com.

Software Engineers

There are a number of software engineering openings at C-Cube Microsystems, maker of Digital Video Compression and Multimedia microchips. Good growth potential with rapidly expanding company. All levels of experience welcome, as well as those with F1 status. Contact Kourosh Soroushian by email: ksh@c-cube.com.



PLEASE GIVE FROM YOUR YOUR HEART



Donations will be deeply appreciated for the FEZANA fund categories: Welfare, Religious Education, Student Aid, Properties, Youth, FEZANA Journal, General, or for a specific appeal. Donors should refer to the broad criteria for eligibility of donations to FEZANA for tax exemption in U.S.A. and Canada, as indicated in FEZANA Journal [Winter 1994, p.60-61]. Donation checks, payable to "FEZANA", may be sent to the address in the appeal, or to Dinshaw Joshi, FEZANA Welfare Committee, 4515 Willard Avenue, #1609-S Chevy Chase, MD 20815, Tel: (301) 654-6250

California Girl Needs Help

Until 7 months ago, Mojgan, a young 26-year-old woman, was a lively and cheerful pre-medical student at the University of California in Berkeley. Today she is very ill, in bed in her mother's apartment. She has been diagnosed with an advanced case of cancer affecting one of her breasts and lungs. Doctors have recommended chemotherapy as the only means to save her life before an operation can possibly be done.

Mojgan must receive an injection of Nupegon every day to help sustain her immune system while on chemotherapy. This alone costs over \$700 per month. Her out-of-pocket medical expenses are estimated to be over \$40,000.

Mojgan does not have any insurance, and neither Medi-Cal nor Medicare cover the cost of this medicine. Her mother has been working two jobs on minimum wage to keep up with the staggering payments.

We cannot let a human being die simply because she does not have money for medicine. A trust fund has been

started to cover her medical needs. Please help. Send your checks, made out to Mojgan Balouch, to 1235 Holly Street, #12, San Carlos, CA 94070, Tel: (415) 802-0435.

Posted by M. Khosraviani on Z-net

Urgent Appeal for Ervad Mobedji's Son

An urgent appeal has been received for financial assistance for medical treatment of 12-year old Yazad Mobedji, son of Ervad Jehangir Mobedji, High Priest of Dadyseth Agiary in Mumbai (Bombay), to correct malrotation of intestines, heart disease, Curzon's syndrome, hydrocephalus and camptodactyly.

Yazad is scheduled to undergo major cranio-facial surgery at Georgetown University Hospital, Washington DC in April 1996. The surgery is expected to take 10-12 hours, followed by a 5-10 day stay in the hospital and 6-8 weeks post-operative care. The total cost is expected to be around \$38,000 to \$43,000, based on reduced charges agreed upon by the hospital if full payment is made in advance. In addition, the family will face additional expenses for their own stay.

FEZANA appeals to all large-hearted Zarthustis for generous donations to assist the Mobedji family in meeting their financial burden. Checks made out to "Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington", marked for "Yazad Mobedji" may be sent to the FEZANA Welfare Committee [see address above].

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*Our problems are the tools God
uses to polish us, not demolish us.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

■ ■ ■ PLEASE GIVE FROM YOUR HEART ■ ■ ■

Help Needed Urgently by Save Udvada Committee

Our "Save Udvada" Committee has been making great efforts for the prevention of erosion in Udvada. Erosion is threatening to severely damage our Sanctum Sanctorum.

The project is receiving good support from the Government. Already the Forestry Department has planted thousands of saplings. The Water and Power Research Institute in Pune is drawing up plans to construct an off-shore breakwater wall to arrest erosion along the shore.

While the Government of Gujarat will bear the major part of the cost, estimated to be Rs. 1 crore for the



whole project; however, they will not proceed with the project until they receive a commitment from our

Committee to share in a portion of the cost.

May I appeal to you, in the interest of protection of our sacred and revered Udvada, where our Iran Shah is ensconced for generations, to make substantial contribution towards this noble project to save our heritage.

*Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan
Chairperson, Save Udvada
Committee
Bombay, India*

Mr. Taleyarkhan and his Committee have worked tirelessly to get Government support of this project. Community support is now needed in

order to proceed. Checks, made out to FEZANA, and marked "Save Udvada", may be sent to the FEZANA Welfare Committee [see page 71 for address].

Electric Wheelchair for Sanam Rabadi

Sanam Rabadi is the 16-year old, whole life was tragically changed last year by a car accident on the Bombay-Pune road. Both her parents were killed; and Sanam has been left a quadriplegic, paralyzed from the waist down.

She has been at the Parsi General Hospital since the accident, on April 17, 1995, and will have to undergo years of rehabilitation, neurological and psychological treatment, and fur-

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ther orthopedic surgery. Urgent funds are needed for these expenses.

In an appeal to FEZANA, her old grandmother, Mrs. K. A. Modi, who now takes care of Sanam, writes: “

... If she had an Electric Wheelchair, she could manipulate it by herself, and move about in the house. FEZANA could help her out by donating an Electric Wheel Chair, it would prove a blessing to her, and she and her grandmother and all of us here, would be very grateful indeed.”

Checks marked “Sanam Rabadi”, or any help with acquiring the wheelchair, may be sent to the FEZANA Welfare Committee [see page 71 for address].

Prosthesis Patient Needs Help

An 18-year old boy from Bombay, who lost his right arm in an accident, will be coming to Chicago to get a prosthesis fitted at a noted University Rehab Clinic in the area.

Help is sought from any Chicago area family willing to host the young man and his father for 1 or 2 months during the rehab program. Financial assistance will also be most gratefully accepted toward the high cost of the prosthesis and rehab.

Further inquiries may be made with Mr. Dinshaw Contractor at (520) 297-9736. Checks marked “prosthesis” may be sent to the FEZANA Welfare Committee [see page 71 for address].

Big THANK YOU From Kairasp's Family

In a letter to FEZANA, Mrs. Khorshed Daruwalla of Karachi, mother of Kairasp Daruwalla, who had appealed for help with treatment of neurological problems at Johns Hopkins [see FEZANA Journal, Spring 1996] writes: “I am very thankful to

all who have helped for my son's treatment. They have collected \$40,000 here (in Pakistan) and through the appeal in USA, my daughter has received \$750. For now, further amounts are not required. Please insert a big THANK YOU from us in your next Journal.

Donation for Navar-Martab Ceremony

Mrs. Coomi Bhathena of Toronto, has donated Rs. 40,000 to the Madressa in Bombay for the Navar-Martab ceremony of two new Mobeds, in her name. During 1997, five Madressa students will be ready for their Navar ceremonies. Financial help is always deeply appreciated by the Madressa.

Acknowledgements

FEZANA gratefully acknowledges the following donations since the last publication.

For Welfare:

Anonymous, CT (\$150); Farieda Irani, TX (\$33+\$33+\$35); Shahrokh & Gool Mehta, NY (\$50); Tehmtan Mistry, MO (\$25); Dinshaw & Goolcher Joshi, MD (\$110); Farrokh Olia, FL (\$151); Behram Shroff, VA (\$101); D. Vazir, FL (\$50); Zoroastrians of Tampa, FL, on the occasion of NavRoz (\$121).

For Religious Education:

Behram Deboo, WA (\$10); Jamshed K. Fozdar, Singapore (\$275); Natasha Karanjia, PA (\$10); Gernot Windfuhr, MI (\$30);

For FEZANA Journal:

Anonymous \$30; Babak Abadi, ONT (\$30); Firozi Alercia, NC (\$10); Marzban Amaria, CA (\$10); Noshir Amroli, CA (\$25); Bejun Anklesaria, IL (\$25); Yezdi Antia, MD (\$10); Behram Antia, FL (\$10); Parviz Ardeshirpour, NC (\$10); Porus Austin, CA (\$10); Khushnum Avari, CA (\$10); Freni Bankwalla, MD (\$20); Nauzer Balsara, IL (\$10); Poras Balsara, TX (\$10); Yazdi Balsara, TX (\$10); Minoo Baria, TX (\$20); Hoshang Baria, DE (\$10); F. Barhamand, IL (\$10); Parthava Behesht-

Nejad, OR (\$96); Zerir Baugh, IL (\$20); Veera Bharucha, TX (\$10); Viraf Bharucha, TX (\$10); Kersi Bhathena, IL (\$10); R. K. Bhoopi, NJ (\$10); Keki Bhote, IL (\$25); Maneck Bhujwala, CA (\$10); Susan Behizadeh, GA (\$10); Coomi Bhathena, ONT (\$50); Dhunjishaw Bhaya, ONT (\$15); Marzi Byramjee, ONT (\$15); Lovji Cama, NJ (\$20); Aspy Canteenwalla, FL (\$51); Darius Captain, CA (\$20); Marazban Chhor, NJ (\$10); Homiyar Choksi, VA (\$12); Khorshed Chothia, MD (\$25); Astad Clubwala, NY (\$10); Kaika Clubwala, NY (\$40); Porus Cooper, NJ (\$10); Sunnu Cooper, Paris (\$20); Farobag Cooper, IL (\$10); Shaki Commissariat, TX (\$10); Dara Commissariat, CA (\$10); Alayar Dabestani, WA (\$100); Jehangir Dahmubed, GA (\$20); Fram Dalal, PA (\$10); T. Dalal, NC (\$10); Susan Damania, ONT (\$15); Jerroo Daruwalla, CA (\$10); Hoshang Daruwalla, MD (\$10); Sherroo Daruwalla, IL (\$50); Kersy Dastur, VA (\$10); K. M. Dastur, IL (\$10); Roxana Dastur, CA (\$10); Behram Deboo, WA (\$20); Dara Deboo, WA (\$10); Aloo Driver, MA (\$10); Minoo Dubash, IN (\$10); J. H. Dudhia, TX (\$10); Nozer Dungor, TX (\$10); Jamshed Elavia, TX (\$20); Dhun Engineer, CA (\$20); Beverly Engineer, IL (\$20); Richard Fears, IN (\$10); Khushroo Fitter, CA (\$10); Farrokh Forooghi, CA (\$101); Perina Framroze, CA (\$10); Keki Gandhi, CA (\$10); Homi Gandhi, NJ (\$10); Burjor Ghandhi, MI (\$10); Faridoun Goshtasbi, CA (\$10); Parvin Guzdar, MD (\$35); Noshir Hansotia, KS (\$10); T. Hormozdyan, VA (\$10); Hassan Hatefi, VA (\$10); Jehangir Irani, TX (\$20); Feroze Irani, TX (\$10); Mehraban Irani, TX (\$10); Farhad Irani, DE (\$10); Homsy Irani, NY (\$150); Khushro Irani, MD (\$20); Pervin Irani, AB (\$30); Zarir Irani, QUE (\$60); Iraj Jahanian, MO (\$10); J. J. Jamadar, TX (\$20); Rumi Jamsetjee, IL (\$10); K. R. Kiash, NFLD (\$15); Fereydoon Jamzadeh, IN (\$10); Laal Jamzadeh, TX (\$10); Kekobad Jassawalla, VA (\$10); Dolly Jijina, MI (\$10); Vistasp Jijina, IL (\$10); Dinshaw & Goolcher Joshi, MD (\$110+\$11+\$10); Broomand Kadhodaian, IL (\$10); Hoshang Karani, IL (\$10); Zareen Karani Lam, MA (\$20); M. D. Karanjia, PA (\$10); Persis Kasad, PA (\$10); Percy Kavasmaneck, WV (\$10); R. Kavarana,

ONT (\$15); Binaifer Khambatta, IL (\$10); Hoshang Khambatta, CA (\$50); Zarir Khademian, MI (\$10); Sharookh Lala, MI (\$25); Emmett Lowry, TX (\$10); Ali Makki, PA (\$10); Adi Maneckshaw, MD (\$10); Amy Makujina, CA (\$10); William Malandra, MN (\$10); Akbar Marvasti, TX (\$15); Noshir Medhora, TX (\$10); K. P. Mehta, IL (\$20); Rustam Mehdiabadi, TX (\$25); Hosi Mehta, IL (\$75); Kersi Mehta, OH (\$20); Daisy Mehta, CA (\$20); Yasmen Mehta, CA (\$8); Rohinton Merchant, WA (\$10); Tehmtan Mistry, MO (\$10); Sorab Mistry, IL (\$10); Jimmy Mistry, MI (\$10); Binaifer Mistry, CA (\$10); B. Mistry, ONT (\$15); Noshir Motivala, NH (\$20); Jamshed Mulla, MD (\$10); Jehangir Nakra, MA (\$10); Sylvia Nanavati, ONT (\$15); Feroze Nanavaty, BC (\$15); Behroz Padamsee, NC (\$20); Sorab Panday, VA (\$10); Aspi Patel, DE (\$20+10); Cowas Patel, CA (\$10); Daraius Patel, IL (\$10); Minu Patel, IL (\$20); Nozer Patel, CA (\$10); Noshir Panthaky, NWT (\$30); J. M. Panthaky, BC (\$30); Adil Pooniwala, IL (\$10); Noshir Pundole, Malaysia (\$30); Meheroz Rabadi, IN (\$10); Kaizad Rajkotwala, TX (\$25); Rohinton Randelia, NJ (\$10); Zarine Ranji, MD (\$10); K. Reid (\$20); Readmore Services, NJ (\$8); Phiroze Rivetna, AZ (\$20+20); Jehangir Rudina, MN (\$21); Paul Rusby, VA (\$20); Freney Sagar, NY (\$20); Pesi Sanjana, MI (\$10); Sohrab Sassani, VA (\$100); Prochy Sethna, CA (\$30); Phiroze Sethna, CO (\$10); S. M. Sethna, TX (\$10); Khorshed Sethna, ONT (\$15); Dilnavaz Shroff, MA (\$10); Khushroo Shroff, NJ (\$20); Parrin Shroff, FL (\$10); Shireen Shroff, FL (\$15); Rohinton Shroff, IL (\$10); Persis Shroff, LA (\$10); Nozer Singpurwalla, VA (\$10); Ted Sohrabi, CA (\$10); Arnavaz Talati, CA (\$20); Hoshedar Tamboli, FL (\$100); Zenobia Tambuvala, FL (\$10); Zenobia Tantra, IL (\$10); Spitaman Tata, IL (\$10); Bella Tata, BC (\$30); Tehmtan Tehsildar, (\$10); Y. S. Turner, QUE (\$35); Jer Udvadia, IL (\$10); Adi Unwalla, NJ (\$20+10+10); Hoshang Unvala, CA (\$10); N. S. Vadoli, CA (\$10); A. B. Wadia, TX (\$10); Noshir Wadia, NY (\$25); M. S. Wadia, CA (\$15); Arno Weilenman, NY (\$10); Sharon Wehrle, NM (\$50+10); New Zealand (\$25); Vancouver, BC (\$15); Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (\$51).

■ ■ ■ MATRIMONIALS ■ ■ ■

FEZANA maintains a matrimonial file and will coordinate the initial contacts between interested parties. FEZANA does not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna (see back cover for address).



CONGRATULATIONS

F94-43 is engaged to a young man she met through the FEZANA Journal. Congratulations!



Male, store manager, 42, B.A. with economics. Divorced. Enjoys traveling, hiking, music, movies. Interested in home-loving woman, divorcee welcome. Call (718) 847-1424 evenings. [M96-9]

Executive Secretary, slim, 32, 5'5", B. Com. From Bombay, family in USA. Call (410) 783-2671. [F96-9a]

Secretary, tall, 36, 5'10", B. Com. From Bombay, interested in settling in USA or Canada. (410) 783-2671. [F96-10]

Air Hostess, 34, 5'2", based in Bombay. Enjoys traveling, outdoors. Interested in meeting professional gentleman, with good sense of humor. (714) 846-8107. [F96-11]

Woman, accountant, 25, 5'4", B.Com, working in Canada. Pretty, friendly, outgoing, active in a lot of things. Would like to meet well-settled, professional tall gentleman. Call (905) 770-9619. [F96-12]

Widow, good looking, 58, good natured, good health. Grown children. Likes to meet good-natured man. (216) 699-6965. [F96-13]

Educated, smart, only daughter, 27, petite, working in Beauty shop in Bombay. Interested in settling in USA/Canada. Call aunt at (216) 699-6965. [F96-14]

UK-educated woman, 31, in retail management for Liz Claiborn, based in Dubai. Fun-loving, outgoing, loves movies, theater, entertaining at home, dogs, cooking. Likes to meet professional or businessman, and settle in USA/Canada. Tel: Dubai 0097-14-368-668. [F96-15]

Correspondence invited from Zoroastrian girls, view matrimony, for a **37 year old, single, gentleman**, well-settled, working with a financial institution in Los Angeles. Please call (714) 992-2115. [M96-17]

Correspondence invited for **single male, 37, good looking, 5'6"**, B.Com, MBA, well settled, working in financial institution in California. Call (714) 992-2115. [M95-31]

Male, 40, US citizen, mechanical and marine engineer, is interested in marrying a Zoroastrian girl. Call (310) 329-2062. [M96-32].

Parents of **Parsi girl, 25, B.A., 5'5"**, invite correspondence from 25-30 year old Parsi boy, well settled, preferably from Ontario. Send biodata and photo to Mail Box 368, 2325 Hurontario Street, Unit 5, Mississauga, Ontario L5A 4K4. [F96-33].

The following listings are from the Circular of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, Zoroastrian House, 88 Compayne Gardens, London, NW6 3RU, Tel: 0171-328-6018.

Attractive, divorcee, young-at-heart, 45, in UK, seeks correspondence with kind, considerate gentleman. Write in confidence to ZTFE Secretary, in envelope marked "Confidential Ref. # ZT795."

Zoroastrian youth, 31, professional accountant with computer studies. Owns own flat. Please write in confidence to Mrs. Freney Writer, 17 Aldemey

Avenue, Heston, Middlesex, TW5 0QN, UK. Tel: 0181 570 4090.

Lady, 28, good looking, well-educated, home-loving, outgoing personality, with sense of humor. Write in confidence to ZTFE Secretary, in envelope marked "Confidential - Ref. # SK1/0196."

Bachelor, 37, well-educated, well settled, and has his own house, seeks woman 29-33. Write in confidence to ZTFE Secretary, in envelope marked "Confidential-Ref. #B1/1095."

Male, 29, professional jewelry maker- designer, with kind heart and outgoing personality, seeks woman 24-30. Write in confidence to the ZTFE Secretary in envelope marked "Confidential-Ref. #SJM/1095."

Help Available with Matrimonials in Bombay

Mrs. Serah Kotval is interested in helping young Zoroastrian men and women who are seeking matrimonial alliances. Please contact Mrs. Kotval at 802C Khareghat Road, Dadar, Bombay 400 014, India.

"Wed" Site on the Internet

Mr. Porus Havewala has started a "Soul-Mates Web Page" on the Internet, to help Zoroastrians who are scattered all over the globe, to find suitable life partners. The site is at:

<http://www.zoroastrianism.com/soulmate>.

Scanned photographs, along with a short description and interests will be placed on the Web Site, but no addresses. All initial contacts will be made by sending email to the Webmaster, who would then forward it on to the person concerned.

A registration form for placing one's entry on the Soul-Mates Web Page is available from Mr. Porus Havewala at email address: porushh@zip.com.au, or write to him at P.O. Box 1770, North Sydney, NSW 2059.



MILESTONES

FEZANA maintains records of births, navjotes (sudreh-push), weddings, deaths and other major events such as graduations, navar and martab ceremonies. Please send full information with photos to Dr. Rustom Kevala (see back cover for address).

Births

Jahan, a son, to Cyrus and Cathy Bamji of Silver Spring, MD, grandson to Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey, and Roshan and Ester Bamji, on February 23.

Sanaya, a girl, to Arnavaz and Jamshed Dhabhar, sister to Humin, of Toronto area, on November 28.

Dillon Daravoush, a son, to Freny and Gary Dickson, of Quebec, on February 9.

Arzan, a boy, to Arnaz and Cyrus Dotivala of Iselin, New Jersey, in February. Grandparents are Tehmasp and Zarine Dotivala, also of New Jersey.

Monaz, a girl, to Rashna and Hoshi Engineer of Colorado, on January 11.

Farzan, a girl, to Behroz and Navdeep Jaikaria of New York, on February 14.

Farhad, a son, to Selena and Vispi Jijina, of Chicago, grandson to Minoo and Aloo Jijina, on November 25.

Roxanne, a girl, to Jasmine and Kaikobad Jussawalla, in Woodbridge, Virginia, on March 9, 1996.

Natalie Jasmine, a daughter, to Mary Jane and Persius Kanga, of Ontario, grand-daughter to Eva and Norman Bouck and Armaity and Dinshaw Kanga, on February 17.

Jessica, a girl, to Mary Lou and Hanoz Kapadia, of Quebec, on December 21.

Nadia Tara, a girl, to Manoucheher and Afsaneh Samiya, of Texas, on March 18.

Darayus, a boy, to Pesi and Bepsi Sanjana of Michigan, brother to Avvan, grandson of Piloo and Homi Sanjana, and Rusi and Viloo Tavadia, on January 25.

Raiomand, a boy, to Shiraz and Spitaman Tata of Illinois, on November 30



Boomtown Rap

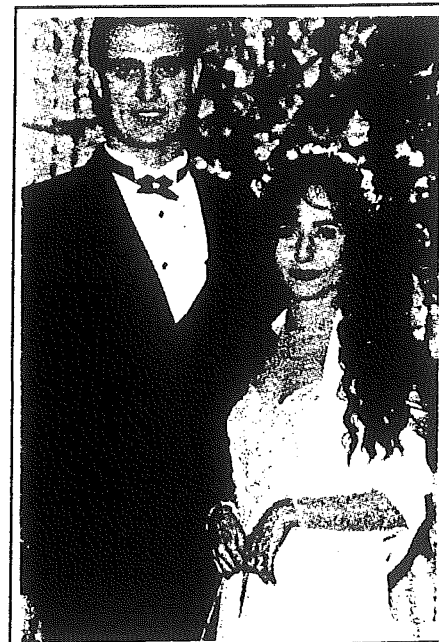
FEBRUARY 9, 1996.

It was a fairy tale wedding. The petite bride wore a pristine white gown, her long brown hair framing the face. The groom, tall and handsome in a tux, wore his hair cropped short in today's nouveau look. They both beamed as guests poured onto the stage to pose for wedding photographs.

JASMINE BHARUCHA, many will tell you, is one of the few genuine people in the music business where average talents are compensated by over-blown egos ...

A large number of her friends came to celebrate her wedding to ADIL BHATHENA whom she'd met several times in Vancouver, Canada. And what a wedding celebration it was. The Beatovens were playing at the Agiary near Afghan Church and couples were already jiving on the floor at 8:00 pm. ... Everyone grouped around the couple for an impromptu singing session.

And then of course, it was time for a delectable Parsee dinner. Sariya, patra ni macchi, sali boti, bhindi, rice, rotli, sev, ice-cream flowed in a gorgefest. The newlyweds of course were the last to eat, having gone from guest to guest welcoming them, in a custom one hopes will always remain.



Where are they honeymooning? Do we know? Of course. Are we telling? Let the lovebirds be and instead wait for Jasmine's new album. Word is that it's a real rocker.

From "Bombay Times". Adil Bhathena is the son of Mrs. Coomi Bhathena of Toronto, Canada.

Navjote (Sudreh Pushi)

Julie Bharucha, daughter of Xerxes and Nizaz, of Middletown, New York, in Karachi, on December 25.

Roxana and Tinaz Godiwalla, daughters of Drs. Yezdi and Shirley Godiwalla, of Wisconsin, in Bombay in January.

Roxanne Irani, daughter of Shahnaaz and Rohinton Irani, of Edmond, Oklahoma, on December 19, in Bombay.

Weddings

Kerman Deboo and Dilzaar of the Boston area, on November 16, in Bombay.

Jamsheed Darayus Mehta and Christine Harman of Toronto, Ontario, on November 11. The officiating priest was Ervad Jehan Bagli.

Nauzer Mistry, son of Pervin and Jamshed Mistry of Toronto, to Armin Sachinwalla, daughter of Arnavaz and Rohinton Sachinwalla, in Bombay, on December 25.

Recovering

Pashang Patel, son of FEZANA Vice-President Framroze K. Patel and ZAGNY Secretary Armaity Patel, is recovering from the removal of a large benign tumor from his brain on February 14. The tumor was wrapped around several nerves, resulting in partial hearing loss, imbalance and speech problems. The good news is he is improving day by day, and manages life on his own. He is being treated by Drs. Dastoor, Naik and Arena of Pittsburgh.

Anniversary

Pilsum and Ruby Master of Calgary celebrated their 25th Wedding Anniversary with a Jashan, dinner, music and fun, on January 13.

Deaths

Perin F. Bilimoria, mother of Yaz (Firoza) Bilimoria, grandmother of Karl, Zal and Nina, of Munster, Indiana, on January 17.

Sam Burjour, 55, husband of Pam, father of Jason and Cyrus, son of Vera Dastoor of England, of a lift-truck accident, in Edmonton, Alberta, on March 20.

Silla Captain, mother of Khushrow, in the Boston area, in November 1995.

Bomi Challa, 58, of colon cancer, husband of Soonu and father of Mahtaab

and Nazneen, in Northern California, on January 11.

Jal Eduljee Damkevala, 86, husband of Banoo; father of Rustom Kevala of Gaithersburg, Maryland; Bomi (Bachi) Damkevala of Naperville, Illinois; and Shirin (Viraf) Kanga of Bolingbrook, Illinois; and grandfather of Ruby, Karl, Sarosh, Kamal, Neville, Diana, Zarine and Persis; of arteriosclerotic failure, in Bolingbrook, on April 8.

A born entrepreneur, Mr. Damkevala started a variety of businesses (trucking, chemical packaging, garment factory, embroidery and more) in Bombay. After WWII the businesses took a turn, and the family fell on hard times. But, he was an overly optimistic and independent man, and believed "a positive attitude is one treasure God will not let anyone take away from you." In the USA for the past six years, he was an inspiration to his children and grand-children, and devoted his days to writing and translating the Avesta.

Homa Djamtorki, 68, wife of Kaikhosrov, mother of Parviz, in North Vancouver on November 27.

Shirin Guiv, 64, wife of Kaikhosrov, mother of Guiv, Freney and Shahpur, in Kelowna, on December 14.

Bapai Rustom Guzdar, 95, mother of Adi Gazdar of the Boston area, in October 1995, in Bombay.

Anne Hinnells, the woman behind Professor John R. Hinnells of London, UK, scholar of Zoroastrianism, and a long-time friend of the Zarthushti community; of lung cancer, on February 23, in the UK. In Anne's memory, a copse has been planted with 500 trees (some Oaks), in Edale, in a valley with a little steam and a variety of flora indigenous to the area. They have also purchased a 5-acre ancient woodland site, just outside Bakewell, to be named The Marianne Grace Wood.

Daulat Rustom Jangi, 79, mother of Faramarz and Sohrab (North Vancouver), Kaikhosrov, Parvayn Dastaki and Banoo Irani (California) and Kharman Dehmobed (Australia); in California, on January 1.

Mother of Vispy Kanga, of New York area, in Nagpur, India.

Seran Keki Kotwal, sister of Yezdi Antia of Toronto, mother of Dr. Jehangir, in New Hartford, New York, on February 24.

Shirangoal Lohrasbi, mother of Homa Yazdgerdi of Chicago area, in Yazd, Iran, on February 6.

Goher Mehershahi, mother of Shahjehan, of Quebec, in December, in Iran.

Marzban Mehrafshani, father of Fari-borz, on March 1. Porshe Ceremony (Memorial Service) was held at the Dar-e-Mehr in San Jose, on Sunday March 3. Besides the Mehrafshani family, Mr. Mehrafshani had relatives in the Aidun and Annosheh families.

Dara Eruchshaw Patel, husband of Avan, of Toronto area, on January 25.

Hormaziar Satoudian, father of Shajehan, of Quebec, on May 15, in Iran.

Sirous Shahriari, 70, husband of Firouzeh, father of Shahriar and Minoo (Sharvini), in North Vancouver, on December 13.

Agnes Wadia, of Calgary, on February 9, leaving behind Professor Dorab, Julie, Jim and Jasmin and families.

PERSONALS

Some ex-Queen Marians wish to start an Alumnus group. If you are a past student of Queen Mary High School in Bombay, and remember singing (with great gusto) "On Malabar Hill is the School that I love ..." please contact Aban Chavda at (212) 407-1303.

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of FIRDAUS BHATHENA, please contact the FEZANA Journal publisher.

People usually consider walking on water or in thin air as a miracle. But I think the real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on Earth. Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we do not even recognize; a blue sky, white clouds, green leaves, the black, curious eyes of a child. All is a miracle.

- Thich Nhat Hanh

EVENTS AND HONORS

DR. KERSEY ANTIA was selected International Man of the Year for 1996 by the International Biographical Center, a leading biographical reference book publisher with more than 20 Who's Who titles. An attractive Medal of Honour accompanies the nomination.

JIMMY K. ANTIA of Chicago area achieved the Boy Scout's "Good Life Emblem" in Zoroastrianism.

In a moving but formal inauguration ceremony, LION ERACH AMARIA, the new President of the Lion's Club of Finchley, London, was handed over the "collar of office and the gavel" by the outgoing President. An active member of the Club for 10 years, in 1992, Amaria was awarded the coveted Melvin Jones Fellowship, the Lions Club International Foundation's highest honor.

The University of Maryland at College Park has appointed DR. HOMAI MCDOWELL, assistant dean and



director of undergraduate programs, to its Maryland Business School. Until recently, McDowell was director of financial services for student affairs at Duke University, monitoring funds totaling over \$6 million. Daughter of the late Justice

Dinshaw Madon, a judge of India's Supreme Court and Dr. Khorshed Madon, Principal of Davar's College of Commerce, McDowell earned her doctorate of Business Administration from the University of Southern California.

[From Parsiana, August 1995]



SUN PHOTO/MATTHEW COULTER

Dr. Manek Kotwal
Bombay native brings health care to Utica's needy

UTICA — A lot of the inspiration for the marvelous medical work for the needy here began more than 30 years ago in dusty little villages in India.

"I realized I had to do something for my people," said Bombay native Dr. Manek Kotwal, medical director of Utica, New York's Sister Barbara Ginter Health Care Ministry, speaking of the desperately poor and undernourished people of India.

Kotwal recently received the Outstanding Woman Award for Health Care from the Mohawk Valley YWCA.

The Ministry provides free basic health care for anyone in need ... Kotwal volunteers her prodigious medical experience and at times helps pay the clinic's monthly rent out of her own pocket. This unusually generous attitude towards those in need began many years ago, shortly after her return from medical studies in England.

It was then, in the 1960s, when she met a Canadian medical missionary who became one of the most significant people in her life. Dr. Robert McClure was in charge of several small Protestant missionary hospitals spread out in villages halfway between Bombay and New Delhi.

"He taught me how much you could do with very little." She was

impressed with this doctor, far from his own land, helping her people. Now, far from her own land, she is doing the same thing in Utica.

It was in McClure's Christian Medical College Hospital in Vellore, India, that she met her future husband, Dr. Jehangir Kotwal, a psychiatrist. Eventually the Kotwals came to Canada, and later to the USA, where they both served as staff physicians at Marcy Psychiatric Hospital near Utica.

When Kotwal was preparing to retire, she was introduced to the work of the ministry. Since she opened the clinic in 1993, more than 450 individuals have received treatment.

Kotwal is a fellow of the Royal Academy of Surgeons in England and a member of the Central New York Academy of Medicine.

Mary Breslow, coordinator of the clinic, who nominated Kotwal for the Award, described her as a "warm, charismatic woman, sharing the gift of her own spirituality with the ecumenical group of volunteers"

She is truly an outstanding woman, living the motto of the health care ministry, "In caring for your health, we are caring for you..

[Extracted from *The Catholic Sun*, New York, April 1995]

Fifty six applicants from all over the world vied for the course at prestigious Karlsruhe Conservatoire of Music in Germany. Included among the six who make the grade is 26-year old pervez Mody of Bombay.

Musician Mody

Mody, a qualified Concert Pianist, Accompanist and Professor of Piano, was selected to attend Karlsruhe Conservatoire of Music in Germany, for a Ph.D. in Artistic Improvement.

Pervez holds the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Piano performance accompaniment and pedagogy from the Moscow Conservatoire, from where he graduated, in 1994, with distinction, following a seven year program with full scholarship.

Pervez started studying the piano at the age of four with Feroza Dubash, and later with veteran piano teacher, Farida Dubash. Mody has played on Air India Radio, and the BBC selected him to play the background music for a documentary on Parsis in India.

A stipulated condition of the Karlsruhe appointment is a deposit of \$12,000 per annum. Mody has appealed to trusts and philanthropists



for help to enable him to pursue this dream: "I am confident that given this opportunity, I can clear the examination with credit, and have the opportunity to participate in competition in Europe, which will enable me to establish myself as a Solo Pianist, and bring credit to my country."

Mody feels Indian society is not very music-friendly. Western classical music, especially is an ignored area, and some really talented people do not get opportunities to develop their talent. He adds: "It is my dream to establish a Music Conservatoire in India,"

THE GOOSE STORY

Next fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in "V" formation, think about what science has learned about why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a "V", the whole flock can fly at least 70% farther than if each bird flew alone. Perhaps people who share a common direction can get where they are going quicker and easier if they cooperate.

When a goose falls out of formation, it feels the resistance of going it alone, and quickly gets back. If we had as much sense as a goose, we would work with others who are going the same way. When the lead goose gets tired, he rotates back, and another goose takes the lead. It pays to take turns doing hard jobs for our group. The geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up speed.

Finally, when a goose weakens and falls out of formation, two geese follow him down to help and protect him until he dies.

If only we had the good sense of a goose. - From Informal Religious Meetings

NOSHIR MEHTA, professor at the Pain Center at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine was quoted in a *Newsweek* [December 4, 1995] article, *I Hear America Grinding*, on nocturnal teeth-grinding. Mehta said: "Almost everybody grinds their teeth sometimes, but as much as 20% of the US population now grind their teeth destructively."

ZARIR JIMMY SETHNA of Houston Texas, a Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) member for four years, recently attained MDRT Foundation Knight status. Membership represents the top 6% of all life insurance producers world wide, and is recognized internationally as the standard of excellence in life insurance sales performance.

The President of Pakistan conferred that country's most prestigious Sitara-e-Imtiaz Award on DR. FARIDOON FRAMROZE SETHNA, Pakistan's topmost gynecologist. Dr. Sethna, Medical Superintendent of Lady Dufferin Hospital for 27 years, has been the moving spirit behind the hospital's superb medical services. He is also the personal obstetrician to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

EDDY SHROFF of the Houston area recently became an Eagle Scout. His project was landscaping work at Springwoods Civic Club swimming pool in his neighborhood.

AZITA RATESHTARI, daughter of Dolly Irani and Rashid Rateshtari of Gaithersburg, Maryland, was awarded the Fali Chothia Scholarship of \$1,500 by the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington. Azita is pursuing a double major in Business and Marketing, and is an active member of ZAMWI. She will use her scholarship for a semester at the University of Nice, France.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*Don't be afraid to take big steps.
You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps.* - David Lloyd George

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