

FEZANA JOURNAL



FALL 2002, PAIZ 1371 YZ

Mah Meher-Avan-Adar 1371 YZ (Fasli)

Mah Ardibehest-Khordad-Tir 1372 YZ (Shensha)

Mah Khordad-Tir-Amardad 1372 YZ (Kadmi)

Fire and Fire Temples

Also Inside:

North American Zoroastrian Congress 2002

Zarathushti Games 2002

Zarathushti Business Conference 2002

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

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PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF
ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF
NORTH AMERICA

<http://www.fezana.org>

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PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE 2002

The FEZANA Publications Committee presents news and views, as well as educational and inspirational articles about Zarathushti religion, culture and practices as they pertain to Zarathushtis in North America. This undertaking has been successful because the process of unbiased and uncompromising accuracy is followed in reporting of facts, events, concepts and ideologies via the Journal and the Website.

Thanks to retiring members

Dr. Rustom Kevala, our treasurer, subscriptions manager and webmaster has stepped down after devoting years of selfless service to make the Publications Committee a viable and successful entity. His cautious yet enterprising approach has been extremely beneficial to us on the committee in all areas. Rustom, we thank you for all that you have done not just for our Committee but for FEZANA as well.

Nenshad Bardoliwalla, co-editor of the *Youthfully Speaking* section, is leaving the committee but will continue to contribute his journalistic talents to the Journal from time to time. *Youthfully Speaking* has seen some outstanding thought-provoking editorials from Nenshad. We will surely miss him.

Publications Committee, 2002

Publications Committee chair, **Khorshed F. Jungalwala** of Boston, will continue to coordinate all activities of the committee, including decisions related to editorial policy, income/expenditure, fundraising, and promotions for FEZANA Journal, the website and other publications.

FEZANA Journal

Editor-in-chief **Roshan Rivetna** of Chicago, continues to be the main-

stay of the Journal. Her superb talent in putting together an unbiased journalistic magazine and publishing and mailing it on a timely basis is a phenomenal feat! Her professionalism in all areas of journalistic presentation is most commendable!

Our editors **Adel Engineer** (Chicago), **Dolly Malva** (Los Angeles) and **Jamshed Udvadia** (Lansing,



MI) have worked very efficiently and been instrumental in coming up with many invaluable suggestions that have been successfully implemented.

Fereshteh Khatibi (Los Angeles) joined us last year to contribute the Farsi Section and has done so with great finesse.

Jt. editor of *Youthfully Speaking*, **Nikan Khatibi** (Los Angeles) has

been wonderfully insightful in his approach and done very well in presenting issues the youth could relate to and express with ease. We welcome **Ushtavaiti Davar** (Metuchen, NJ) as Jt. editor of *Youthfully Speaking* bringing a contemporary, yet mature approach to youth-related issues.

Mahrukh Motafram (Brookfield, WI) has stepped down as our efficient business manager, but will continue to do the *Milestones* section. We welcome **Rusi Gandhi** (Montville, NJ) as the new business manager.

Kershaw Khumbatta of Houston joins the team as subscriptions manager, a task previously handled by Rustom Kevala. Kershaw, an accountant in private practice, comes highly recommended. He will handle management of contributions for subscriptions and maintain the subscriptions database for the Journal.

Zenobia (Rivetna) Damania of Chicago, does a superb job of design-

ing the Journal cover, and lends an efficient hand to Roshan in all areas of Journal production.

Dinaz Rogers (Albany, OR) has done much for our readership by perpetuating our communal treasure-chest of lores, legends and sayings with articles of inspirational value in the *Lest We Forget* section.

FEZANA website

We welcome a new member on the Publications Committee, webmaster **Farrokh Mistree** of Atlanta, who has taken over the development of the website from Rustom. As with everything he does, Farrokh's contributions will be, to say the least, outstanding! He will continue the well-established work done by Rustom and will introduce innovative formats, such as a 2-way discussion format and many other such items.

Zubin Medora (Burnsville, MN) is a true asset to us. He is very innovative in designing and updating the FEZANA website.

Special Thanks

Our very special thanks to the Rivetna family, the guest editors, authors and many volunteers, donors and most of all, our subscribers whose efforts and contributions have made it possible for the Committee to carry out its work successfully. Special thanks also to the Chicago area "Mailing Crew" volunteers who help in sorting, bagging and mailing out the Journals every quarter; to Dara Rivetna of *Alphagraphics* for very cost-effective printing services; and to our overseas contact persons who help in distributing the Journal overseas [see page 10].

Recent publications

The Publications Committee has recently published *The Legacy of Zarathushtra*, an attractive book showcasing the Zarathushti religion, history and culture to our North American neighbors; and looks forward to shortly publishing a brochure on our Zarathushti religion.

Khorshed Jungalwala
Chair, FEZANA Publications

From the President

Jasa me avanghahe Mazda! O Wise Lord, come to my guidance!

I express my deepest gratitude and sincere thanks to all for giving me the opportunity to serve the North American Zarathushti community as the President of FEZANA, for the 2002-2004 term of office. **The FEZANA Executive Committee** includes a highly dedicated and worthy team of officers: Mr. Rashid Mehin (treasurer), Mrs. Arnavaz Sethna (secretary) and Prof. Farrokh Mistree (assistant secretary). The position of vice president was subsequently filled by Mrs. Mahrukh Motafram. I would like to thank the outgoing executive officers, Framroze Patel, Rustom Kevala and Diana Balsara for their support and guidance during my days as vice president.

For the future survival and prosperity of our community in North America, I believe we must have established **infrastructure**, which will enable our young members to experience religious and spiritual awareness. To bring this goal to fruition, we must support any member association, or initiate such activities through the FEZANA machinery, for the establishment of consecrated places of worship, ordainment of future clergy, development of theological institutions of the Zarathushti religion, and community support programs in education, critical and medical assistance, seniors' health and residency, and assisted living establishments.

Sports and young Zarathushtis. *The Sports Committee* (ZSC) is doing a superb job of the Zarathushti Games in every even year, and they have plans to undertake soccer tour-



Incoming president, Firdosh Mehta, left, at the FEZANA AGM in Montreal, May 2002, presenting an engraved candlestand to outgoing president, Framroze Patel, for his years of dedicated service.

namment in the odd year, thereby having a sport event every year. Similarly, **Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA)** Committee is working on a youth congress every odd year, and a summer youth camp or a winter activity every even year, so that there will also be a youth activity every year.

Religious Education is very important and an integral part of FEZANA's commitment to work closely with the **North American Mobed Council** and the **Kankash-e-Mobedan** in supporting programs that they would like to undertake.

As far as general religious education is concerned, we have more than the necessary books, materials and programs available, and many FEZANA workshops have been held for religious educators. However, more effort should be made to properly publicize and utilize the existing programs and materials, and the available information distributed to the various anjumans, e.g. the **Good Life Medallion Program** put forth by The Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York, and the Zoroastrian Scouts program for Religion badge from the **Toronto Scouts Group** of The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, are two excellent programs, which must be promoted.

FEZANA will endeavor to develop a CD-Rom Power Point presentation on an introduction to the religion of Zarathushtra, as an educational tool for associations and individuals.

This can also be used for inter-faith activities and for creating awareness among our interested neighbors.

Medical Assistance. *The Critical Assistance Fund* for medical and social aid has been constantly growing, and the need for it outpaces this growth. This Committee is working to improve FEZANA's response time in investigating the authenticity of the appeals and allocation of funding. We acknowledge the assistance of various agencies in assisting FEZANA for this activity, such as the various anjumans around the world, the WZO Trusts in India, *Parsiana* and others.

Seniors. As the area of senior activities is managed by each association

individually, a North American program would involve a few large associations forming committees for senior strategies which FEZANA could liaise with and share information within these groups for their overall benefit. A FEZANA survey in the past has indicated that Houston and Vancouver are the two major cities where many Zarathushtis would like to spend their retirement years. These are choices based on climate, cost of living, availability of social services infrastructure, and medical insurance assistance. New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay Area, Toronto and their vicinity, are major areas of settlement for our community in North America, with a high proportion of settled seniors.

Constitutional amendments. A ballot has been sent to all associations to vote on amendments to our constitution, in a clause-by-clause form. However, there is a major issue of separating the clauses in the constitution into by-laws, which will make it less cumbersome to make changes that reflect growth and demographics. At the last AGM, the board gave us direction for such by-law separation, as there seems to be a few different ways to accomplish that. The preamble, objectives, name and location should be the constitution, and the rest of the procedural issues to be set up as by-laws. This will be done with the help of knowledgeable people in this field of activity.

FEZANA awareness. Many times individuals at the grassroots level feel that the FEZANA constitution is inadequate in protecting their rights and serving them in the way they would feel satisfied. This is perhaps because we have not done an adequate and continuous job of informing individuals of the make-up of FEZANA, as essentially an umbrella body of federated registered associations. In response to this, we have set up a new internet group titled *fezana-awareness@yahoogroups.com*, which will be monitored by our Public Relation Committee chair. Everyone is welcome to join.

Strategic planning. A very elaborate and well-documented *Strategic Plan* has been developed and adopted at the 1997 AGM, under the leadership of the then president, Dolly Dastoor.

Since then many of the strategic objectives have been started and partly accomplished, but there has been no committed endeavor to implement or utilize this plan as a yardstick for implementation or measure to any successful degree. The executive will carry this torch and move it forward, in the second half of the 10-year plan envisaged till 2007.

Home for FEZANA. FEZANA has now come of age where the records and files need to be archived and stored in an organized manner with retrieval facilities and some archival administration requirements. I thank Hosi Mehta for the generous offer to house FEZANA records at the Chicago Darbe-Mehr and to Rohinton Rivetna for offering his services in the archival management and document retrieval process.

FEZANA officially communicates with the community-at-large via the website www.fezana.org and the *FEZANA Journal*. Thanks to Zubin Medora and Rustom Kevala for managing and operating the website and I sincerely thank Roshan Rivetna and her team for publication of the Journal under the leadership of the Publications Committee chaired by Khorshed Jungalwala. ■

Firdosh Mehta
President, FEZANA

VP Election Results

Results of the Ballot Count Committee (Yasmin Pavri, Bahram Yazdani, Firdosh Mehta and Arnavaz Sethna) meeting at the ZHCC, Houston, are as follows:

Mahrukh Motafram – 37.6 votes

Fereshteh Khatibi – 28.4 votes
for a total of 66 qualifying votes.

Mahrukh will serve as vice president of FEZANA for the balance of the 2002-2003 term.

FEZANA AGM 2002

Report of the Fifteenth FEZANA annual general meeting, on May 25 and 26, 2002, in Montreal, Quebec.

It was a special occasion for Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (ZAQ) as the FEZANA AGM coincided with the 35th Anniversary of their Association. ZAQ members were excellent hosts and planned the event to the last detail. Special thanks to Ness Lakdawala for the excellent facilities at *Dectron, Inc.* and lunches for the meeting.

The AGM commenced with a benediction by Ervads Jehan Bagli, Gev Karkaria and Kobad Zarolia.

ELECTIONS

Results of the election were announced by Rustom Kevala, who had been appointed election officer by Framroze Patel:

President: *Firdosh Mehta*
Treasurer: *Rashid Mehin*
Asst. secy: *Farrokh Mistree*

Rustom stated that the election for the president's position had been very close. One of the association ballots had been rejected by the election observers because it appeared that it had been sent after the due date for receipt of ballots by the FEZANA secretary. However, this rejection had not altered the results of the election.

There was some discussion on involving the community (association members) more fully in the election process. Delegates felt that FEZANA cannot dictate to the associations how they arrive at the votes for FEZANA elections.

Firdosh Mehta thanked all who supported him and also thanked the others for making him realize that he has to work harder to earn their support. After being elected president, Fir-



Top, outgoing FEZANA executive committee: Firdosh Mehta (vice president), Arnava Sethna (secretary), Framroze Patel (president) and Rustom Kevala (treasurer); missing in picture is Diana Balsara (asst. secry). Below, due to staggered terms, some old and some new faces are on the 2002 executive committee: Firdosh Mehta (president), Rashid Mehin (treasurer), Arnava Sethna (secretary) and Farrokh Mistree (asst. secry); the position of vice president was filled by Mahrukh Motafram in August. Facing page, clockwise from top left: FEZANA association representatives Ness Lakdawala, of the host association, ZAQ, Montreal; Khushru Lakdawala, president of ZAC Los Angeles; Perviz Madon, president of ZSBC, Vancouver; Houtoxi Contractor, president of ZAPA, Pittsburgh; Rumi Engineer, president of ZARM, Rocky Mountains, Colorado; and Jimmy Dholoo, representing ZAMWI, Washington DC.

dosh resigned from his existing position as vice president.

Rashid Mehin thanked everyone for their support and said it would be an honor to serve the community.

Farrokh Mistree thanked everyone for their support and particularly thanked ZAH for nominating him for the position.

As for the vacancy for the position of vice president, it was decided to request members to send in their nominations by June 15. In case of an election, ballot papers were to be received post marked no later than July 30, 2002. Khorshed Jungalwala was nominated from the floor and accepted as one of the nominees. (This was subsequently withdrawn by Khorshed).

FEZANA OFFICERS' REPORTS

Outgoing president **Framroze Patel** presented his report [see below].

Vice president **Firdosh Mehta**, on behalf of FEZANA, presented a beautiful candle stand in the shape of an *afarganyu* with an engraved base to Framroze for his dedicated service during the past many years.

Treasurer **Rustom Kevala** presented the financial statement. The financial report was approved after being duly proposed and seconded. Rustom was also presented with a plaque by Firdosh on behalf of FEZANA for his dedicated service.

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

Delegates of associations who were present, made brief reports on the activities of their associations during the past year.

All the associations indicated having Sunday School and some even needed to divide the children by age groups as the number of children has increased. Social events were Iranian and Shenshai Nouruz celebrations, Jashne Sadeh, picnics and outings.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Awards Committee. **Dinshaw Joshi.** **Dinshaw** thanked Ervad Mehraban Zartoshty for his donation of \$2500 and for his continuous support since 1996. He advised that the selection for the awards has been



completed and the successful nominees will be honored at the North American Zoroastrian Congress to be held in Chicago. The

committee had a different panel of judges for each category with a total of 36 judges. Dinshaw [photo above] thanked Yasmin Pavri for all her help in the selection process.

Coordination and Planning. *Firdosh Mehta's* report included establishing procedures to avoid conflicting FEZANA events such as North American Congresses, ZSC Sports events and AGM's. The report stated that a possible tentative ski trip is under planning stages by ZYNA, in the picturesque Canadian Rockies near Banff, Alberta. To avoid future conflicts, the following upcoming events have been confirmed.

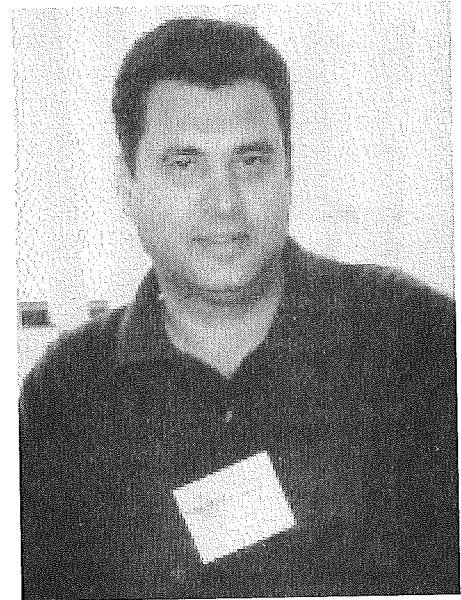
(1) ZYNA Summer Youth Camp, August 21-25, 2002, at Yosemite Campsite hosted by ZANC. Thanks to Bomi Patel of ZANC.

(2) 2003 FEZANA AGM, hosted by ZAGBA is scheduled over Memorial Day weekend.

(3) The North American Youth Congress in Toronto, is now confirmed for July 24 - 27, 2003.

(4) Zarathushti Soccer Tournament by ZSC is confirmed for Labor Day weekend, September 6-8, 2003.

External Affairs. Rohinton Rivetna stated that as Zarathushtis, we must not tire of reminding ourselves that we are uniquely equipped to build "bridges of understanding and peace" among all faiths and peoples. As for bringing awareness to our non-Zarathushti friends and neighbors, Rohinton applauded the efforts of Shahrukh Mehta for creating such awareness. Rohinton regretted that FEZANA's NGO status is not being fully utilized. Behram Pastakia and Homi Gandhi have shown interest in





From left, Sam Vesuna, president of ZSO, Toronto; Mahrukh Motafram, Small Groups Committee; Roshan Sethna representing ZAH, Houston; and Hosi Mehta, president of ZAC, Chicago.

being our UN-NGO representatives, and Rohinton will work with them.

Funds and Finance. *Jerry Kheradi* discussed the main issue of *Thousand Points of Light* requesting each Zarathushti family to donate \$100 (one point). As of date, we have 249 points and the goal is to reach 1,000 points. He requested representatives of each association to spread the word about this project. Due to the poor economic conditions, there were no volunteers for the Matching Funds. The Financial Advisory Board is presently functioning, and it's members are Maneck Kotwal, Yazdi Sidhwa, the newly elected treasurer Rashid Mehin and the Funds and Finance Chair, Jerry Kheradi.

Information Receiving and Disseminating. *Khorshed Jungalwala* advised that a booklet has been published for "creating awareness" which will be sent to all FEZANA Journal subscribers as a supplement with the Summer 2002 edition. All the associations are encouraged to promote this booklet and place it in their local libraries and universities.

North American Congress. *Rustom Kevala* advised that the Terms of Reference (TOR) for hosting the Congress were approved in July

1996. Costs to the attendees, speakers, awardees, etc. is a perennial issue that keeps cropping up at every major seminar, congress or workshop. Rustom emphasized that all Zarathushtis who want to, regardless of their financial ability, should be able to attend it. This is a difficult balancing act for the congress planners and fundraisers. He requested the new president to look into revising the guidelines for hosting North American congresses to make it easier for future hosts.

Public Relations. *Rashid Mehin* tabled the brochure for FEZANA promotion developed some years ago. The brochure is a well laid out promotional information package, which was developed to promote FEZANA to the community through further distribution by member associations. However, it needs to be updated with more current information. Rashid Mehin agreed to work on the document and present it to the Executive in the near future.

Small Groups. *Mahrukh Motafram* emphasized the need for FEZANA to be proactive as far as small groups are concerned. Presently there are 13 small groups and they need to be encouraged to participate in

FEZANA. Mahrukh appealed to the new officers to address this issue and make provision in the constitution – invite them to the AGMs, give them voting rights. She was happy to note that the Journal has brought the groups together.

Scholarship Report. *Dolly Dastoor* stated that during the academic year 2001-2002, fifteen full-time Zoroastrian students from North America applied for scholarship funds. Four scholarships were awarded to the following students: *Farhad Ardesheirpour* (\$1,000 scholarship), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, working towards a BS in biology and chemistry. *Rukshana Gheyara* (\$1,000 scholarship), McGill University, working towards a BS in physical therapy. *Roxanna Mirza* (\$500 scholarship), Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, working towards a doctor of naturopathic medicine. *Natasha Mody* (\$500 Scholarship), Art Institute of Southern California, working towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts in graphic design and visual communications.

Dolly requested to consider a minimum of \$5000 to be allotted to the Scholarship Fund for next year.

Sports. *Bijan Khosraviani* advised that they have now prepared the



Clockwise from left, Homi Gandhi, president, ZAGNY, New York; Jerry Kheradi, Funds and Finance Committee; Bijan Khosraviani, Sports, with Dolly Dastoor, Scholarship; Sherazade Mehta, co-chair of ZYNA and president, ZAGBA, Boston; and Armaity Bamji, ZYNA co-chair and liaison between ZYNA and ZSO, Toronto.

guidelines for running successful events. FEZANA members wanted the guidelines to be approved by the FEZANA board and requested Bijan to send these to all the FEZANA members for their comments.

ZYNA. *Sherazade Mehta* gave a report of ZYNA activities. They did not hold any social event in December 2001. Instead they held a fund raiser for Afghan Children Fund and raised \$576. They are now focusing on the youth congress.

Afreed Mistry, youth representative from the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, talked about the youth congress to be held in 2003 in Toronto. It will be organized by the youth of ZSO from July 24 - 27 with other activities up to August 3. They are hoping to get a lot of response. The theme of the youth congress is "Nexus". Nexus means link and they are hoping that by the end of the congress the attendees will discover their link – link between generations and the community.

The location is close to Toronto in the Toronto Congress Center. They are working with Radisson Hotel, which

is across the street. They have had a kick-off session and raised \$350. Age limit for this congress is from 13 to 35. Afreed requested comments and questions to be directed to Armaity Bamji who is ZYNA liaison with the ZSO congress committee.

World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce. *Rohinton Rivetna* advised that the WZCC is now a reality. Several chapters have been opened and are working successfully. It is for networking among members and encourages Zarathushtis to be entrepreneurs. Rohinton requested all the associations to encourage their members to become members of the Chamber, join their e-group at zchamber@yahoogroups.com and visit the website at www.wzcc.net.

New Association – Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation. *Kobad Zarolia* advised that they have formed a new organization in the Mississauga area. They propose to purchase land by the end of 2002. They plan to build three structures – a community hall, an agiary and an old folks home. They presently have approximately 200 members and



have started the project with a jashan. They have raised over \$300,000 in cash and pledges. Kobad emphasized that they are not opposing the existing organization; they had logistical problems and thought it would better serve the community if they had another center. Their aim is to bring religion to people. They have started the process of joining FEZANA as a member association.



Shahrokh Mehta: creating awareness

Creating Awareness. *Shahrokh Mehta* [above] co-author of the article, "Telling Others Who We Are" in FEZANA Journal [Winter 2001], reported that in a short period of four months several committees have been formed. The Stamp Project is one of them. Shahrokh felt that it took 25 years to build a structure, and the next 25 years should be spent in promoting the Zarathushti religion.

FEZANA World Body Working Group (WG) Report. The WG, *Sarosh Collector*, *Khorshed Jungalwala* (Chair), *Farrokh Mistree*, *Gev Nentin* and *Rohinton Rivetna*, that was appointed in May 2001 by Framroze Patel, briefed the assembled FEZANA member associations.

Rohinton Rivetna gave a brief history of efforts to form a world body from 1970s to the advent of the WG in 2001. He succinctly highlighted some of the salient features of the

actions undertaken by various people around the world.

Khorshed Jungalwala, referring to the WG's Phase II report, stated at the outset that the WG is *not* an advocacy group, but is committed to creating a climate of reciprocating trust that will enable all who share in the vision of a Zarathushti world body advance towards its realization. Explaining the process and recommendations, she said the WG looked through feedback from many constituencies, studied models of several non-Zarathushti communities and also discussed the US (House/Senate) and UK (Commons/Lords) models.

Sarosh Collector presented a set of 30 "ideal characteristics" of a world body which were developed by the WG with consideration given to principles, representation, organization, laws and tax exemption, feasibility and workability.

Farrokh Mistree presented the four models (see WG Phase I report) detailing their structure, their commonality and their workability. Summarizing on behalf of the WG, Farrokh indicated that the WG was focused on getting agreement on the 'structure' of the world body (e.g., how decisions will be made, etc.) before dealing with issues of 'policy' (e.g., should doctrinal issues be dealt with at the local or the world body level).

It was pointed out that Draft No. 6 of 1997 of WCZF should be taken into consideration by the WG. A letter dated May 14, 2002 from Rumi Sethna was also presented.

After nearly four hours of discussion, and questions/answers, a resolution was passed, empowering the WG to continue its deliberations, with the FEZANA executive being charged with issuing directives. Salient features of the resolution include: the WG develop all four models, communicate with other regions around the world, not negotiate conclusion, pay special attention to WZO's "deal breaker list" and report back to the FEZANA executive and the board of FEZANA within 90 days.

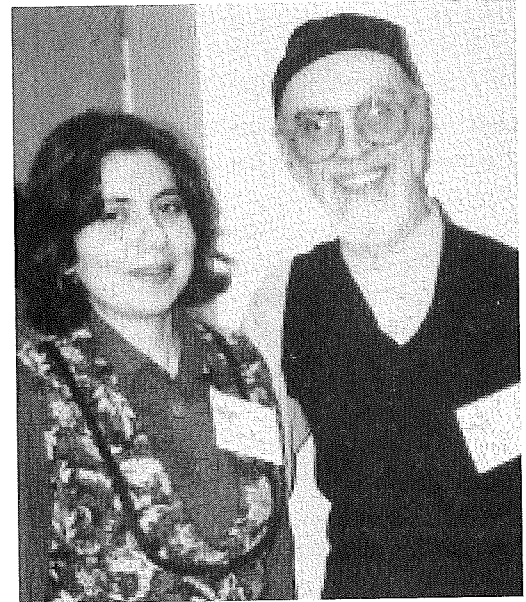
North American Mobeds Council. Ervad Jehan Bagli stated NAMC's Mission Statement: "To promote the understanding and practice of Zarathushti religion, in North America (USA and Canada), and to represent the interest of Council members."

Er. Bagli laid out the strategic plan of NAMC which included: development of ecclesiastical excellence in the knowledge of Zarathushti theology, doctrines, rituals and spiritual care; enhance and advance understanding and appreciation of theological, doctrinal and ritualistic concepts of the religion of Zarathushtra amongst North American communities in general and Zarathushtis in particular, and thereby raise the profile of NAMC; provide spiritual guidance in the Zarathushti way of life at the national level in the US and Canada.

The Council will continue to pursue and develop existing programs of training of mobedyars, religious publications and hands-on training camps. As for religious publications, the funding for the book *Jashan and Afringan* came from the Council and there are more books to be published – funeral ceremony, understanding of navjote and wedding ceremonies, to bring understanding among laity.

Er. Bagli concluded by saying that good thoughts and good words are easy but it is difficult to transform these into good actions. He stated that there are about 80 members on NAMC which brings in annual fees of Cdn \$2000. He would like to create a mobedyar training fund and a young mobed training fund. He sent an appeal to send donations to NAMC Treasurer Gev Karkaria. The new NAMC committee consists of *Jehan Bagli* (president), *Adi Unwalla* (vice president), *Gev Karkaria* (treasurer), *Nozer Kotwal* (secretary) and *Kawas Desai* (member at large).

Video by Tenaz Dubash. Sherazade Mehta read out a letter from Tenaz Dubash regarding her project of making a video presentation. This is a documentary film and everyone



From left, the FEZANA World Body Working Group: Sarosh Collector, Farrokh Mistree, Khorshed Jungalwala (chair) and Rohinton Rivetna (not present). Right, Rashna Ghadialy, chair of the Census Committee and chair of the 12th North American Congress, with Er. Jehan Bagli, president of the North American Mobeds Council.

was working on voluntary basis. She made an appeal for donations from associations. There were comments from the floor suggesting that the documentary material present a balanced perspective of the different modes of practice of our religion.

North American Congress. *Rashna Ghadialy* reported that they had met the quota that was given to the hotel. Fund raising was the most daunting challenge. September 11 incident had changed a lot in the business community and some registrations were cancelled.

Z Labels. Publication Committee chair *Khorshed Jungalwala* advised that the Committee will only be facilitating this project and felt that Public Relations Committee be involved with this. Khorshed showed four samples of labels that could be used as return address labels and sold to the community as a fund raiser. There was some discussion regarding the design and Khorshed invited comments/suggestions to be sent to her. The concept of selling personalized labels was approved conditional upon approval of designs by the FEZANA Board (24 member associations).

Amendments to the Fezana Constitution. *Firdosh Mehta* advised that

not all the associations had responded to the amendment ballots. This was discussed in depth and it was decided to give another 60 days to the associations to respond. Firdosh offered his help to anyone who needed clarification of the amendments.

Passing the baton. *Framroze Patel* officially passed the gavel to *Firdosh Mehta* as the next president of FEZANA.

Next AGM: Sherazade Mehta, president of ZAGBA made a presentation for the next AGM to be held in Boston, on Memorial Day weekend 2003. This was unanimously ratified by members present.

Thanks to the host. The FEZANA executives, past and present, sincerely thanked Ness Lakdawala and the entire team of ZAQ volunteers for their excellent arrangements for the meeting and lodging.

Prepared jointly by:
Rustom Kevala
Rashid Mehin
Firdosh Mehta
Farrokh Mistree
Framroze Patel
Arnavaz Sethna

OUTGOING PRESIDENT

FRAMROZE PATEL'S REPORT

This is the last time that I will be addressing you formally as the president of FEZANA and the 'sevak' of the Zarathushti community of North America.

During my first term I invested a lot of thought and energy in participation of and in organizing the World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston. I am pleased to say that congress was by all accounts, the best ever. I am glad that I played my part well.

In my second term, I focused on bringing the world body into existence. I am pleased to say that we have made significant progress on our journey towards establishing a world body. We do have a long way to go. I do not know what the final outcome will be, but I want to assure you that, in my opinion, the path upon which we have embarked is the right one, the correct one, the righteous one.

Many people have been involved in bringing us thus far and I thank them for their contributions. Pardon me as I single out just a few:

Rohinton Rivetna, for creating FEZANA, serving as its first presi-

dent and for envisioning the creation of a world body as a World Council of Zoroastrian Federations (WCZF).

Adi Davar and respected **Dr. Farhang Mehr** for championing the cause of the WZO and working behind the scenes to bring about convergence. **Rumi Sethna**, **Rustam Dubash** and **Dinshaw Tamboli** for championing the cause of WZO and investing many hours for bringing a unified world body as they visualize.

Minoo Shroff, for being my conduit to the BPP and for providing sound advice.

[Continued on page 102]

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! For help in distributing FEZANA Journal overseas

Due to exorbitant increase in overseas mailing rates FEZANA Journal has established contacts in several countries, to whom the Journals are sent for local distribution. Our very grateful thanks to:

Australia: **Dr. Sam Kerr**
Europe: **Sam Motashaw**
India: **Jehangir Patel**
(Parsiana)
New Zealand: **Gev Daji**
Pakistan: **Toxy Cowasjee**
Singapore: **Roshan Mistri**
Nelly Doctor
UK: **Rusi Dalal**

THANKS also to **Anita Parakh** (Australia), **Farrokh Mistree** (UK, Singapore), **Farrokh Toddywalla** (India), **Mr. & Mrs. Sohrab Gimi** (India) and **Er. Godrej Sidhwa** (Pakistan) for kindly carrying the Summer 2002 edition and the "Legacy of Zarathushtra" books overseas in their luggage.

If volunteers are not available to hand carry the journals, airmail subscriptions are sent to the contact persons by Global Priority Mail (not available in Pakistan); and sea mail subscriptions are sent as "Periodicals Mail", which may take up to 2 months (Europe) and up to 4 months (Asia, Australia).

ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE

Second Association in Toronto



In a letter to member associations, dated July 17, FEZANA president **Firdosh Mehta** welcomed the newly formed **Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation (OZCF)** as the 24th member of FEZANA: "We are pleased to inform you that we have now received the said documents and fees, and have extended the membership of OZCF to FEZANA ..."

With this announcement, Toronto joins three other major cities – Los Angeles, San Jose and New York – in having more than one Zarathushti association.

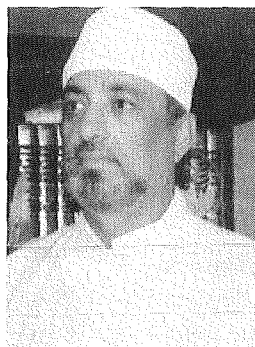
The Inaugural Jashan, performed by over a dozen priests and the gala dinner, at a Mississauga banquet hall on

May 20, drew a crowd of 375, according to the OZCF newsletter, *Vision* [see above].

OZCF plans to hold a Black Tie fundraising gala on October 26th, with tickets at \$100 per person.

Donations are urged from all Zarathushtis. Immediate plans are to purchase a 5 to 15 acres parcel of land to build a house of worship and community center to accommodate the future demands of an increasing Zarathushti population of the western Greater Toronto Area. Contact:

OZCF at 4244 Taffey Crescent, Mississauga, ON L5L 2J2, Canada; president **Er. Kobad Zarolia** [above] tel: (905) 542-9885, fax: (416) 745-6499, email: kzarolia@interlog.com; vice president is **Phil Sidhwa** at tel: (905) 845-2823.



ZSO's Building Capital Campaign

"Our goal is to raise \$2.2 million in 3 years", says **Dr. Dhun Noria**, chair of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario's, Building Capital Campaign Committee, in a letter to ZSO members, "... after more than three months of deliberations and discussions, 78% of us overwhelmingly voted and gave a mandate to build a new, larger community center at the present darbe mehr site ... ZSO takes care of you from cradle to grave" notes the letter, listing a host of services pro-

vided by ZSO to its members over the past 30 years of its existence.

Plans are to expand the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr assembly hall from 2400 sq. ft. to 5040 sq. ft., prayer room from 930 sq. ft. to 1950 sq. ft., and parking spots from 114 cars to 150 cars. The expanded hall will accommodate 916 persons theatre style. Contact **Dr. Noria** at Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr, 3590 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M2M 3S6.



ZAMWI celebrates Jashne Sadeh.

Ervad Behram Panthaki (at right) leads the seven Amesha Spentas at the Jashne Sadeh celebration in Washington, DC area. From left, Vivian, Faranak, Meher, Mitra, Shireen, Dena, Avan and Kian Paul.



ZAC purchases house next door to darbe mehr

Several ZAC members came up with \$5,000 each in a hurry for the down payment when the property next door to the darbe mehr came up for sale. Having missed two earlier opportunities to buy this property (in the 1980s for around \$80,000 and again in the 1990s for around \$200,000), ZAC acted fast this time. The purchase was completed in July, for \$301,000. The neat 4-bedroom house [photo left] on a beautiful 1-acre property shaded with large trees, will be rented out until plans for the future use of this property are finalized.

Shenshai Muktd

Associations across North America celebrated *muktd* days in August, in remembrance of dear departed ones. **ZANT** (Dallas) gathered in a private home for gatha prayers for 5 days. **ZSBC** (Vancouver) had a jashan at the darbe mehr on Spentomard Gatha. **ZAGNY** offered community prayers for five days, at a different location each day, across the tri-state area. **ZSO** performed prayers (open to Zarathushtis only) for five gatha days at the darbe mehr, with communal meals – morning satum, afringan and farrokshi, afternoon satum and evening satum and humbandagi.

ZAC (Chicago) performed daily prayers for the five Gatha days and navroze, at the darbe mehr with a community meal to follow. **ZAC (S. California)** usually observes muktd with prayers by Mobed Zarir Bhandara. **ZANC** observed muktd for 10 days at the San Jose darbe mehr, Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala and Er. Kobad Jamshed recited the prayers **ZAH (Houston)** allowed Er. Peshoton Unwalla to rent the Library Room at the Center, while Er. Bomanshaw Sanjana was given the free use of the Prayer Room, for performing prayers for ten days. All then enjoyed meals together.



Rows of flower-vases commemorate the fravashis of departed loved ones, during the five muktd days at the darbe mehr in Chicago.

It is with a deep sense of humility and a strong appreciation of 'progressive mentality' that I have accepted the responsibility to be president of NAMC. The new team whose counsel I seek, comprises of Ervads *Adi Unwala* (vice president), *Nozer Kotwal* (secretary), *Gev Karkaria* (treasurer) and *Cawas Desai* (member at large).

NAMC is an important religious and spiritual limb of the community – the body. A limb cannot function on its own, severed from the body; and the body without its limb, cannot attain its full potential strength. The first step to rectify this situation, is for FEZANA and NAMC to work in close collaboration, to mutually strengthen both the limb and the body.

NAMC MISSION STATEMENT

To promote the Understanding and practice of the Zarathushti religion, in North America (United States and Canada) and to represent the interest of Council members.

NAMC STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Provide services to members for development of ecclesiastical excellence in the knowledge of Zarathushti theology, doctrines, rituals and spiritual care.

1.1 Establish an *Initiative for Informed Zarathushti Clergy (IIZAC)* program for continuing education of mobeds in order to augment their awareness of Zarathushti theology, doctrines and rituals.

1.2 Evolve an infrastructure to train and ordain mobeds in North America in coordination with Iranian and Parsi religious leaders.

2. Enhance and advance understanding and appreciation of theological, doctrinal and ritualistic concepts of the religion of Zarathushti amongst North American communities in general and Zarathushtis in particular, and thereby raise the profile of NAMC.

NAMC Memorandum and Agenda

New president of the North American Mobeds Council, Er. "NAMC is ready to put their time and resources at the disposal of the community. Is the community ready to work with the Council?" says NAMC president, Er. (Dr) Bagli.

2.1 Improve public perception of Zarathushti religion and its clergy amongst co-religionists by focusing on the values of the faith.

2.2 Develop, promote and publicize the 'mobedyar' program and provide training to Zarathushti youths.

2.3 Promote IIZAC program of continuing education amongst the laity.

2.4 Promote interactive dialogue between laity and the clergy within the North American Zarathushti community for better understanding.

2.5 Organize camps for training of young mobeds/mobedyars for hands-on training on performance of rituals.

3. Provide spiritual guidance in the Zarathushti way of life at the national level in the US and Canada.

3.1 Survey Zarathushti associations and communities in North America to position Mobeds as a resource person for religious education within the local community.

3.2 Study existing standards of education of Zarathushti children in Zarathushti religion and prayers. Wherever necessary, recommend new standards for such education.

3.3 Prepare standardized explanatory notes on rituals, which can be used by mobeds to explain to the laity, the purpose and details of the rituals and the accompanying prayers.

4. Create and develop links with academic religious departments, as well as Zarathushti clergy worldwide to harmonize the understanding and practice of Zarathushti theology.

5. Catalyze and promote World Council of Zarathushti Mobeds.

6. Recognize and reward individuals and organizations for significant contributions towards perpetuation of the religion in North America.

The IIZAC program is initially directed to commence a dialog

amongst the clergies. In time we hope to publish deliberations to integrate the laity into this project.

The council will continue to develop the following three existing programs.

Training of mobedyar. Ervad Behram Panthaky of ZAMWI has been appointed chairperson for the Mobedyar Training Committee.

Religious Publications. We hope to publish a series of 'understanding and practice' books for various rituals. The first of this series is *Understanding and Practice of Jashan Ceremony* by Er. Jehan Bagli and Ervad Adi Unwala [see FEZANA Journal, Summer 2000, page 84]. The second, *Understanding and Practice of Obsequies* is under preparation. The objective is to prepare a ground work of the explanation, mode of performance of rituals, and prayers, all in one place and in English, to pass on to future generations.

Hands-on training camp. We plan to modify this program into a workshop to be held in selected locations. We invite suggestions and reaction of various associations, as this will involve organizations, singly or jointly, taking the initiative and inviting experienced mobeds to impart their valuable know-how to the youth.

Finally it is my earnest plea to all Zarathushti associations to encourage their local mobeds to participate in the working of the NAMC. If this demands subsidizing their travel costs, so be it, in the interest of integration of all viewpoints in the discussions, that will shape the future of the Zarathushti clergy on this continent.

Fiscal support. All of the above are good thoughts and good words. They are not worth the paper they are written on, if we cannot transform them into good action. It is a fact of life in

ZAGNY team in Revlon Walk for Women.



Twenty members of ZAGNY, led by team captain Usheen Davar [left], gathered at 7:30 am on Saturday, May 4, in Times

Square, New York to join 50,000 people in the 5th Annual Revlon Run/Walk for Women, in a display of support for women battling breast and ovarian cancer. The ZAGNY team raised over \$1600 and definitely 'created awareness' as people enquired about their *Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York* banner. ■

the material world, that every good action demands good fiscal support. The life-breath of the Council comes from donations and subscription of volunteer mobeds that totals annually to a meager sum. I would therefore like to announce the creation of

- Mobedyar Training Fund.
- Religious Publications Fund
- Young Mobed Training Fund

Individuals and associations are invited to donate to these funds to help transform some of these thoughts into actions for the enlightenment of future Zarathushtis. Donations should be sent to NAMC treasurer Er. Gev Karkaria, 38, Brome Street, Kirkland, QUE, H9J 2N3, Canada.

NAMC is ready to put their time and resources at the disposal of the community. Is the community ready to work with the Council? ■

A symposium on "**Zarathushti Rituals: Past, Present & Future**", sponsored jointly by NAMC and FEZANA, will be held during the Easter weekend, April 18-20, 2003, in Toronto, Canada, and will feature speakers from India, Europe and North America. Contact jbagli@rogers.com.

COMING EVENTS

Canada: Global Model

A conference "*Canada: Global Model for a Multicultural State, Diversity 2002*" will be held September 25-28, 2002, at Sheraton Grande Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta. It will look at Canada's public policy and community initiatives that promote social harmony through multiculturalism. Visit www.cmef.ca or contact firdosh.mehta@primus.ca.

FEZANA AGM 2003

The 2003 FEZANA AGM will be held in **Boston**, Massachusetts, on Memorial Day (May), hosted by ZAGBA, sherazadem@yahoo.com.

Next NA Youth Congress

The next *North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress* will be held in

Toronto, July 24-27, 2003. A week of post-congress activities is also planned. nazyc2003@yahoo.com.

Unity Cup Soccer - 2003

The Third Unity Cup Soccer Games will be held on Labor Day weekend, Sept. 2003. Contact zsc@fezana.org.

World Youth Congress

The *Third World Zoroastrian Youth Congress*, which was planned for December 2002, in India, has been moved to December 2003. It will be hosted by the Federation of Zoroastrian Youth of India, FOZYA, with due sponsorship from the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, and will, most likely, be held in Pune. Contact FOZYA president Sarosh Palkhiwalla at sarosh64@hotmail.com.

NA Congress 2004

The *13th North American Zoroastrian Congress* will be held in the San Francisco Bay area in 2004. Contact Bomi Patel at bomip@yahoo.com.

2004 Zarathushti Games

The next Zarathushti Games will be held on 4th of July, 2004. The location is to be confirmed. Contact zsc@fezana.org.

Next World Congress

The 8th World Zoroastrian Congress will be held in the UK, in the summer of 2005. Please contact ZTFE president at godrej@globalnet.co.uk. ■

Left, Armaity Bamji, Armeen Bhesania and Afreed Mistry are organizing the next North American youth congress, "Nexus 2003" [p. 14].





ZOROASTRIAN SOCIETY OF ONTARIO
PROUDLY HOSTS

The 2003 North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress

July 24-27, 2003

Toronto, Ontario
Canada

www.nexus2003.com

Email: nazyc2003@yahoo.com

Indian Diaspora Day

All members of the Indian diaspora are invited to a conference in New Delhi, **January 9-11, 2003**, to be inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, to commemorate the declaration of January 9th as "Bharatya Pravasi Divas" (Indian Diaspora Day). Register at www.indiaday.org. [also see page 50].

IN COMING ISSUES OF FEZANA JOURNAL

Winter 2002:

**Religious Education
and Youth Leadership**

Guest Editor:

Mehrborzin Soroushian
mazda@san.rr.com

Spring 2003:

Zarathushtis in Sports

Guest Editor:

Porus Cooper

poruscooper@hotmail.com

Calendar of Festivals

Fravardian Jashan

Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin

Fri Aug 9

(K)

Sun Sep 8

(S)

Maidyozarem Gahambar

Mah Ardibehesht, Roj Khorshed - Daepmeher

Sat Aug 31 - Wed Sep 4

(K)

Mon Sep 30 - Fri Oct 4

(S)

Paitishem Gahambar

Mah Sheherevar, Roj Ashtad - Aneran

Thu Sep 12 - Mon Sep 16

(F)

Jashne-Mehergan

Mah Meher, Roj Meher

Wed Oct 2

(F)

Ayathrem Gahambar

Mah Meher, Roj Ashtad - Aneran

Sat Oct 12 - Wed Oct 16

(F)

Jashne-Avangan (Avan Ardivisur Parab)

Mah Avan, Roj Avan

Sat Oct 26

(F)

Maidyoshem Gahambar

Mah Tir, Roj Khorshed - Daepmeher

Wed Oct 30 - Sun Nov 3

(K)

Fri Nov 29 - Tue Dec 3(S)

Jashne-Adargan

Mah Adar, Roj Adar

Sun Nov 24

(F)

Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra

Mah Daye, Roj Khorshed

Thu Dec 26

(F)

Maidhyarem Gahambar

Mah Dae, Roz Meher -Bahram

Tue Dec 31 - Sat Jan 4

(F)

Jashan-e-Daegan

Mah Dae, Roz Daepdin

Tue Jan 7

(F)

Jashan-e-Bahmangan

Mah Bahman, Roz Bahman

Thu Jan 16

(F)

Paitishem Gahambar

Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad - Aneran

Mon Jan 13 - Fri Jan 17

(K)

Wed Feb 12 - Sun Feb 16(S)

Jashan-e-Sadeh

Mah Bahman, Roz Meher

Thu Jan 30

(F)

Ayathrem Gahambar

Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad - Aneran

Wed Feb 12 - Sun Feb 16(K)

Fri Mar 14 - Tue Mar 18

(S)

Fravardegan/Panjeh/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar

Five Gatha days

Sun Mar 16 - Thu Mar 20

(F)

Char-Shanbe-Soori (Heralding the New Year)

Tuesday prior to Nouruz

Tue Mar 18

(F)

Nouruz or Jamshedi Navroz (New Year)

Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd

Fri Mar 21

(F)

(F)=Fashi, (K)=Kadmi, (S)=Shenshai

Royal Recognition

Over 700 Zarathushtis and distinguished guests welcome Their Royal Highnesses Prince Edward and Sophie to the Zoroastrian Centre of Europe in London.

Zoroastrians welcome Edward and Sophie



The Earl and Countess of Wessex made history yesterday when they became the first members of the Royal Family to attend a Zoroastrian service. The couple visited the Zartoshty Brothers Hall in Alexandra Avenue, Rayners Lane, for a golden jubilee service, celebrating a "period of unparalleled prosperity and peace over 50 glorious years of Her Majesty's reign." [photo and caption from *The Harrow Times*, June 27. At right is Dorab Mistry's wife, Shernaz]

On Wednesday 26th June, 2002 Their Royal Highnesses Prince Edward and Sophie, the Earl and Countess of Wessex arrived at the Zartoshty Brothers Hall at the Zoroastrian Centre of Europe in Harrow London at 10.00 am together with their security personnel and

were welcomed by Zarathushti children waving Union Jacks.

The royal couple was greeted by ZTFE (Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe) president Dorab Mistry, dressed in a white *dagli* and *feto*, to the sounds of *Thus Spake Zarathushtra*, with a *tili* and rice welcome by

ZTFE past president Mrs. Beroze Mody [photo next page] in a beautiful *garo*, and an Iranian welcome of rose water, a mirror and sweets, by Mahnaz Khosraviani and Ashraf Falahati wearing traditional Iranian Zarathushti dress. Besides over 700 Zarathushtis present, there were

many distinguished guests – His Worship The Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Harrow, professors David Bivar and John Hinnells, Dr. Sarah Stewart, Dr. Basirov, Dr. Almut Hintze (the Zartoshty Brothers' Lecturer of Zoroastrian Studies at SOAS), Dr. Crabtree (deputy director of the Inter Faith Network in Britain), Helen Bayne (head of the Golden Jubilee Office at Buckingham Palace) and many others from the academic world, interfaith groups and national and ethnic media.

The fire was lit, *loban* offered and prayers performed led by Er. Rustom

Bhedwar and Er. Jal Karkaria, with their significance explained by ZTFE past president Er. Zal Sethna. Everybody then sang *God Save The Queen*. Mr. Shahrokh Shahrokh (grandson of Arbab Kaikhosrow Shahrokh, past president of ZTFE and currently chairman of the New Premises Committee) welcomed the Earl and Countess of Wessex in Farsi.

President Dorab Mistry spoke of the relationship between the British and Zarathushtis commencing in Surat, when Rustom Manek Sett, in 1701, secured trading rights for the British

East India Company from the Mogul Emperor Aurangzeb. Navroji, his youngest son was the first Indian to come to Britain in 1723 – to seek justice from the directors of the East India Company. Furthermore, the first three ethnic MPs elected to the House of Commons were all Zarathushtis. Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir Muncherjee Bhownaggee were longstanding presidents of the ZTFE. The oldest ship afloat in the Royal Navy is the 46 gun frigate HMS Trincomalee, built in 1817 by Zarathushti shipbuilders of Bombay, the Wadias.

Royal couple make history

by CHARLIE HARRIS

The Queen's golden jubilee celebrations continued this week when the Earl and Countess of Wessex, Prince Edward and his wife Sophie, attended a Zoroastrian thanksgiving service ...

It was the first time that any member of the Royal Family had formally met the Parsee and Iranian Zoroastrian community in the 141 years since it became established in the UK, and in his speech at the Zartoshty Brothers Hall in Alexandra Avenue (the former Odeon cinema), His Royal Highness jokingly apologised for the delay.

"It is a great pleasure for both of us to be here," he said. "I am sorry that it has taken us 141 years to get here and to appreciate what a wonderful community you are and what a great contribution you make to the life of our nation."

"In this, her jubilee year, the Queen has taken a great interest in all of the major religious faiths in this country. The golden jubilee is not celebrating her 50 years on the throne, but another 50 years in the history of this colourful, vibrant and diverse nation."

Welcoming the royal couple to the service, Dorab Mistry, president of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, traced the long connection between one of the world's oldest religious faiths and the British monarchy and people, which went back 300 years to when India became part of the Empire.



The Earl is given a bindi at a welcoming ceremony outside the Zoroastrian centre.

SIMON JACOBS

"This is indeed a golden day in the long history of the Zoroastrian community in Britain," he said. "We have come together to thank the creator, Ahura Mazda, for 50 glorious years of Her Majesty's reign. We are greatly honoured by your presence and we hope this will be the first of many royal visits to our community."

"Zoroastrians have a deep respect and affection for the British monarchy and the Royal Family have always occupied a special place in all our hearts. Our dedication is like the eternal fire, which rep-

resents our faith. May the Creator show his choicest blessings on the Royal Family and may He always bless the House of Windsor."

Mr Mistry said that Britain was the finest country in the world in which to live, and that Harrow was a very hospitable home for Zoroastrians ...

Excerpted from The Harrow Times, June 27, 2002

He recounted the role the British played in the emancipation of Zarathushtis in Iran. It was only after the personal intervention of Queen Victoria, that Nasir al - Din Shah Qajar, when he first visited Britain in 1874, agreed to receive the delegation of Parsis led by then President of ZTFE, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, to appeal to the Qajar Shah to improve the condition of his Zarathushti subjects in Iran. There were other petitions sent to Qajar Shahs in Iran and also to Reza Shah Pahlavi, which assisted the Zarathushtis of Iran and led, in 1906, to Arbab Jamshed becoming the first Zarathushti representative in the Iranian Majlis. Dorab Mistry informed the gathering that Seth Manekji Limji Hataraia traveled to Iran as a British subject and was under the protection of the British Ambassador Rawlinson ...

Zarathushtis in Britain have participated in all walks of British life, including the armed forces. He mentioned the four Engineer brothers three of whom had won the Distinguished Flying Cross – the only instance in history of three brothers being decorated in the same war. The late high priest of Europe, Dastur Dr. Sorabji S. Kutar had served in North Africa under Field Marshall Montgomery in World War II. Finally he spoke of the contribution of Britain's most famous Zarathushti in recent years, Freddie Mercury.

The President read a message from senior ZTFE patron Mobed Mehraban Jamshid Zartoshty, expressing his pride that such a historic function was being held in the Zartoshty Brothers Hall.

ZTFE (established in 1861) archives hold copies of scrolls of allegiance presented to Queen Victoria, King George V and King George VI, the Queen's father. This tradition was continued when senior trustee Noshir Avari presented a scroll to HRH Prince Edward, pledging allegiance and wishing Her Majesty and the House of Windsor longevity.

Distinguished Zarathushti guests who had flown in specially for this



ZTFE president Dorab Mistry, Sophie, Countess of Wessex, HRH Prince Edward, His Worship the Mayor of Harrow and ZTFE trustee Noshir Avari.

historic occasion included Nadir Godrej, managing director of Godrej Industries of India, Soli Sorabjee, attorney general of India and art historian and editor Pheroza Godrej.

Gifts were presented to the Royal family – a glass etching of Prophet Zarathushtra, a traditional red garo, a gold *fravashi* bracelet, a glass dish etched with a *fravashi*. Pheroza Godrej, co-author with Firoza Punthakey Mistree, presented the *first copy* of their monumental work *A Zoroastrian Tapestry* to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Former FEZANA president Framroze Patel presented *mava ni machhi* to the Prince.

Prince Edward was overwhelmed by the warmth and the hospitality shown by ZTFE. He thanked the Zarathushti community for their loyalty to the Crown and hoped that there would be more Royal visits in the future,

because this was the first in the 141 year history of ZTFE. The formal function concluded to the Freddie Mercury song *I want to be free!*

During refreshments a special documentary *Zoroastrians of Britain*, commissioned by ZTFE for the Golden Jubilee was screened together with plans for the future development of Zartoshty Brothers

Hall. It is the intention of ZTFE that the very first traditionally consecrated *atash dadgah* with a permanent burning *atash* be consecrated very soon at the new Centre.

The program, which was emceed by Malcolm M. Deboo

and Paurushasp B. Jila, ended with a spirited rendition of *Chaiye hame Zarathushti*.

[Excerpted by Roshan Rivetna from a report by Malcolm M. Deboo, Information Officer & Librarian, ZTFE, London, email: library@ztfecolm.com].

Kudos to ZTFE for interfaith initiatives

Kudos to the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) for their commitment and initiatives to bring recognition of the Zarathushti religion and community of 7,000 Zarathushtis, to the government and people of UK.

● In January, Er. Rustom Bhedwar joined representatives of 12 major religions at the **Day of Prayer for World Peace** at Assisi, Italy, and was invited to the Papal Palace for lunch with the Pope.

● ZTFE's interfaith representative **Jehangir Sarosh** serves as vice chair of the Interfaith Network of the UK, and chair for Europe of the World Council of Religions for Peace.

● Since 1995, the ZTFE president is invited to join the Royal Procession in Westminster Abbey at the **Commonwealth Day Service** each year on March 11. He is presented to Her Majesty with leaders of eight other religious communities.

● On March 11, ZTFE participated in a **reception at Buckingham Palace** for representatives of Commonwealth countries and leaders of religious communities. President Dorab Mistry had an opportunity of talking with Her Majesty about the UK Zarathushti community.

● On April 25, HRH Prince Charles launched his **multi-faith initiative**

RESPECT in Birmingham. ZTFE was among 25 faith communities that participated.

● On June 4, ZTFE (Dorab Mistry) was invited to join the **Royal Procession in St. Paul's** cathedral along with leaders of other faith communities, at a special service at St. Paul's Cathedral to celebrate Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee.

● Two young Zarathushtis, Farmeen Sorab and Burzin Rustumji were invited to participate in a **Young People's Faith Forum**. They were invited to a reception at Buckingham Palace on June 10, along with 7 ZTFE trustees/officers.

● Zarathushtis were the first ethnic community to announce their intention to hold a **Special Service** to celebrate the Golden Jubilee [see previous pages].

● ZTFE is also invited to the Mansion House for the **Lord Mayor of London's bi-annual banquet** for archbishops and bishops.

● Zarathushtis have also gained recognition in local government. **Councillor Filly Kaikhushroo Maravala** has once again been elected to serve his ward of Loxford in the London Borough of Redbridge for a third successive term of 4 years.

[from ZTFE newsletter, May 2002]

UN - NGO News

FEZANA is an NGO (Non-governmental organization) in consultative status (Roster) with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations; and as such receives information about upcoming UN events and initiatives. Mr. Behram Pastakia has volunteered to serve as coordinator for FEZANA in UN-NGO matters.

The UN and many NGOs recognize the need to implement a broad range of initiatives to prevent the recurrence of conflicts and to support traumatized populations as they rebuild their lives and fragile governments, mobilize economies and restore damaged environments. The 55th Annual DPI/NGO Conference, 9-11 September 2002, entitled **Rebuilding Societies Emerging from Conflict: A Shared Responsibility** will explore the role of the international community in supporting societies emerging from conflicts, focusing on those contemporary examples that have been the subject of concerted UN involvement. The focus of the discussion will be on post-conflict situations such as Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, East Timor, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Guatemala, Kosovo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan and South Africa. ■

[Contact Behram Pastakia, email: BPastakia@aol.com]



Seminar in Calgary. Firdosh Mehta conducted a seminar on the Zarathushti faith at the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action on March 13. The presentation (accompanied with color photos and short videos) covered Persian history and early geography, doctrine and theology, scriptures, languages, rituals and ceremonies, initiation and weddings, eschatology, divine judgment, heaven and hell, calendar and festivals, practice in Canada and more. Display tables were set up with liturgical implements (oil lamp, metal urn) and artifacts, books, posters and photographs.

KZBM continues tradition of service and charity

During 2001, under the leadership of then president Toxy Cowasjee, the *Karachi Zarhosti Banu Mandal* continued its tradition of "seva & sakhavat" (service and charity). The Karachi Zarathushtis, though small in number (just 2,200 in October 2001, and declining), are large in heart, as indicated in their annual report.

Welfare is the cornerstone of KZBM. Last year the Welfare subcommittee spent Rs. 1,084,881 providing assistance in to the needy. The Rehabilitation subcommittee spent Rs. 48,344 and three loans were given out, amounting to Rs. 645,000. The Medical subcommittee spent Rs. 345,471 to help relieve the financial burden of medical expenses. Rs. 1,338,614 was spent on education assistance, and Rs. 427,970 on disbursement of loans. Rs. 74,927 was spent on child welfare.

"I have some words which have been my guide all these years," said Toxy Cowasjee, as she stepped down after seven years as president of KZBM:

"I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness, I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again." - William Penn

UNESCO project

UNESCO Paris has sanctioned the *Parzor Asha project*. A meeting will be held with UNESCO New Delhi, Prof. Jamsheed Choksy of Stanford, Dastur Firouzgary of Iran and Dastur Feroze Kotwal of Mumbai, to draw up a 5-10 year action plan.

Dr. Shernaz Cama, who is spearheading the project writes: "We need the good wishes and prayers of all, so that Asha can be declared 'a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity.' We are still working on a shoestring budget and look forward to support, financial and otherwise, from all sources.



Khordeh Avesta in Tajik-Russian Cyrillic script. Consul for Poland, Mr. Marek A. Moron [left] with Dr. Meher Master Moos and Prof. Rustom Fuzaylov, at the launch of the Khordeh Avesta in Cyrillic script, at the Russian Cultural Centre, Mumbai, on May 26. Co-authors Prof. Fuzaylov, head of the English and Foreign Languages department of Tajikistan Technological University, and Dr. Meher Master Moos, president of Zoroastrian College, Sanjan, worked together on the project. Dr. Moos writes: "Since the independence of the former USSR about 10 years ago, which for thousands of years was within the Old Iranian empires, there is a revival and upsurge of interest in Avesta prayers to be taught to the people." The book is now available in print and also as a CD from Dr. Moos at mazocol@vsnl.net.

"The government of India has been extremely supportive and if we can raise funds, is willing to give us land where we can create a complete archival center and museum on Zoroastrians. This will greatly facilitate researchers, and under the UNESCO umbrella, attract world wide attention to our tiny community." Contact ShernazCama@hotmail.com.

Symposium in Heidelberg

Heidelberg, a beautiful, historic town on the rivers Neckar and Rheine, was home to an international symposium "Zoroastrian Rituals in Context" from April 10-13. It was organized by Michael Stausberg with Internationales Wissenschaftsforum (Academy of Sciences and Humanities) of the Ruprecht-Karls University of Heidelberg, incidentally the oldest university in Germany.

The scintillating array of speakers included Gerd Gropp (Hamburg), Sarah Stewart (London), Firoze Kotwal (Mumbai), Ramiyar Karanjia (Mumbai), Ketayoun Mazdapour (Tehran), Phillip Kreyenbroek and Bijan Gheiby (Gottingen), Shaul Shaked (Jerusalem), Antonio Panaino (Bologna), Almut Hintze (London), Jean Kellens (Paris), Jamsheed Choksy (Stanford), James Boyd and Ron Williams (Colorado), Gernot Windfuhr (Michigan).

A unique exhibit at the Ethnological Museum, on "Rituals" by noted photo journalists Noshir Desai of India and Kaveh Kazemi of Iran, drew record crowds. For information, contact michael.stausberg@urz.uni-heidelberg.de.

[Excerpted from the report by Er. Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia in *Jam-e Jamshed Weekly*, April 28, 2002]

Chinese learn of Parsi Achievements

Monday, June 17th was a special day in the history of the Parsis of Hong Kong. The next day turned out to be a day of pride as well. On Monday, the bust of Sir Hormusjee Nowrojee Mody [photo right] major donor to and founder of the University of Hong Kong, regained its rightful place in the University's main building. On Tuesday, leading Chinese newspapers covering the event surprised readers with articles not only on the many achievements of Sir Hormusjee, but on the achievements of ancient and modern day Parsis as well.

Missing bust. A bust of Sir Hormusjee had stood in the University for many years, but for some reason, had been removed and misplaced. When the trustees of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao discovered this loss, they asked respected past president Noshir Pavri, MBE, JP to lead a project to rectify it. Mr. Pavri worked with the University and (with son Kavas Pavri) with a master sculptor to design and construct a new bust, plinth and plaque.

Unveiling ceremony. The University had decorated the entrance with lights and placed enlarged photos of Sir Hormusjee taken at the original foundation stone laying ceremony in 1910. They had also provided refreshments and champagne in honor of the occasion. In attendance were ZCF trustees President Jal Soli Shroff, JP, Hon. Secy. Viraf Parekh, Dr. Sam Nariman, Kavas Pavri and Rustom Jokhi and their wives; Mr. and Mrs. Noshir Pavri, resident priest Ervad Jimmy Sidhwa, eminent University of Hong Kong professor Dr. Cyrus Kumana and his wife, and distinguished guests including the vice chancellor, Prof. Ian Davis.

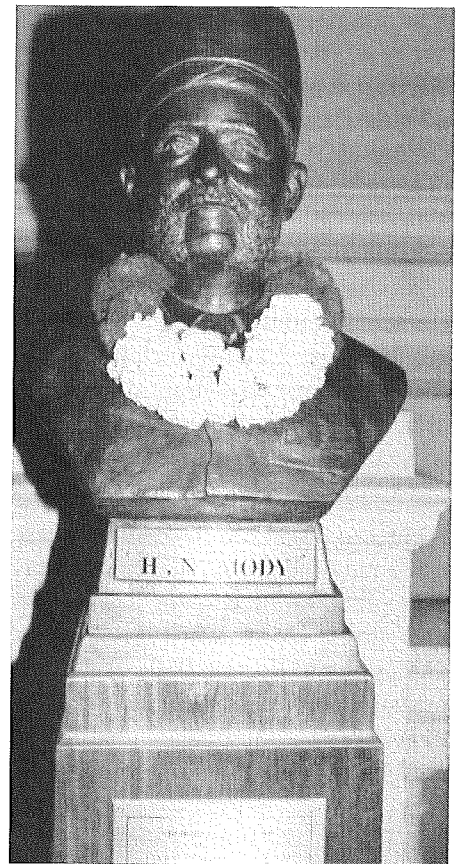
In his opening speech, Mr. Shroff honored Sir Hormusjee and quoted his original noble sentiment for foundation of the University: *"providing for others what I myself was*

denied." Mr. Shroff and Prof. Davis jointly unveiled the magnificent bust – made of beautiful bronze, set on a polished wooden plinth with a base of black stone, placed in a prominent position at the University.

Life and works. Sir Hormusjee arrived in Hong Kong in 1858 as a young 20-year-old man. He soon became a successful businessman and was well known for his many charitable donations. He was responsible for reclaiming and developing much of urban Kowloon and Hong Kong. Mody Road, a major road in the heart of the bustling Tsim Sha Tsui district, is named after him. He activated the Hong Kong Gold Bullion markets (now Asia's largest and the world's fourth largest) and the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (now Asia's second largest). Sir Hormusjee contributed to the development of sports in Hong Kong by founding the Kowloon Cricket Club and owning a famous horse-racing stable. Sir Hormusjee was also president of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds in the 1890s. He made a considerable fortune from his businesses, but returned much of it to the area and people that made him successful.

Press coverage. The next day, articles and pictures of the ceremony appeared in numerous newspapers, serving to educate the local population on the vast contributions made to Hong Kong by past generations of Parsis and to raise the profile of the current Parsi community and the religion in general.

One local paper, the *Sun Daily*, devoted a full page to Parsis and the religion of Zarathushtra, covering the history of the religion and Parsis, to the modern 23-story tower of the Zoroastrian Building in Hong Kong. They even had a small article on the ancient Zarathushtis who had come to China over a thousand years ago and helped the Chinese develop a better style of Kung Fu. The local



**Sir Hormusjee N. Mody
(1838 - 1911)**

Major donor towards the founding of the University of Hong Kong

A distinguished Parsi businessman renowned philanthropist and benefactor of Hong Kong for over fifty years.

This bust is presented to the University of Hong Kong on 17th June, 2002 by the Incorporated Trustees of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the University of Hong Kong.

Chinese population was extremely surprised to find out how much Parsis had contributed to the development of Hong Kong and the betterment of their way of life.

Truly, these were special days of recognition, not only for the Parsis of Hong Kong, but for Zarathushtis around the world. ■

[From a report submitted by Jal S. Shroff, President, Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao]



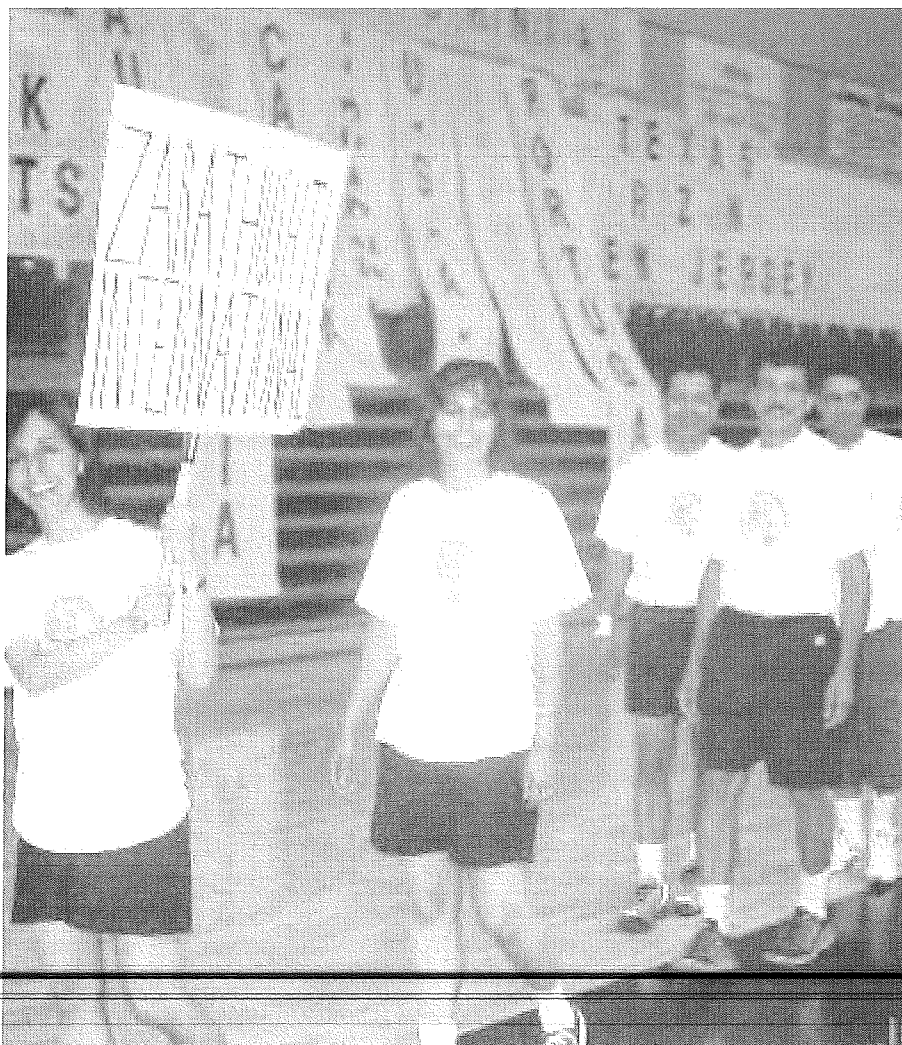
ZARATHUSHTI GAMES 2002

Over 200 Zarathushti sports enthusiasts and 220 athletes enjoyed the Eighth Zarathushti Games and accompanying social events in California.

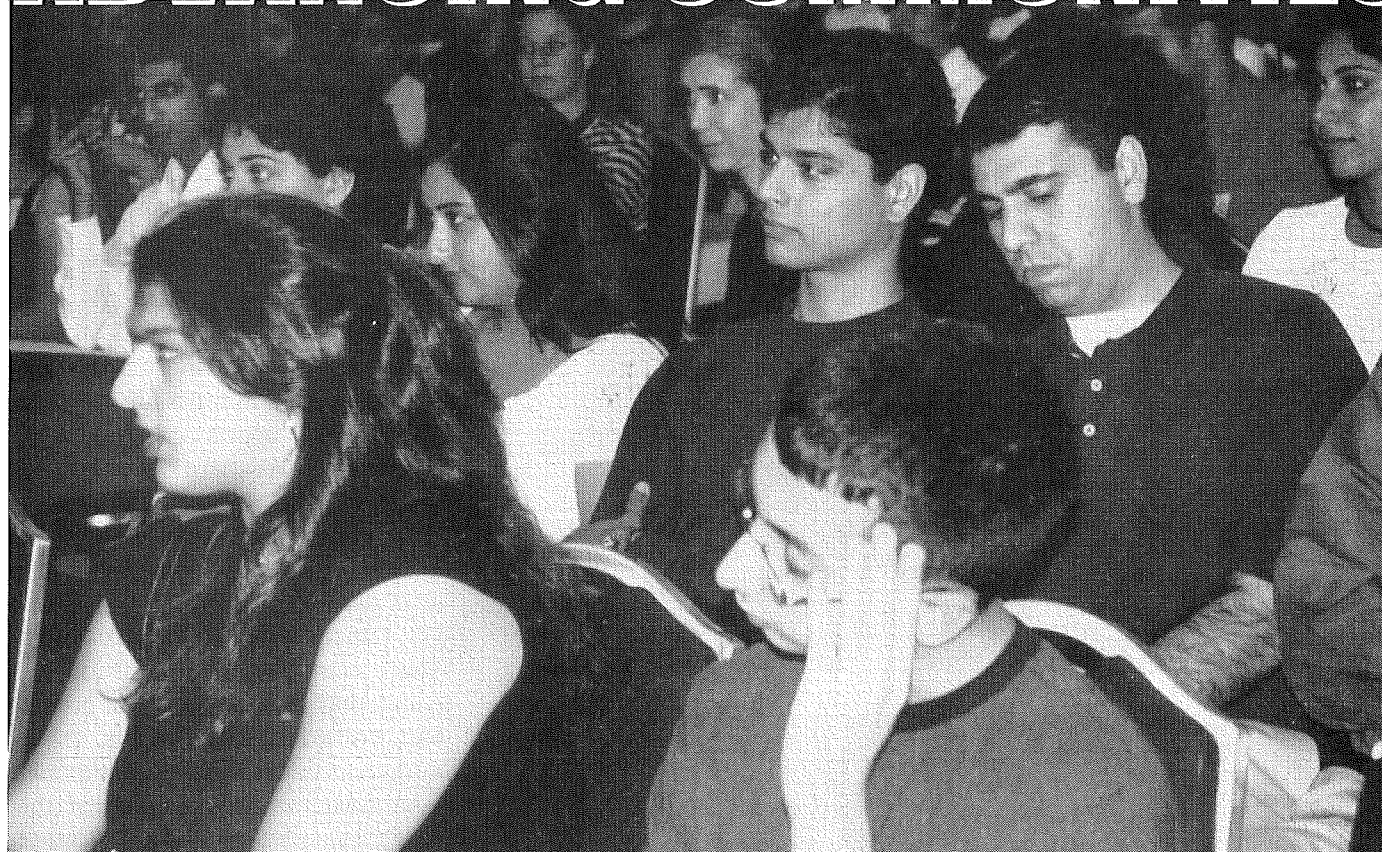
Greetings from the Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC), the official sports committee of FEZANA. We are pleased to announce that the 8th Zarathushti Games took place on July 3-7, 2002 in Northridge, California, with athletes participating from all over the US, Canada, Germany and Australia. There were more than 220 athletes competing in sports such as basketball, volleyball, table tennis, swimming and track and field. Although more participants were expected, this year's games started with 10 volleyball, 8 adult and 5 youth basketball teams. In addition more than 200 sports lovers were present to cheer for their favorite teams and athletes. Fellow Zarathushtis, young and old took this opportunity to meet new friends, and strengthen old friendship bonds.

After a long day of competition athletes danced the nights away with a BBQ party by the California State University (in Northridge) pool, banquet night at one of LA's prime locations, and disco night at the Grand Saloon on the University campus.

It was hard to depart but we hope to see everyone back for the **3rd Unity Cup Soccer Games** on Labor Day weekend of 2003 and the **9th Zarathushti Games** on July 4th weekend of 2004. A detailed report about the games will follow in the next FEZANA Journal. [Also see "Youthfully Speaking" in this issue]. Pictures from the games can be viewed at www.FEZANA.org. For information contact zsc@fezana.org.



ADVANCING COMMUNITIES



Congress perspective

Rashna Ghadialy
Congress 2002 chairperson



Eighteen months ago I was vested with the responsibility of chairing the Congress by the board members of my association, the ZAC (Chicago). My formidable task was to captain a ship of energetic and vocal volunteers, and remain focused on the goal – a successful Congress. The entire Congress planning experience has changed my own perspective of volunteerism in our community. I have developed a greater appreciation of the hours volunteers spend in weaving the fabric of our communities.

The making of the congress was like creating a mural which captures the minute details of everyday life and yet spotlights the broader themes – spiritual, educational and cultural. Indeed the Congress itself served as the canvas, our diverse ethnic, cultural and religious heritage was the paint, and the members of the North American community were the artists. The primary focus was to provide a forum for dialogue with an emphasis on inter-generational exchange.

In my mind, the July 4th Gala Orchestral Banquet and Z-Apollo epitomized the present state of the North American Zarathushti community. The performances were memorable and truly brought the house down. Undoubtedly in North America opportunities are plentiful for us to initiate, create and participate. It is the individuals' free choice to seize these opportunities and benefit from them.

Getting priorities right

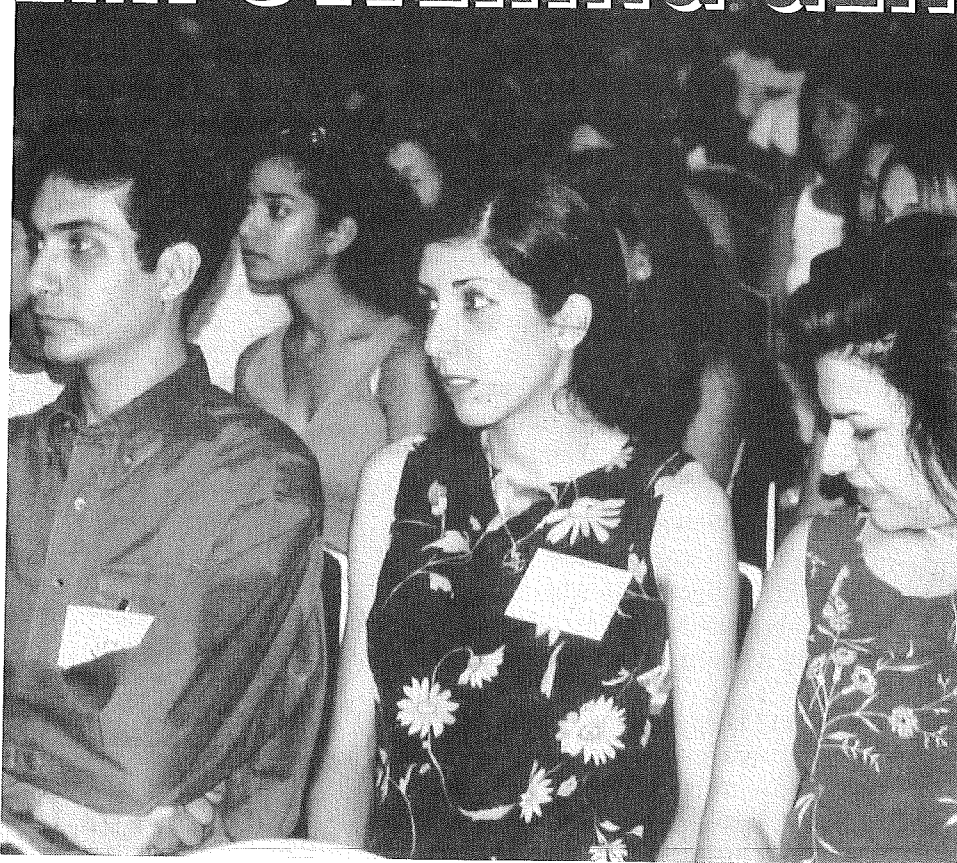
Hoshi Mehta
Immediate past president, ZAC



Here's my vision that I shared eighteen months earlier, with the volunteers who had crowded into our library for our very first Congress meeting.

We have a year and a half to organize the best Congress possible. The miracle of life can happen in nine months! We have 18 months, we can do it! Our guiding principle for the Congress is to keep in mind our Ashem Vohu prayer: "Do good for the sake of doing good and not for any reward." Instead of writing lots

EMPOWERING GENERATIONS



Six hundred Zarathushtis of all ages and persuasions, from USA, Canada and around the world, gathered at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Chicago, July 4-7, 2002, to celebrate the 12th North American Zoroastrian Congress.

by Roshan Rivetna

of rules and procedures, let us just follow our basic religious teachings and use them as our guide.

What legacy are we leaving for ourselves, our kids, our community and the world? We are a special community here in Chicago. This is our chance to showcase it to the rest of the Zarathushti world. We will need a lot of sacrifice, commitment, dedication and patience. We have to work hard but with understanding.

We have to respect and value each other, because the product of the Congress, when it is all over, should be unity, love and respect for each other, otherwise it will just be an empty show. Whatever your differences, let us use this opportunity to work together, to come together and show, with our example, what a model community should be like.

How close we came to achieving this vision, you be the judge.

Thanks to all!

Ann Arnavaz Elavia
President, ZAC



July was a very busy but glorious month for ZAC. Along with the celebration of our US Independence Day, we celebrated the gathering of 600 Zarathushtis from far and near in our city, as we hosted Congress 2002.

This Congress was a celebration of our religion, our heritage, our talent and our vision. We honored outstanding Zarathushtis. We discussed the ideal community. We tried to initiate an inter and intra generation dialogue. We talked about issues facing

our youth, elders, health issues from pediatrics to geriatrics, and gender roles. We discussed interfaith and our role in building bridges for peace. We discussed challenges facing Iranian Zarathushtis. There were brilliant workshops: WZCC (business), Jashan demonstration, Religion Education Teachers, Zarathushti authors and ZWIN3; and a large variety of exhibits in the "marketplace".

The entertainment was outstanding: the magical opening night, the Zarathushti Orchestra directed by our own Farobag Cooper, the brilliant youth singers, actors and dancers – all superb. Our natak – *Gherno Ghambar* was a rip roaring success.

I would like to thank all the volunteers and donors for your participation and help to make this Congress successful. This Congress will be remembered for years to come because of *your* effort and dedication.

Congrats to Chicago!

Dr. Rustom Kevala

Chair, FEZANA Congress Committee



My congratulations to the Chicago team for making the 12th Congress a truly enjoyable and memorable event. The arrangements were meticulous

and there was none of the tension and worry that seems to grip Congress organizers at the last moment – at least none was apparent.

This congress was different. The format of the sessions worked well in bringing the audience into the spirit of the discussions. The only complaint I heard was that it was not possible to attend more than one session simultaneously!

The entertainment was superb, the hotel was first rate and the food was great. What more can one ask?

Finally, it was an honor and a privilege to work with Framroze Patel, Rashna Gahdialy, Hosi Mehta and Jim Engineer and all the good people of Chicago, my previous home town; especially since they gave me so little to do. They deserve our special thanks for a job well done. ■

Below, Congress 2002 banner, designed by Kamal R. Katrak

My Congress 2002 achievement: Building a relationship - with my community.

Kamalrukh R. Katrak [krk@panto-ulema.com]

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago

Have been told – to really know a person, travel with them.
I say to understand your community – host a Congress!

For me the congress experience started a year ago –
Allowing me to develop a relationship with my community.
Together we learnt our strengths and weaknesses.
We learnt to draw on the strengths and build on them.
Understood our weaknesses and worked at accepting them
Diluting their consequences through the acceptance.

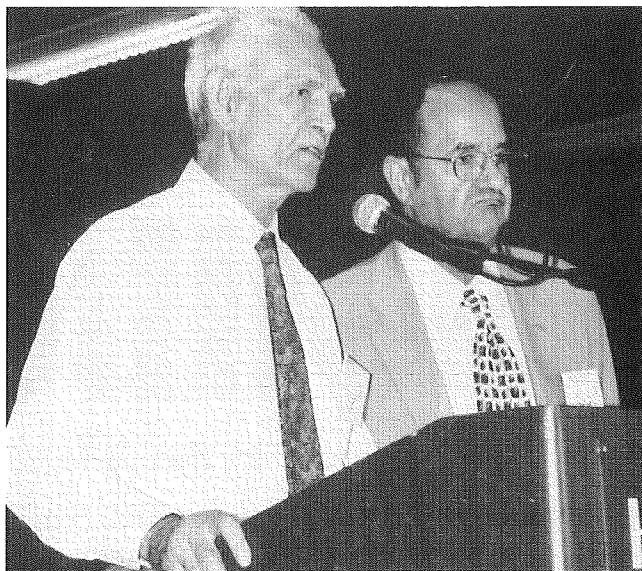
Building friendships, working as teams, creating thoughts,
formulating words and performing deeds.

We grew together – or shall I say,
I grew drawing from the support of my community.
I have grown but have not changed.
To draw from Robert Frost:
I am not changed from what I know,
Am only more sure of all I thought was true,
Having allowed myself to form this relationship.

How do I keep building on this relationship? I do not know.
I know my community is anxious about the future, just as I am.
Neither of us having all the answers.
Today when I am constantly reminded that
We don't have strength in numbers,
I search for Good Guidance, *Kshathra Vairya*
Through my growing relationship I hope to look towards
My community to provide that for me.
To provide the culture, the tillage, the rearing.

Through our recent relationship I understand my community culture
As constantly reminding me of being in that unique position,
To be able to make a difference here in North America,
Just as our forefathers did on other shores.
Let's move forward together it says, towards continued progress. ■





Opening Ceremony

Congress 2002 opened with a lunch banquet on July 4th in the Riverside Center of the Hyatt Regency hotel. The inaugural benediction was given by **Er. Kersey H. Antia**, high priest of Chicago. After opening remarks by congress chair **Rashna Ghadialy**, ZAC president **Arnavaz Elavia** and FEZANA president **Firdosh Mehta**, keynote speaker **Bomi Damkevala** [right] a founding member and past president of ZAC gave a stirring address:

“Our religion and our communities need growth. We want our families to grow, our local associations to grow, we want FEZANA to grow, and we want our worldwide Zarathushti community to grow. The challenge before us is to have sustained growth without losing our focus on the central theme of our religion. We should be looking for true leaders who set a direction for the community, who are able to guide the community through troubled waters, and steer it clear of obstacles. Our leaders should be able to recognize the needs for evolutionary changes and avoid revolutionary changes.

“As the flame points upwards, so be our aims,” said Damkevala, “As the red logs glow, so be our friendships. As the gray ash fades, so be our differences. As the good fire warms the circle, so may Zarathushti ideals warm the world.”

The FEZANA Congress trophy was ceremoniously passed by President **Homi Gandhi** of ZAGNY (organizers of the previous North American Congress, in July 1998) to Congress 2002 chair **Rashna Ghadialy** [top left].

Goodwill messages were given by representatives of FEZANA associations and by overseas delegates. **Gen. Khodarahm Shahryary** [above] presented remarks from ZAMWI, Washington, DC, in Farsi, translated by **Dr. Daryoush Jahanian** [at right in photo]. Ceremonies closed with a stirring rendition of the Canadian and US national anthems, led by outstanding Zarathushti musicians [photo right] **Darius Weil** (on snare drums, hidden behind flute), **Binaifer Dubash** (flute), **Anita Parakh**, **Ayesha Dua**, **Farobag Cooper**, **Anita Rao** and **Dinyar Vania**.



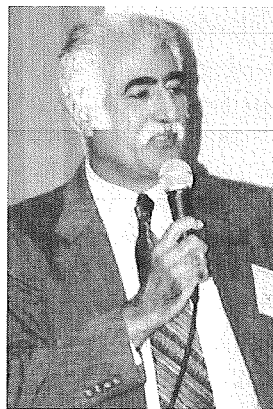
dialogue & deliberations

From youth issues to those facing elders, from health and nutrition to interfaith, from prayers and rituals to community building exercises, Congress 2002 speakers and participants, covered the whole gamut.

Opening Plenary: Advancing Communities, Empowering Generations

by session chair Jim Engineer

[jm.engineer@e-rainmaker.com]



From left, Session chair Jim Engineer, panelists Aaron Rustom, Bapsi Sidhwa and Mehraban Khodavandi

How do North American Zarathushtis communicate their identity to fellow Zarathushtis worldwide, and most importantly to non-Zarathushtis in a post 9/11 world? This question took center stage at the Congress' only plenary session.

No longer do North American Zarathushtis have the opportunity to simply "sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride," to coin a phrase used by most airline pilots. The plenary session brought to life the very real sense of urgency Zarathushtis have in not just communicating their past, but who they are in the present.

What is to prevent those less educated in society from assuming Zarathushtis, simply by looking, are no different than followers of radical Islamic philosophies in light of the horrific acts of last September 11?

With changing complexions, accents and preferences, the North American Zarathushti population is more 'melted' and assimilated into North American society. Generations are shifting, leadership within Zarathushti communities is turning more youthful, students are becoming young professionals, young professionals are becoming parents, and parents are retiring.

To sift through these important changes in our diaspora, were four outstanding panelists: ZAC high priest, *Er. Dr. Kersey H. Antia*, [photo p. 38] a licensed clinical and management psychologist; *Mehraban Khodavandi*, professor of education and psychology at Lakeland College, Wisconsin; *Bapsi Sidhwa*, distinguished international author and writer from Houston; and *Aaron Rustom*, an associate producer for CNN Headline News in Atlanta.

In the first hour, each panelist brought to the discussion differing viewpoints backed by real-world experience as social commentators, scholars, psychologists, authors and educators within their respective fields. To facilitate the discussion, session chair *Jim Engineer* presented each panelist with discussion topics including bridge-building, intergenerational dialogue, our identity and interfaith relations. The second hour featured a lively Q&A session as audience members questioned and shared their thoughts and perspectives with panelists.

The session served as an eye opener to new ideas, challenges and changes the North American Zarathushti community will either embrace with open arms, or face head-on with unknown consequences.

An Introduction to FEZANA

AN INTRODUCTION TO FEZANA

By Farrokh Mistree

[farrokh.mistree@eudoramail.com]

FEZANA president **Firdosh Mehta** (of Edmonton, Alberta) introduced the 2002-2004 executive officers: treasurer Rashid Mehin, Arnavaz Sethna (who continues as secretary) and asst. secy. Farrokh Mistree.



He gave the audience an understanding of FEZANA's mission statement and objectives, and explained the structure of FEZANA, emphasizing that the "board" of FEZANA, where all decisions are made, are the Member Associations. He explained how individuals in remote areas and 'small groups' could participate.

Firdosh described the various committees of FEZANA and made a plea for individuals to volunteer to serve in the area of their interest.

Farrokh Mistree gave a short presentation on the FEZANA World Body Working Group, headed by Khorshed Jungalwala [as outlined in the AGM report on page 8]. He re-emphasized that the WG is not an advocacy group; rather it analyses information in regard to the creation of a world body, and advises FEZANA executives and member associations. In closing, Farrokh shared what he had gathered from the session: "We must listen to each other, we must trust one another, we must respect one another, and want to work together towards furthering our Zarathushti community."

PANEL: HOW CAN FEZANA BEST SERVE NA ZARATHUSHTIS?

By panel chair Rustom Kevala

Immigrants generally want to preserve the customs and beliefs they

bring with them from the old country. As Zarathushtis from India, Pakistan and Iran began to regroup in the New World, each came with their own differences that were difficult to reconcile in the new surroundings. These differences in the mindset of the immigrant Zarathushtis may be responsible for the mistrust and disagreements that are sometimes exhibited ... The FEZANA constitution also exhibits some of these symptoms of mistrust ... as we develop trust and gain experience in governing ourselves, the first step would be to separate the operating procedures from the body of the constitution ... We must begin to develop trust in each other and be willing to go in a direction that may not be entirely familiar to all. I strongly believe that FEZANA is an invaluable resource that we must all support and utilize to the maximum extent possible.

Panelists. Panelist **Shahrokh Mehta's** [SamMMehta@aol.com] message was for FEZANA to (a) stop functioning like a typical North American Zoroastrian association (resulting in duplication of activities); and (b) start fostering, informing and engaging the North American community (per the FEZANA constitution) besides being just a "coordinating" body. FEZANA must communicate openly with *all* Zarathushtis, including those who are not members of any association, and not limit its communications with association presidents only. Stay in front of the community, do not depend on the associations to be your surrogate.

Panelist **Sarosh Bharucha** [bharucha@sympatico] an engineer-marketer from Toronto, outlined four initiatives for FEZANA: (1) a "safety net for our children" – find legal mechanisms for FEZANA to place a Zarathushti child in adoptive care; (2) "elder care" – develop a partnership with a provider of retirement care for our elders; (3) expand the

FEZANA scholarship program; and (4) align the chapters of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce closer with local bodies and re-focus the Chamber upon increasing the flow of commerce through Zarathushti hands.

Panelist **Yasmin Pavri** [yspavri@yahoo.com] believes that FEZANA is uniquely positioned to facilitate transition from the old generation to the new. Its vision as stated in its Strategic plan is "to develop a community that is well connected, well educated, well grounded in religious thought, values and ethics, respectful of diversity, strong in collective giving, economically prosperous ..." FEZANA has grown in size, visibility and diversity. It's biggest challenge right now is to facilitate a free exchange of thoughts without allowing arguments to turn into enmities.

Summary. The panel session and ensuing audience participation highlighted the following for FEZANA to better serve the community:

- Improve communications with associations, small groups and individuals who are not members of any association so that the entire community feels a stake in FEZANA affairs.
- Empower the elected executives to use their discretion in performing their duties to help the community.
- Set up formal and informal lines of communication with the Mobeds' Council to resolve religious issues.
- Develop a support network to help the adoption of Zarathushti children and to help victims of crime or abuse.
- Develop ties with an existing eldercare organization.
- Limit duplication of services such as charitable donations and scholarships offered by Zarathushti associations.
- FEZANA should represent the opinion of all North American Zarathushtis in worldwide issues.

Youth Program: The Past, the Present and the Future

By Cyrus Rivetna, co-chair Youth Program [crivetna@hotmail.com]



Session emcee Delnaz Vazifdar; youth panel: Khodi Kaviani, Sherazade Mehta, Mitra Mehr, Perry Unwalla, Jehan Panthaki; Xerxes Spencer. Below, Youth Program co-chairs: Cyrus Rivetna and Zarine Damkevala.

OVERALL YOUTH PROGRAM

The Zarathushti youth of North America are a new generation, growing up in an environment very different from that of our parents. We don't live in *baugs* with fire temples around the corner and our aunts and uncles don't live in the building down the street. Here we are spread thin across the land. Gatherings such as congresses help develop our feeling of community and identity.

The Youth Program, was spread across three days and covered "The Past", "The Present" and "The Future". The last [see page 29] was a joint community building session with the adults.

DAY 1: THE PAST

Six panelists for this session looked at our history in Iran and India, and explored the roles that spirituality and culture play.

History. *Khodi Kaviani* [khodi@aol.com] spoke of our history in Iran. He described the role of religion in ancient societies. In Sasanian times, there were 4 classes of people, of whom priests were the highest. After the Arab conquest, the system was overwhelmed, and many embraced Islam because of incentives (power,

money, status ...) it offered to the disenfranchised members of society. Today, there is discrimination at all levels: educational opportunities, political and leadership positions, daily harassment on the job, limited military advancement, unequal access to justice. People are leaving the country.

Sherazade Mehta [sherazadem@yahoo.com]

explored the migration from Iran to India (for the preservation of their religion) and the 20th century migrations to the first world countries (for economic, professional and educational reasons).

Spirituality. *Perry Unwalla* [unperry@aol.com]

and *Mitra Mehr* [mmehr@dbllp.com] addressed challenges faced by the youth here. When we become immigrants, we are the "foreigners". We are forced to look at ourselves from the outside and try to sum up our way of life to an audience who often has little knowledge of what we have long taken for granted.



And we have to learn to practice our religion outside the context of our communities. The second migration can have two different consequences for us: we can either lose our spiritual identity or gain an even stronger sense of it.

Culture. *Xerxes Spencer* [siti-zen@msn.com] Because we are so scattered and there are such few concrete establishments to bring us together, we rely more on our memory and our imagination to retain a sense of culture and community, based on the recollection of a shared past. Gatherings such as this congress are healthy as we seek to reinforce our cultural moorings and reaffirm our cultural identity. **Jehan Panthaki** [Washington, DC] defines culture as customs and practice, tied in with community, country, religion, ethic and identity. For Zarathushtis

in Russia, e.g., while the religion, ethics and values may be the same, everything else is probably different.

DAY 2: THE PRESENT

By Zarine Damkevala
Co-chair, Youth Program

The second day's program focused on issues currently facing Zarathushti youth in North America. Skits were performed by youth from Chicago and Toronto on the topics of identity, inter-marriage and what makes us Zarathushtis. The skits were followed by small group discussions and an open-mike session.

Identity. Main points covered were the importance of retaining our distinctiveness, what the youth must do to preserve our identity, and what makes us who we are.

Intermarriage. Points included advantages and disadvantages, how Zarathushti parents and communities react to inter-marriage, and the effects it has on Zarathushti identity.

What is the Ideal Zarathushti Community?

By session co-chair Hosi Mehta [hosimehta@aol.com]

DAY 3: THE FUTURE

This was a joint session with the session by the youth. The youth co-chairs were **Zarine Damkevala** and **Jimmy Antia** [photo at right, top].

Hosi Mehta introduced the topic. If a brick is not baked properly, the house will not be a strong one. If an individual is not developed properly, the community will not be a strong one. So to better our communities each one of us should better ourselves first. We have the infrastructure of associations, small groups and FEZANA. We need to give of ourselves and our resources to better those around us. Community Building means **Come, Unite** and **Build** bridges so we can understand and appreciate ourselves and others better. **LET US START!**

Panelists. There were 4 adult and 3 youth panelists. **Shahrokh Mehta** [SamMMehta@aol.com] believes that community building is a grass-roots effort of getting to know each other by doing projects together. Whether one belongs to an association or not, community building – the collective pooling of our innovative ideas, knowledge database, professional expertise, human and financial

What makes us Zarathushtis? We evaluated what makes us Zarathushtis. Is it that we are born into the community, believe in the religion, wear sudreh and kushti, pray, or practice good thoughts, words, and deeds? We talked about the kind of identity we want to create in North America, and the aspects that differentiate us from other North Americans. No generalized conclusions were made, but this session enabled the youth to hear the viewpoints of their peers and to explore their own feelings and ideas.

resources, with a deliberate focus on community involvement and enrichment – can be implemented. He presented a list of community building initiatives.

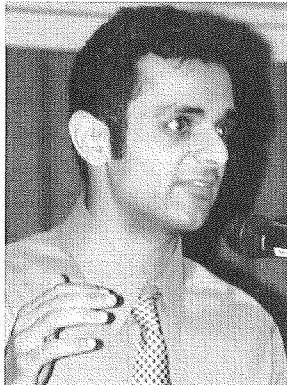
Rohinton Rivetna [rivetna@aol.com] presented his hope for the ideal community: “Internally – loving, caring, compassionate, spiritually motivated, a world-wide fraternity; and externally – to embody goodness, honesty, industry, charity, be bridge-builders, respectful of all.”

Bella Tata [Tata.Bella@ic.gc.ca] said that we as immigrants have had individuals whose vision, dedication and religious ardor have given us our associations and FEZANA. We need to build structures that cover all age groups and focus on healthy and happy families, religious and other education, economic prosperity, environment, multiculturalism, etc.

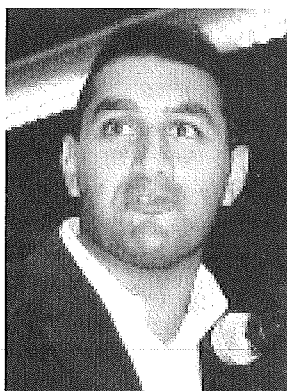
Houtoxi Contractor [HFM31@aol.com]. Our community is small in number but is large in potential to address the many challenges that face us. We are a close-knit community, we have a world-wide fraternity, and we often

take care of one another. However, we have fewer resources than larger communities, and we must use these wisely to build and sustain the infrastructure of our organizations.

Tamina Davar [taminadavar@yahoo.com], a public relations specialist with extensive background in grass roots labor and community organizing, presented her thoughts on what an ideal Zarathushti community should be.



Pheroze Austin [left, middle] [crashondeck@sprint.ca] boiled it down to two things *believing* and *belonging*. He used the model of the small community of European immigrants who worked as meat packers in Packingtown on Chicago's south side. After over a century, Packingtown is still there! Because (a) it is a complex matrix of relationships between people and groups, and (b) it is committed to a set of shared values, history, identity and culture.



Hoshi Vazifdar [left, bottom] believes that education, life-long learning of our religious teachings should be a priority. If we can become immersed in the spirituality of our scriptures, and have faith in our *fravashi* or inner

light, we can offer more of ourselves to our communities and others. Knowledge and learning builds interest, which leads to greater self-confidence, motivating us to be future leaders of our community.



Viewing of “Footsteps”. The film “*In the Footsteps of our Forefathers*” by **Tenaz Dubash** was shown as part of the Day 2 youth program. The film follows 34 young Zarathushtis (mostly youth from North America) on a two-week pilgrimage in Iran. Tenaz and a few of the pilgrims featured in the film were available for the interesting discussion that followed the viewing.



Understanding Issues Facing Our Elders

By session chair Yasmin Ghadialy

[ghad@aol.com]

From left, Edul Udvadia of
Chicago, co-chair of the
Elders Program Committee;
Moti Balsara of Toronto and
Soonamai Dessai; and
Yasmin Ghadialy of New York.

This was the first time that our community addressed the needs of our elders – from housing to healthcare, to financial, to aging gracefully, independently and spiritually. We had a panel of learned and experienced speakers who had a lot to say but time was of essence and they had to shorten their speeches.

Speakers. *Edul Udvadia*, an 81-year gentleman from Chicago, shared his experience of “aging independently”. His advice was (a) do not give everything away to your children; (b) do not forget to make a will; (c) find a retirement home or senior housing facility to meet your needs; (d) if financially hard-pressed, there are various government programs that help with rents, healthcare etc. (e) exercise regularly and take proper nutrition; (f) do some work to get supplemental income and keep your mind and body alert; (g) do volunteer work at your association or any service clubs; (h) donate your body. He believes in a positive attitude and making others happy.

Moti Balsara recommends the use of our darbe mehrs to the fullest extent. In Toronto, she formed a Senior Committee in 1978 and got volunteers to drive the elders. She has organized exercise sessions and speakers on health topics, housing, financial and legal matters; and

arranged trips including travel abroad. In Canada they have received financial aid from government agencies and encourages us to explore all possibilities. They have started a “buddy” system and the elders do the cooking and arrangements for the *mukhtad*. Moti has now started recording the life stories of the elders; to help future generations know how their parents lived in different lands.

Soonamai Dessai, who has worked for 16 years in a multi-level retirement home advises to plan ahead how and where you want to live. The options are (a) aging in place – that is in your own home, so start adapting your home to your needs. One can also get adult day care at home; (b) residential care – where you pay for the services; (c) skilled nursing care; (d) respite care; and (e) hospice care. The last three depend on the state of your health. She strongly advises legal advice to go over all the details and be aware of your financial responsibilities.

According to FEZANA’s last census the maximum number of Zarathushtis live in Canada, California and Texas. Since our community is so small she does not advocate building homes since they are expensive to build and maintain. We should get partnerships in assisted living places near the darbe mehrs so the

elders can have a full Zarathushti life. She recommends that FEZANA create an Elders Committee.

Arnavaz Elavia [aelavia@hotmail.com] believes that the key to fulfilling retirement is “Retire to something and not from something.” The steps are (a) invest early in your IRAs and 401k; (b) plan for a long haul and not immediate results; (c) change your career perspective; (d) gather all the information and have a family meeting; involving the children helps everyone; (e) assess your needs regularly; (d) take long term care coverage, life insurance etc. and take care of your housing needs; (e) have a good estate plan and a proper will.

Mehraban Oshidari, editor of the Farsi language magazine, *Rah-e-Asha* spoke of our history and how through all the difficult times, our elders have passed on their faith to the next generation. He praised the Parsis for keeping the faith alive even in a different land. Today as we have now come to this new land, we call home, once again the elders have to play their part, to explain and be role models for the younger generation. We have to do that by talking to them and understanding their concerns.

Jehan Bagli [jbagli@rogers.com] showed the importance of maintaining good health and a sound mind by

Meeting Challenges Facing Iranian Zarathushtis

By session co-chairs Mehrborzin Soroushian and Mehraban Khodavandi

The opening speech for this Farsi session was delivered by Keikhosrow Mobed of Chicago, who was the main thrust behind this session.

Speeches were also given by **Dr. Mehrborzin Soroushian** [mazda@san.rr.com], **Prof. Mehraban Khodavandi** [KhodavandiM@lakeland.edu], **General Khodarahm Shahryary** of Washington DC, **Mehraban Oshidari** of California, **Arman Ariane** [xerxes4gents@earthlink.net], **Dr. Farhang Mehr** of Boston and **Khodi Kaviani** [khodi@aol.com].

A variety of challenges facing Iranian Zarathushtis in North America were mentioned by the various speakers. Some of the main issues discussed are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list, and is meant to give a sampling of the issues.

With the dispersion of Zarathushti expatriates from Iran, there is a need for **regular get-togethers**. The idea

prayer and meditation. He is convinced that inner peace keeps the chemical balance of hormones at optimal level that does not cause destruction of the human body. Keeping a high level of positive thinking in life helps. He recommended that, like our IRAs, we must invest in SRAs – spiritual retirement accounts to draw on as we face the tougher issues of life.

Conclusion. All agreed that FEZANA should form a new committee of elders and a few people already showed their interest to serve on it. ■

would be to explore the interest amongst Iranian Zarathushti families in North America to congregate in one or two locations in North America once or twice a year to renew friendship and socialize with each other.

There were several appeals to support more of the Iranian Zartoshty **cultural initiatives** in North America. A number of musicians have produced Farsi songs based on themes of interest to Zarathushtis. There are educational books being produced by Iranian Zarathushti publicizing festivities and events of interest such as Nouruz. These initiatives deserve community-wide support.

There was unanimity by all who expressed their opinion that **Zarathushtra's message is for all humanity**, and that every person has the right to choose their path in life including the religion they wish to follow. The surge in interest in the message of Zarathushtra witnessed in many parts of the world was talked about with pride and joy by a number of speakers who expressed their delight and support for those who chose the path of Zarathushtra of their own volition. Dr. Mehr pointed out that he is very optimistic for the prospects of Zarathushtrianism moving forward.

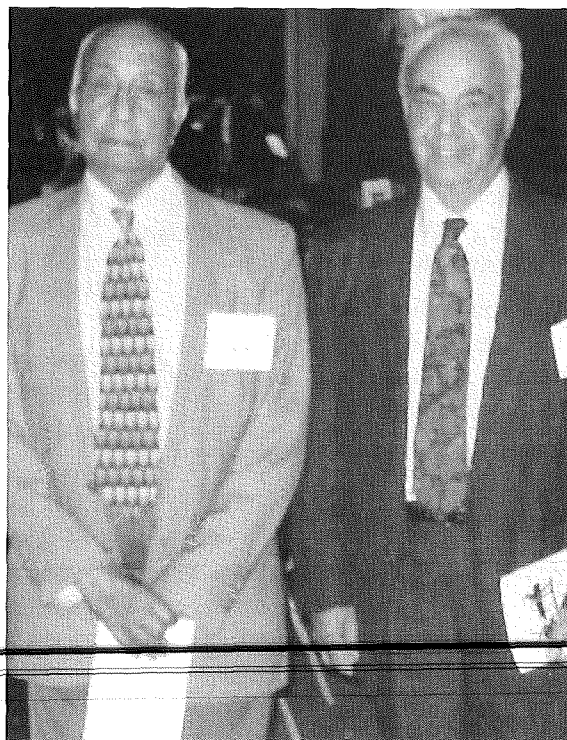
Mehraban Oshidari, who since moving to the San Francisco Bay area in the after-

math of the Iranian revolution, has been single-handedly publishing a journal in Farsi, *Rah-e-Asha* (Path of Asha) distributed among the expatriates in North America made the following point. The positive response he is receiving from some of his Zarathushti readers has been overwhelming. They express great interest and yearning for their ancestral religion.

It was pointed out that Iranian Zarathushtis need to get more involved with the **political process** in North America to help effect policies favorable to them. They also need to become **more active in FEZANA** to ensure FEZANA is more sensitive to their needs.

An example pointed out is the plight of **Zarathushti refugees** from Iran currently in Austria waiting to be granted refugee visas to the US. In the wake of September 11, the processing of visas for members of the minority groups from the Middle East has trickled down to a minuscule number. Many who had gone to Austria and applied to the US refugee processing center have been stranded and cannot go back. Most have exhausted their limited financial means and are in dire financial straits.

Mehraban Oshidari and Keikhosrow Mobed



Morning Prayers

A prayer *humbandagi* session started the day's proceedings on July 5th and 6th. Er. Kersey Antia led the *humbandagi* with a recitation of *Doa Nam Setayashne*, and singing of several monajats by the ZAC choir. These prayer sessions were held at the urging of Rohinton Rivetna, to encourage greater spiritual content at congresses, along with the usual secular agenda.

Demonstration of Jashan with Audience Laity Participation

By Er. Jehan Bagli
[jbagli@rogers.com]

A session where NAMC played a major role, was the Jashan Demonstration, which was prompted by Rohinton Rivetna with help from NAMC members. I was involved in the organization and conducting of this session. The idea was to involve the audience laity to participate in the jashan ritual.

I gave a short introduction of the purpose and the objective of the experiment. A 'demonstration jashan' was set up, with a *diva* on the *afrikan* instead of regular fire, an empty fruit tray and flowers. Two mobeds, Er. Jimmy Rayji and Er. Hoshi Vazifdar – *zaotar* and *raspi* were fully dressed in mobed robes for the ceremony. I also participated in the prayers, wearing a *dagli*.

After the introduction we started with *Atash Nyaesh*. During its recital, at the time of the three *atravakhshi*, the audience was prompted to rise, hold hands with their neighbor and recite the prayers. Similarly at a few places in the *afrikan* the audience recited selected lines of the devotional prayers. They were also prompted to perform the ritual handshake of "Hamazor Hama Asho Bed" with

[Continued on page 102]

Interfaith: Building Bridges, the Zarathushti Imperative

By session chair Rohinton M. Rivetna

[rivetna@aol.com]

A luncheon for Zarathushti interfaith leaders and leaders of several interfaith organizations and faith communities in Chicago, preceded the interfaith session, at the Jaipur Palace restaurant on July 5th. Guest speaker, the *Consul General of India, Surendra Kumar* [right] made a presentation on the commitment to secularism in India. *Jamshed Udvadia* (Lansing, MI) spoke about his understanding of the terms 'faith' and 'religion'.

The hall was packed to capacity for the ensuing session.

Rohinton Rivetna [right], organizer of the Congress 2002 interfaith program and a trustee of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, stressed that the goal of interfaith work is peace through understanding; and how Zarathushtis are uniquely situated to build bridges of understanding, on account of our history, teachings, our commonality with other faiths, and our vision of *frashokereti*.

Sister Joan McGuire, O.P. is the director of the Office for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs for the Archdiocese of Chicago, headed by Francis Cardinal George, O. M. I.. She said she felt privileged to be with the Zarathushti community and was pleased to participate in the congress, especially because of the many fruitful relations the Archdiocese has had with several local Chicago Zarathushtis. It was important to see the community within the context of the congress.

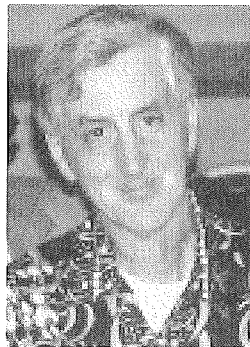
She hoped that these relations continue to develop more deeply in the future.

Rev. Robert Thompson is chairperson of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions and pastor of the Lake Street Church in Evanston, IL. He said it in terms of the Congress 2002 theme: "Whether our communities are advanced and future generations empowered, depends on our commitment here and now to create a world that is just and peaceful ... no one religious community can answer the call to create a peaceful world on our own. For every community to advance and future generations empowered, each and every one of us and all our religious communities, are being called to come together. We cannot do it by ourselves. It takes all of us to weave together a new tapestry of hope."

Brother Wayne Teasdale [left] author, professor and a Catholic monk/sanyasi also serves on the Board of the CPWR. He feels the interfaith movement must emphasize the work for peace around the world, and

especially in the inter-religious context. We must encourage our brothers who are religious and spiritual leaders in Islam to assume responsibility for educating the masses of Islamic faithful in peace, nonviolence, acceptance of diversity and dialogue. He said: "The Zoroastrian community is a model of such wisdom in our time."

Rev. Stanley Davis is Executive Director of The National Conference





Interfaith leaders: Soonoo Engineer, Behram Pastakia, Rev. Robert Thompson, Firdosh Mehta, Sister Joan McGuire O.P., and Homi Gandhi.

for Community and Justice (NCCJ), and has helped expand and redefine interreligious work in the Chicago area. His connections with the media have helped Congress 2002 secure excellent press coverage in the Chicago Tribune and Sun Times. NCCJ publishes the annual interfaith calendar, with a page devoted to Zarathushtis.

Rev. Davis [below] acknowledged the Zarathushti religion as "one from which all the great world's religions have benefitted. Many have appropriated the fundamental teaching of Zarathushtra into their faith structure ... You are a proud people, with a proud legacy and a proud future – a people of peace!"

"In every religious system there are many tensions, including tensions

“ You are a proud people, with a proud legacy and a proud future – a people of peace! ”

between remaining within one's community or reaching outside to understand the differing religious claims of the faith systems around us. The challenge is to maintain an authentic faith stance; a challenge as well to reflect that authenticity in interfaith contact and dialogue, without giving up the uniqueness of the truth as you understand it ... so, keep the tension between maintaining your Zoroastrian boundaries and interfaith contact. Maintain the balance ... For we need your voice, your understandings, your centuries old insights to keep the wagon of faith running smoothly ..."

Soonoo Engineer has been very active in peace organizations and interfaith groups, and has been the president of the local chapter of Religions for Peace (formerly WCRP). She analyzed the reasons why interfaith activity has failed to bring about peace between faiths around the world, in spite of its growth and increased acceptance. The solution could be in realizing the spiritual values that lie at the source of all religions, stressing their commonality and collectively evolving to a more mature concept of God.

Firdosh Mehta who is very active in the Interfaith Centre in Edmonton, Alberta, discussed the concept of



A significant moment. It was a moment of historic significance during the interfaith session, when **Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman** [above] acknowledged the indebtedness and gratitude of the Jewish people to Cyrus the Great:

"Upon learning that Cyrus the Great had been a Zoroastrian, and knowing what a decisive role he played in allowing Jewish exiles in former Babylonia to return to their own country and thus restart their own commonwealth, I want to express my personal gratitude and the indebtedness of my Jewish community to this great Zoroastrian personality of 2,500 years ago.

"Had this second commonwealth not been reconstituted, it is possible that Judaism and therefore Christianity and Islam would have had an entirely different development, if any."

[Rabbi Schaalman serves on the board of many distinguished religious organizations including the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago and The Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions.]

[Continued on page 95]

Gender Identity: A Talk Show on Gender Roles Among Zarathushtis

By co-host Khorshed Jungalwala

[kayj@ziplink.net]

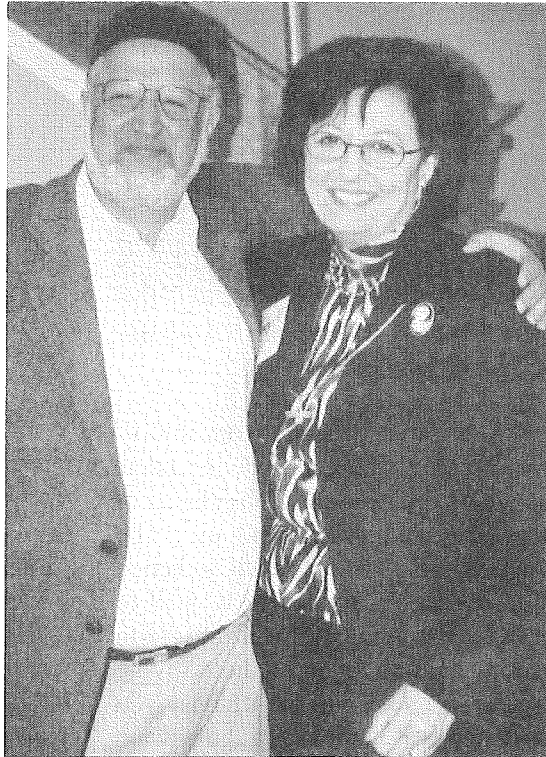
Congress 2002 organizers came up with an innovative format for this session, that gave the flavor of a 'town hall' meeting conducted in talk show style. The topic focused on themes that included, but were not limited to the differences in Zarathushti male and female identity; the need for role models in our development; and the pursuit of equality between Zarathushti men and women.

The two talk show hosts – ***Khorshed Jungalwala*** and ***Farrokh Mistree*** [photo right] [farrokh.mistree@eudoramail.com] gave a synopsis of the doctrinal and societal structure through the ages, of the role that men and women played in pre-Gathic, Gathic and post-Gathic times, passing through the Islamic influence in Iran; migration to India and the final exodus from Iran and India to other countries. With this background, the lively audience was geared up to come forward with questions, comments and concerns regarding their own role in their new homeland in North America.

● How do men perceive men, women perceive women, men perceive women and women perceive men?

● What are the pros and cons of patrilineal and matrilineal society?

● Is there a need to evolve and to what degree do we consider evolving, in order to adjust to our new environment in North America?



Gender specific roles are becoming less defined. Husbands are comfortable giving tender loving care to their children while their wives are running the corporate empire.

● Do we need role models? Where should we be looking for them?


The extended joint family of the past provided ample role models for the young to emulate. Here in North America the parents play a very significant role in providing the fundamentals which are enhanced by examples provided by siblings, friends, teachers and immediate community members.

The session gave the audience much food for thought, with audience participation bringing about open expression of thoughts and beliefs.■

Religion Education Teachers' Workshop

*By Lovji Cama, chair, FEZANA
Education & Scholarship Com-
mittee [ldcama@aaahawk.com]*

This workshop, attended by about 60 people, was held on July 4 preceding the opening ceremony of the Congress 2002. The purpose of the workshop was to demonstrate the use of novel ways of imparting religious education to young Zarathushtis, using audio visual and computer aids in teaching.



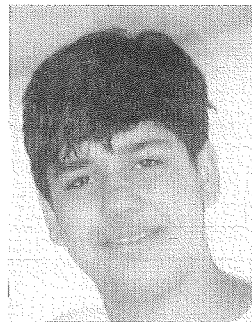
Vahishta Kaikobad [below] of Houston, demonstrated “*Teaching Sunday-School the Montessori Way*” her special material (all hand created) to teach Zarathushti



concepts, with extensions to cultural awareness and comparative religions. A video presentation of children at work was also shown. Her method involves considerable student participation with older children teaching the younger ones. Vahishta has offered to duplicate her material, if finances can be found and also to

teach other
teachers the
Montessori
way.

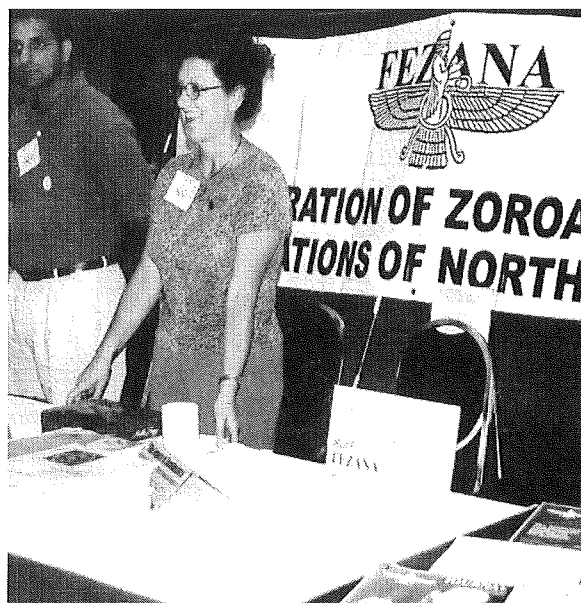
Ashraf Divecha [left]
[divecha@juno.com] of
Pinehurst, NC,
and **Dustyn**



Shroff [McLarenF 488 @aol.com] of
Boca Raton, FL, both 14 years old,

Man has his will ^{and} but woman has her way

- Oliver Wendall Holmes, 1858



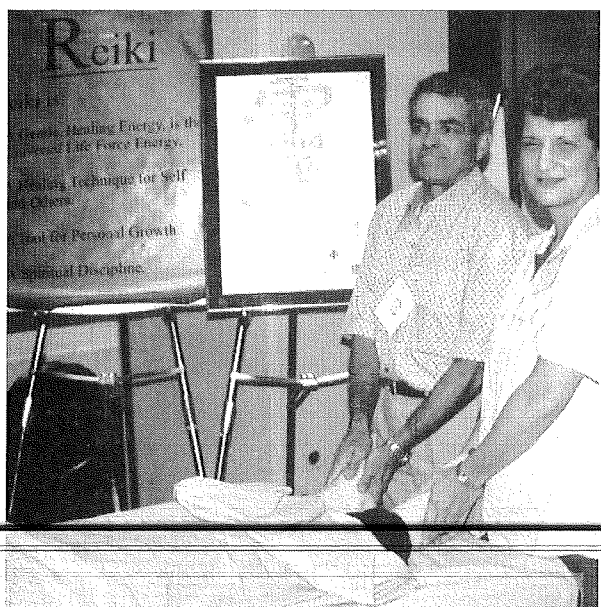
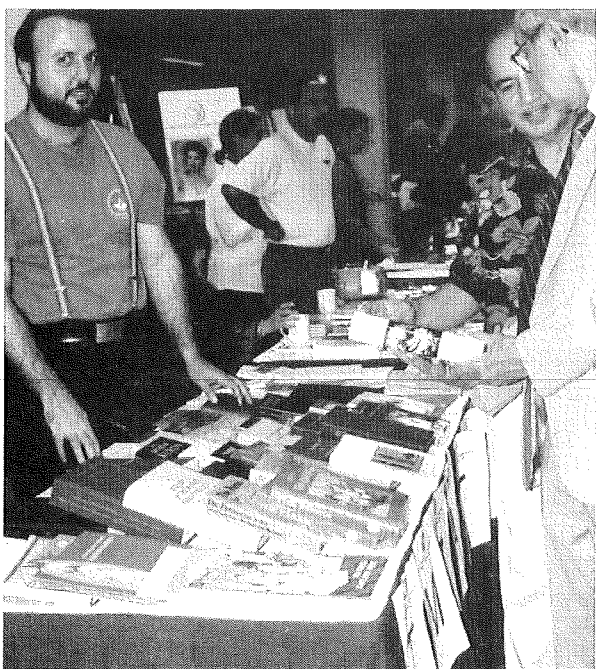
Marketplace

By organizer Mehroo M. Patel, MD

T rue to its name, the “Marketplace” at Congress 2002 was buzzing with activity from 11 am on July 4, through 8 pm on July 6. Visiting some 30 stalls set up by vendors and exhibitors was a welcome interlude from session dialogues and “beating around the bush”.

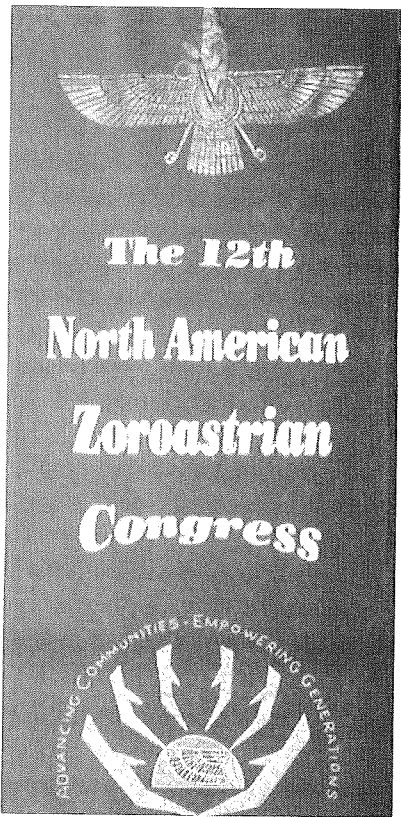
There was brisk business (mostly of books, CDs and such) at the **FEZANA** and **ZAC** tables. The World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (**WZCC**) offered a number of services such as estate planning. The **Reiki** demonstration by Vera and Pesi Shroff of Ontario (613-829-0224), nutrition and healthcare exhibits donated by **Thorek Hospital**, **Pfizer**, **TAP** and other pharmaceutical companies, alongside pens, balloons and other gifts (thank you to them all) drew crowds superceded only by the “**Gara Shoppe**” (by Manchi Captain and his wife, Mumbai, tel: 91-22-266 3890), the table of Parsi snacks – bhakras, badam pak, dardi-pori – net sudrehs, and more, by “**ParsiChef**” (Aban Daboo, parsichef@aol.com) and exhibit of crafts – wreaths, centerpieces and more by **Creative Creations, Inc.** (Roxana Daboo, tel: 630-851-3628). Our thanks to Munira Merchant, Shernaz Mazda, Dina and Sanaya Jijina, Darcy Cooper and many other volunteers who donated their time to ZAC and FEZANA sales and exhibits though not participating in the congress otherwise.

Malcolm Deboo [library@ztfe.com] of London, UK, had set up a mini **Book Fair**, sponsored by Tahamtan Aresh and the TMZA, with over 200 books on display. This generated a lot of interest amongst the delegates as it gave them a rare opportunity to obtain books on Zoroastrianism, which are not usually available in local book shops. Khodi Kaviani [khodi@aol.com] exhibited his **CDs of Persian songs**, including his latest **Amordad** [see p. 120]; Anita Parakh [perkanproductions@yahoo.com.au] exhibited Perviz Parakh’s **CD “Indian Cooking Parsi Style”** [see p. 120].





Clockwise from left: the Shroffs, giving a Reiki treatment; Malcolm Deboo at the Book Fair; Khodi Kaviani exhibiting his Persian music CDs; Celeste Kheradi at the FEZANA table; at the Gram Seva table: Roda Patel, Jehan Rivetna, Nicholas Bonaventura and Khushroo Patel; Congress banner (by Mehrwar Irani); Manchi Captain, left, did brisk business selling garas, hand-embroidered in India.



The **Bone Marrow** Donor registration and blood-draw organized by Yasmin Ghadialy on July 5th, was slow to start with, but picked up in the afternoon.

The **Nutrition luncheon** [see page 40] and afternoon tea followed by the **Physician and Healthcare Professionals mixer** were other events on July 5th.

At teatime Drs. Roda and Khushroo Patel besieged the crowd with a video on Roda's ongoing (empowerment) health and education work with women and children at the **Gram Seva Trust**, in the village of Kharel in Gujarat. Volunteers Jehan Rivetna and Nicholas Bonaventura created and showed the video. This was followed by a presentation of the documentary *In the Footsteps of Our Forefathers* [see page 29]. On July 6th, **poetry reading** by Zarina Mullan Plath and the three "**story-walas**" drew crowds [see page 37].

Future directions. In future congresses I would like to see an expanded role for the Marketplace:

- All organizations (host as well as visiting) have an area to show their activities and conduct their own fund raisers.
- Showcase arts and crafts by individuals; have competitions, demonstrations and sales.
- Small businesses conduct sales and fund raiser activities.
- Organize mixers for business persons, professionals and other like-minded groups, to facilitate interactions, big brother/sister for growing generations.
- Recreational activities/space for children and adults.
- Charitable and community activities like bone marrow drive, organ tissue donor drive.
- More such initiatives to encourage community fellowship.



LUNCH ROUNDTABLE ON NUTRITION IN THE MARKETPLACE

By Mehroo M. Patel

Karmeen Kulkarni RD, CD, CDE, BC, ADM, America's foremost diabetes educator led the discussion at this informative workshop in the Marketplace on July 5th, following a brief introduction by Mehroo M. Patel MD.

About 50 attendees were treated to a healthy feast of nutritional advice, some fresh out of the ADA conference just a week before. New teachings on glycemic index, dysmetabolic syndrome-X and scary statistics of projected 80% of Southeast Asian population at risk for diabetes type II, coronary heart disease and stroke were some eye-openers. All those in attendance left greatly satisfied – kudos to Karmeen. ■

Story-walas [Contd. from p. 37]

North America, Parsi writers such as Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa are among the most celebrated, have already had long-standing mainstream literary success, and have introduced the Parsi community – and Zoroastrianism – to millions of readers worldwide.

The audience reaction following this event was phenomenally positive. They enjoyed the diversity of the authors' ages and backgrounds, and their very different voices and styles of expressing stories of homelands, ethnic and religious identity, immigration, and more. Young writers felt this event encouraged their creative talents. The authors themselves greatly enjoyed the opportunity both to meet each other and share experiences and advice. But more importantly, it meant a great deal to these writers to face an audience of their own community, and to have such a positive and supportive experience. Both writers and attendees said they look forward to more opportunities to come together, celebrate our community's artists, and to support new talent in the future. ■

North American Zarathushti Community Awards - 2002

By chair Dinshaw Joshi

[dfjoshi@erols.com]

The 2002 North American Zarathushti Award winners were publicly recognized and presented with tokens of their award, at the Congress 2002 FEZANA Awards Brunch Banquet on July 6. Seven distinguished Zarathushtis were inducted into the North American Zarathushti Hall of Fame. They join thirty-eight other distinguished Zarathushtis inducted since 1988 [see list on page 43].

The ceremony was choreographed by **Laila Contractor** as MC. After a brief introduction by **Dinshaw Joshi**, chair of the Awards Committee, each award winner was introduced by a prominent fellow Zarathushti and presented a plaque by another.

Dr. Farhang Mehr, winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award, was presented with a shawl, following the tradition of honoring distinguished Zarathushtis, by Framroze Patel, past president of FEZANA. Dinshaw Joshi is at right.



The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks by Yasmin Pavri to: Mobed Mehraban Zartoshty for a donation of \$2,500; the judges, those who introduced the winners and the presenters; Ness Lakdawala for assistance in production of the plaques; and Feroza Fitch for the design of the awards brochure.

THE AWARDS PROCESS

The Awards Committee (which currently comprises of Dinshaw Joshi chair, Yasmin Pavri and Trity Pourbahrami) first established that three basic principles, transparency, equality and impartiality, would govern all their actions and decisions in selecting the award winners. In consultation with FEZANA executives and a few Zarathushtis, the committee established the rules governing the awards competition, and defined six award categories, their definitions and evaluation criteria.

The call for nominations for the 2002 awards was issued in November 2001 to all FEZANA associations

and registered small Zarathushti communities in USA and Canada, and also published in FEZANA Journal and the website. For evaluation of the nominees, the committee selected 36 respected Zarathushti men and women from USA and Canada to serve as judges (whose names were kept confidential). They were divided into six panels of six judges for each award category. A Zarathushti "youth" was included in each panel. The committee ensured that a nominee did not serve as judge for



North American Zarathushti Community Awards - 2002: [front, from left] *Bapsi Sidhwa*, Excellence in Performing Arts, Literature or Painting Award; *Kayomارش P. Mehta*, Rohinton Rivetna Outstanding Zarathushti Award; *Sherazade Mehta*, Outstanding Young Zarathushti Award; [behind, from left] *Bella Tata*, Jamshed Pavri Humanitarian Service Award; *Dinshaw Joshi*, chair, FEZANA Award Committee; *Dr. Farhang Mehr*, Lifetime Achievement Award; *Tenaz Dubash*, Paradise Award; *Firdaus Bhathena*, Excellence in Business or Profession.

the award category for which he/she was nominated.

The judges were enjoined to evaluate the nominees based strictly on the criteria specified by the committee. Committee members were not involved in any way in the evaluation process, except to collate the numerical scores allotted by the judges. Winners were selected based on the rankings of the nominees by the judges for each award category.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

In addition to the six competitive awards, the Awards Committee, in consultation with FEZANA Executives decided to present a Lifetime Achievement Award to a highly respected North American Zarathushti, who through his/her personal

achievements and meritorious service, has brought recognition to the Zarathushti community worldwide. The selection of the 2002 award recipient was made by the Awards Committee in consultation with a few respected Zarathushtis of North America.

PARADISE AWARD

The Paradise Award recognizes an individual or group who has contributed to spreading the message of Zarathushtra through the composition of artistic and educational play, poetry or song capable of being transcribed on film, video or DVD.

2002 AWARD WINNERS

The Lifetime Achievement Award: *Dr. Farhang Mehr*. Dr. Mehr's towering achievements and service to the Zarathushti community over several

decades, have gained him worldwide recognition. Growing up in Tehran, Dr. Mehr mobilized a Youth Wing, rebelled at the restrictions and indignities suffered by Zarathushtis, and won the right for Zarathushtis to vote and elect representatives to parliament.

During his brilliant career in Iran, Dr. Mehr held the positions of Permanent Secretary of major ministries, Governor of OPEC, czar of national insurance, finance minister and ultimately, deputy prime minister, a position unique in the annals of Zarathushtis. His preeminence enabled him to imprint reforms of lasting impact on Iran's economic, education, financial, insurance and oil sectors. As Chancellor of the Pahlavi University in Shiraz, he reformed university education in Iran.

During the 1979 Islamic revolution, his very preeminence as a Zarathushti led to his being targeted for death. In 1980, he and later his wife Parichehr and children escaped to USA and settled in Boston. Professor Emeritus of Boston University, he now runs the Center for Ancient Iranian Studies.

A world-acclaimed scholar, his books and lectures have created awareness of the Zarathushti religion and the Gathas. His scholarly advice, urging rationality, prudence and moderation on contemporary religious and community issues, is heeded around the world. His dedicated community leadership has enabled Zarathushtis in Iran to face their future with greater confidence, encouraged Zarathushti youth to be active in shaping the community's destiny and for Tehran's Mobed Kankash to modernize its outlook on religious and community matters. Through his leadership, world Zarathushti congresses have become a norm and countless Iranian Zarathushti families have found safe asylum in western countries.

Rohinton Rivetna Outstanding Zarathushti Award: Kayomارش P. Mehta.

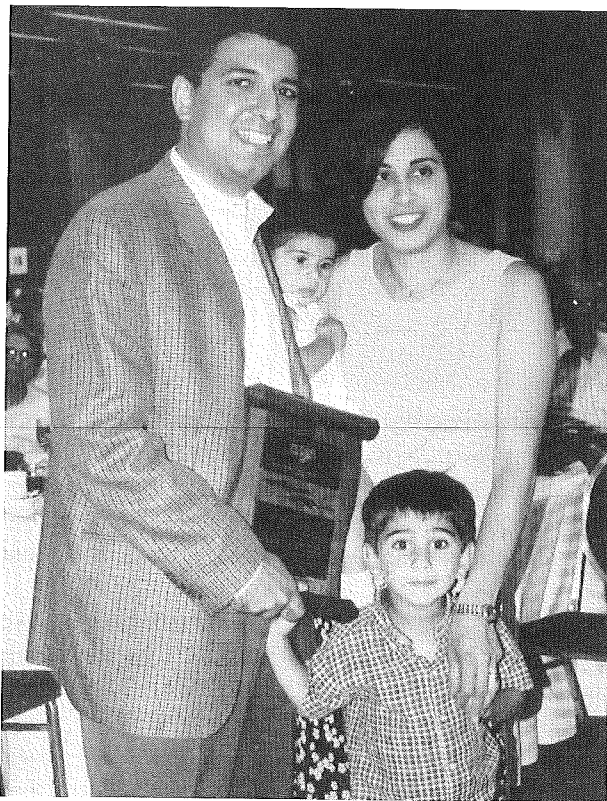
Kayomارش has devoted over thirty years as an active and energetic member of the Zarathushti community in Chicago, making significant contributions in leadership, religious education and social and cultural aspects. He has supported and encouraged youth, worked towards strengthening the role of mobeds, worked to ameliorate the lives of the elderly and those in need of assistance, and promoted awareness of the religion.

He provided meritorious services as ZAC president. As chair of ZAC's Religious Education Committee, Kayomارش developed, led and managed a very active and informative religious education program. As chair of FEZANA's Education Committee,

he initiated and successfully formulated a universal Zarathushti religion curriculum. Kayomارش has also initiated an elaborate program for advancing religious education of mobeds in North America. He is currently working on establishing and managing a Zarathushti Learning Center.

Excellence in Business or Profession Award: Firdaus Bhathena.

Firdaus [photo below, with wife Jasmin, son Darian and daughter Zenia] is a successful entrepreneur with four high-tech startups to his name in less than ten years. He is currently president and CEO of *Relicore, Inc.*, a



software infrastructure company that he founded in November 2000. *Relicore* raised \$11M in its first round of venture capital funding, and has over 40 employees.

Prior to *Relicore*, Firdaus founded *WebLine Communications* in 1996 after winning the MIT \$50K Entrepreneurship Competition. In less than three years, *WebLine* grew to over 150 employees and was a leader in customer interaction software with more than 100 large customers. *Cisco Systems* acquired *WebLine* in

1999 for \$325 M and Firdaus became a director of engineering at *Cisco* before leaving to found *Relicore*. [Read more about Firdaus in *FEZANA Journal*, Spring 2002].

Jamshed Pavri Humanitarian Service Award: Bella Tata.

After a successful professional career in India as secretary and manager spanning many industries and organizations, Bella immigrated in 1981 to Vancouver, BC, where she currently resides with her mother, Shirin. In 1983, Bella joined the Canadian federal government where she now holds the post of executive assistance officer, Pacific region, Industry Canada.

In 1993, Bella was awarded the Canada 125 Commemorative Medal for her extensive and notable contributions to the department, its clients and for community work.

In 1992, Bella chaired the successful Eighth North American Zoroastrian Congress in Vancouver, BC. She has served as chair of the Congress Committee of FEZANA. From 1998 to 2000, she was president of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (ZSBC), founded in 1968 by late Jamshed K. Pavri (whose immeasurable services, along with his wife Roda, defy description, and after whom this award is named).

Bella, supported by her sister Zarine and Zarine's husband Nanu Dastur, and good friends,

continues her efforts to bring the fruits of education and the message of equality, compassion, harmony and unity to all segments of the society in Vancouver.

Excellence in Performing Arts, Painting or Literature: Bapsi Sidhwa.

Distinguished international writer Bapsi Sidhwa lives in USA but travels frequently to the Indian subcontinent. She has published four novels: *An American Brat*, *Cracking India*, *The Bride* and *The Crow Eaters* and she has been translated

into German, French, Italian, Greek and Russian.

Among her many honors, Bapsi received the Lila Wallace – Reader’s Digest Writer’s Award in 1994, the *Sitara-I-Imtiaz*, Pakistan’s highest national honor in arts and the *LiBer-aturepreis* in Germany. She has also been awarded the Bunting Fellowship at Radcliffe, Harvard.

Bapsi Sidhwa, who was on the advisory committee to then Pakistan prime minster Benazir Bhutto on women’s development, has taught at Columbia University, University of Houston, Mount Holyoke College and Brandeis University.

Cracking India, a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year and a Quality Paperback Club selection, has been made into the film Earth by noted Canadian director Deepa Mehta.

Outstanding Young Zarathushti: Sherazade Mehta. Sherazade grew up in Edmonton, Alberta, and is currently a full-time Montessori teacher in Boston. Also an entrepreneur, Sherazade makes her own jewelry and launched her own website www.Sherazarts.com, featured in the Boston Globe. She has appeared on the New England Cable news television highlighting local entrepreneurs. Sherazade is currently president of ZAGBA, the Boston area Zarathushti association, where she helped initiate and teach children’s religious classes. Since 2000, Sherazade has been a co-chair of ZYNA (Zoroastrian Youth of North America) which brings youth together in educational, cultural and social areas. She is committed to the mission of ZYNA to ensure that Zarathushti youth have a representative voice in all areas affecting their future.

Paradise Award: Tenaz Dubash. Born and raised in India, Tenaz Dubash moved to the USA in 1982 with her parents. She has a master’s degree in Television/Radio & Film and over eight years of television production experience including

positions at ABC, FOX and CNBC. During her year at FOX, she wrote breaking news stories that were sent by satellite to over 150 FOX affiliates. Tenaz also has strong business, writing and production skills. As an equities writer at Bridge News, she wrote up to the minute, business releases for the wire service.

In 2000, Tenaz traveled to Iran with thirty-four Zarathushtis. She wrote, narrated and produced her first docu-

mentary about Zoroastrianism called “*In the Footsteps of Our Forefathers*” which has been received with acclamation both nationally and internationally. A seven-minute segment was featured on CNN’s *Inside Asia* and was also carried on CNNfn. It has received positive press in *India Today*, *The Indian Express* and *Rediff.com* and has been screened at Boston University, MIT and Berkeley. ■

Hall of Fame			
Recipients of North American			
Zarathushti Community Awards 1988-2002			
Lifetime Achievement Award		Jamshed Pavri Humanitarian Service Award	
2002	Dr. Farhang Mehr	2002	Miss Bella Tata
1996	Prof. Kaikhosrov D. Irani	1998	Mr. Jamshed and Mrs. Yasmin Ghadialy
1990	Maestro Zubin Mehta	1996	Mrs. Katy Driver
Rohinton Rivetna Outstanding Zarathushti Award		1994	Mr. Minoo Treasurywala
2002	Mr. Kayomارش P. Mehta	1992	Mr. Rustom Irani
1998	Mrs. Farangis K. Shahrokh	1990	Mobed Mehraban and Mrs. Paridokht Zartoshty
1996	Mr. Homi Minocher-Homji	1988	Mrs. Sabar E. Patel
1994	Dr. Dolly Dastoor	Outstanding Young Zarathushti Award	
1992	Mr. Homi Davier	2002	Ms. Sherazade Mehta
1990	Mr. Rohinton and Mrs. Roshan Rivetna	1998	Mr. Orang Demehry and Mrs. Parastu Dubash
1988	Mr. Minoo Dastoor	1994	Mr. Darius Bagli
Excellence in Business or Profession Award		1992	Mr. Mehran Sepehri
2002	Mr. Firdaus Bhathena	1990	Ms. Sarosh V. Kanga
1998	Dr. Yasmin Thanavala	1988	Prof. Jamsheed Choksy
1996	Mr. Adi Dastur and Mrs. Mehroo Jussawalla	Outstanding Zarathushti Student Award	
1994	Dr. Jehan Bagli	1998	Mr. Phiroz Tarapore
1992	Mr. Mehli Mehta and Mr. Jamshed Mavalwala	1996	Mr. Arash Anoshiravani
1990	Mr. Meherwan Boyce	1994	Mr. Cyrus Hirjibehdin
Excellence in Performing Arts, Literature or Painting Award		1992	Mr. Murzban F. Morris and Miss Shanaya Deboo
2002	Bapsi Sidhwa	1990	Mr. Neville M. Billimoria
Paradise Award		1988	Mr. Zubin Jal Panthaky
2002	Ms. Tenaz Dubash		

showcase of talent

From the magnificent strains of the Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra, to the side-splitting antics of the Vicaji Vaghmaru household, the talented Z-Apollo show, the Persian Night, the Moonlight Cruise, the Game Show Nite and much more – Congress 2002 offered a melange of entertainment for every palate.

GALA ORCHESTRAL BANQUET AND SHOWTIME AT Z-APOLLO

By Negin Sharyari [photo left]
Entertainment co-chair

What an eventful Fourth of July it was! There were fireworks outside for US Independence day, but more spectacular were the fireworks taking place inside, at the Congress 2002 Gala Orchestral banquet and Z-Apollo Night complimented with a lavish salmon dinner.

The evening opened with a recitation of the poem "On the Occasion of the Congress" by poetry contest winner, **Magdalena Rustomji** [see page 60].

The ZSO orchestra. The 80-member Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra [photo above] in which 22 talented Zarathushti musicians played alongside seasoned professionals from the *Chicago Philharmonia* (of which Farobag Cooper is music director) brought the house down with their magnificent performance. Music

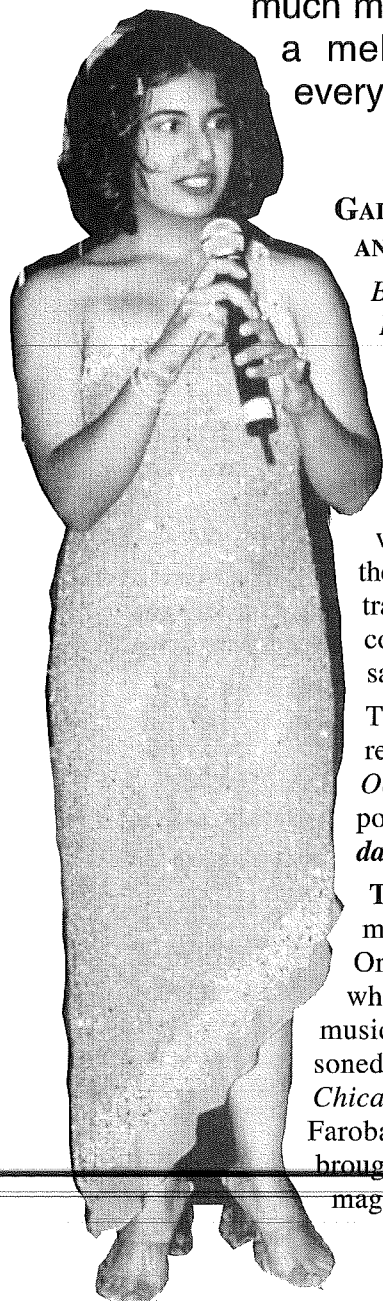
director **Farobag Homi Cooper** is to be complimented for bringing Zarathushti musical talent together and providing an opportunity for them to play with seasoned musicians. Violin soloists were **Cyrus Mehta** (who was also administrative director of the ZSO) and **Jamshed Turel**. Baritone **Dinyar Vania** and soprano **Anita Parakh** received standing ovations for their performance of Bizet's *Chanson du Toreador* and the grand finale – the premiere performance of *Zarathushtra* composed for voice and orchestra by **Parizad Irani**.

The **Chicago Choir** sang a rousing rendition of *Chaiye Hame Zarathushti* [photo next page].

The Z-Apollo Show that followed, emcee'd by **Cyrus Press**, showcased brilliant performances that shined brighter than any fireworks spectacular: award-winning singer **Vista Pourbahrami**; *Chicago's Dance Group* and a *Persian dance*, *Baleh-Baleh*, both choreographed by **Negin Sharyari**; singing of *Jashn-e Tirgan* by **Khodi Kaviani** and **Haideh Esfahani**; a south *Indian dance* by Mehr Pastakia; a recital by Carl Darukhanavala (clarinet) and Anita Rao (vocal).

Post-gala dance party. Dance until you drop, and that is exactly what everyone did. Not only was there great music, provided by professional (B96) radio DJs, but also the free glow-sticks and necklaces were a real treat. The dance floor was never empty and even at 2 o'clock in the morning, the crowd kept yelling for more.

The Congress 2002 Entertainment Committee was chaired by **Farida Sharyari** and **Mehrawar Irani**, and co-chaired by **Negin Sharyari** and **Delnaz Vazifdar**.





PERSPECTIVES FROM THE PODIUM

By Farobag Homi Cooper, Music Director, ZSO

If one were to codify the objectives of the Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra (ZSO) it would be to encourage artistic interest among young Zarathushtis by emphasizing the creative arts as a necessary constituent of a many-dimensional manifold which gives definition to the adjective 'human'. Having said that, it is of import to underscore the pedagogic and motivational tools required for sufficiently nurturing enthusiasm.

The ZSO incorporates a methodology (initiated at the Marlboro Festival) where young, budding musicians have the opportunity to sit side-by-side with seasoned professionals. Albeit daunting at first, such an experience can propel a novice artist to embrace the necessary rigor and demands placed upon professionals and simultaneously relish the refined sounds emanating from the stage.



Standing ovations from the audience for the Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra: music director Farobag Homi Cooper, baritone Dinyar Vania and soprano Anita Parakh.

Certainly, we do not expect, nor is it our intent, that all Zoroastrians who participate in our biannual undertaking yearn to become performing artists. Suffice it to say, that this profession isn't meant for everyone. But then, neither is mathematics, law, or medicine. Nonetheless, should even a handful of the twenty young Zarathushtis entertain the notion and cultivate the kernel of thought to make their mark as performers, then our investment in this endeavor would be amply rewarded.

Besides the talented soloists, one artist who caught my eye (and ears) was our ZSO principal cellist, **Ayesha Dua**. It was remarkable and gratifying to observe a fifteen year-old fulfill the role of a first-chair cello with sufficient confidence and musicality in order that I may have the option of casting my attention on other sections of this unique 80-piece ensemble. Although the demands of the performance did not enable me to

know Ayesha personally, she can count on me to be there for her should she ever need my assistance.

OPERATIC STARS by Roshan Rivetna

Operatic tenor **Dinyar Vania**, 23, (who to this author's untrained ear looked and sounded very much like a young Pavarotti) sang the part of the Toreador from Bizet's opera *Carmen*, at the ZSO performance on July 4, with a rich voice that drew standing ovation from the audience. "It is great to perform for a Zarathushti crowd," says Dinyar,



"because no matter what, they are always behind you."

Son of Jehangir and Daulat Vania of Syracuse, Dinyar is studying for his BA in Music at Mannes

College of Music in New York City.

Following competitive auditions last year, he was selected to perform with the NY Choral Society, a professional group that sings for the New York Philharmonic and for the Carnegie Hall Choral Society. They have been engaged to perform Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the season opener of the NY Philharmonic in September. Later this year he plans to audition for the

Metropolitan Opera national competition – considered to be a great step for young singers, and an entre to contracts with opera houses in Europe and America. ■

Soprano **Anita Parakh** played the role of the Toreador's passionate Spanish counterpart *Frasquita* in Bizet's *Carmen*, and was the soloist for Parizad Irani's *Zarathushtra* at the July 4th performance with the ZSO. The audience of 600 Zarathushtis loved every bit of it.

Born in Mumbai, Anita moved to Australia with her parents Perviz and Kaikee Parakh, in 1976, at the age of five. It was at the Queensland Conservatorium,

which is the best vocal department in the southern hemisphere, that she developed a passion for opera. In 1994 she started singing as a soloist with orchestra in concerts around



Queensland, and won the Queensland Trust Award for studying opera and vocal coaching in London. After graduation last year, she started with the State Opera Company of Queensland. Anita is now focussing on solo concert work in Australia and overseas.

While in Chicago for the Congress, Anita auditioned for the Chicago Opera Theater, the Cleveland Opera and the Indiana Opera Company.

"The only thing that drives me is passion," says Anita, who spends 3-4 hours every day practicing at the Conservatorium, after her 9:00-5:00 job as an administrator at the University, "If the music doesn't move you

with a passion, how can you move your audience to where you can hear a pin drop in the auditorium, and they are traveling the same journey as your character?" ■

Counterclockwise, ZAC chorus singing "Chaiye Hame Zarathushti" at the Gala Orchestral Banquet; dancing the night away at Persian night at Reza's; the Odyssey at Navy Pier; a scene from "Gherno Ghambar".



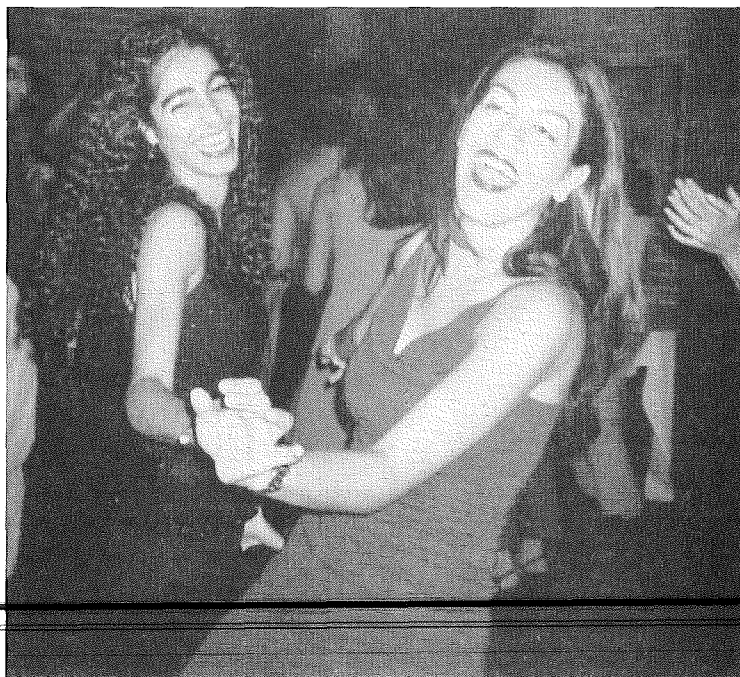


Persian Night. There were more than Persians at this Persian Night at Reza's restaurant, on July 5th. The evening was just as tasteful and delightful as the Persian buffet and pastries. The night was filled with over 180 lively Zarathushtis who, after eating until they could not eat anymore, danced the night away to an array of Iranian and Latin tunes.

"Gherno Ghambar" Parsi natak. A capacity crowd filled the Riverside Center hall at the Hyatt on July 5th, to laugh at the hilarious antics of Dr. Vikaji Vaghmaru and his faithful ramo, who is by now, "almost a doctor", and

various neighbors and friends, as they land from one convoluted situation to another, in this comedy adapted from Homi Tavadia, and produced for North American audiences by Roshan Patel of Chicago.

Moonlight Cruise. There is nothing better than viewing the Chicago skyline at night, unless you are viewing the city from the gorgeous yacht, *Odyssey*, on Lake Michigan. After enjoying a delicious buffet, two levels of dancing, and a magnificent view from the open-air observation deck, everyone left Navy Pier with happy memories.



GAME SHOW NIGHT

By Delnaz Vazifdar
Entertainment co-chair

Congress 2002 closed with Game Show Night on July 6th, featuring a banquet and starring Zarathushti versions of favorite TV game shows. **Rustom Bhathena** was host of *Family Feud* – a contest about guessing common Zarathushti names and common phrases spoken by their parents. *Change of Heart* with host **Shazad Mehta**, introduced an interracial couple. Some points were

brought up about why the relationship was working or not, but the general idea was joking about the dating world as a whole.

In between the game shows, emcee **Nozer Buchia**, led the audience in a live game of questions and jokes. A video in the Jay Leno style of “Jay-walking” was also presented to show what everyday people know, or do not know, about Zarathushtis.

Next North American Congress. **Bomi Patel** [bomip@yahoo.com] and **Annahita Jasavala** presented

early plans for the next North American Congress, to be held in San Francisco in 2004.

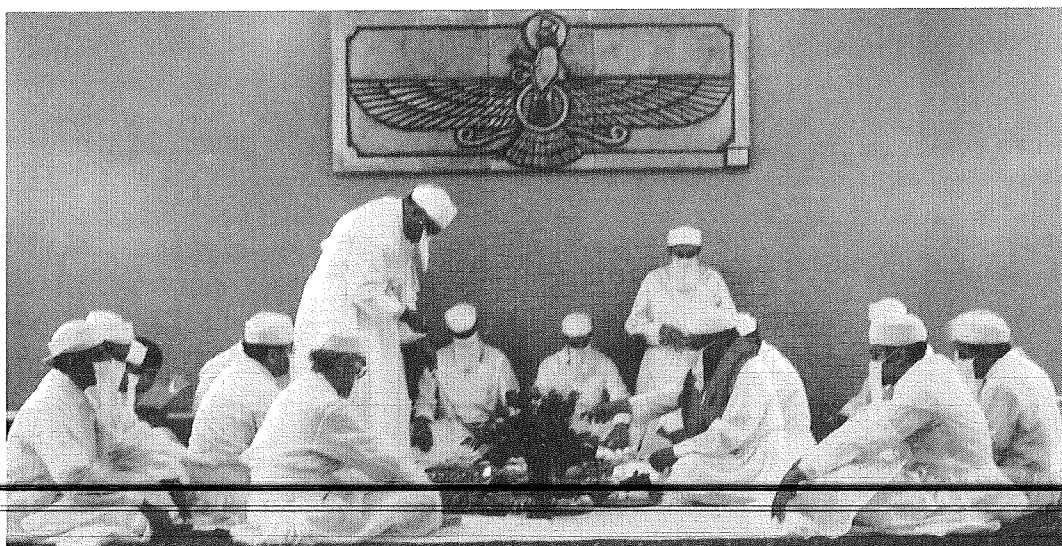
Next Youth Congress. **Armaity Bamji**, **Armeen Bhesania** and **Afreed Mistry** presented an excellent, professionally produced short film, inviting youth to Toronto for the next North American Youth Congress, “Nexus 2003” [see Coming Events page 13].

Overall, it was a night filled with fun and laughter. ■



Bouquets

for the Congress 2002 “movers and shakers”: from left, ZAC president **Arnavaz Elavia**, congress chair **Rashna Ghadialy**, Entertainment co-chair **Farida Sharyari**, Registration chair **Bachi Damkevala** and Entertainment co-chair **Mehrawar Irani**.



Jashan at the darbe mehr

On Sunday, July 7th, delegates were bused to the **Arbab Guive Darbe Mehr** in suburban Hinsdale for a jashan, led by **Er. Kersey Antia**, high priest of the Chicago area, followed by a box lunch.



energizing the entrepreneurial spirit

By Rohinton M. Rivetna
President, WZCC

Zarathushti business persons and professionals gather at the Zarathushti Business Conference – 2002 and the Business Breakfast, preceding Congress 2002 to reaffirm the WZCC mission: “to energize the Zarathushti entrepreneurial spirit through a networking of businesses and professionals.”

BUSINESS CONFERENCE

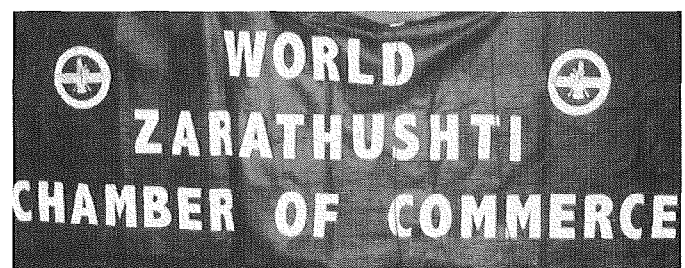
The Zarathushti Business Conference was held on July 3rd at the Hyatt hotel in Chicago, preceding Congress 2002. This was the third such conference (the first two were held in Las Vegas in 1997 and 1998) and the first one after the launching of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce, at the World Congress in December 2000. The conference, attended by about 80 persons, was organized by the Chicago chapter of WZCC, chaired by **Sarosh Khambatta** [Chicago, tiger101@msn.com].

The morning session, moderated by **Porus Dadabhoy** [Chicago, porus@magsinet.com] quality manager and partner of a Motel 6, opened with a presentation by **Edul Daver** [New Jersey, daver@acupowder.com] president and CEO of AcuPowder International, LLC, a leading producer of metal powders. Edul spoke on *Entrepreneurship*, distinguishing it from conventional management and corporate behavior, focussing on start-ups and smaller private companies.

Ruyintan Mehta [New Jersey, ruyintan@aol.com] president-owner of Premium Molding, Inc. a plastic blow mold manufacturing company, spoke about *Evaluation of Business Opportunities*. He covered business models for evaluating small business opportunities, particularly in manufacturing, with respect to acquisition and successful operation.

Maherji Bilimoria [Chicago] with a 35-year career, holding managerial positions in appliance manufacturing at GE, spoke on *Business Management*.

Keki R. Bhote [Chicago] president of Keki R. Bhote Associates, a company specializing in quality and productivity improvement talked about How to Launch a Successful Consulting Business, highlighting that (a) the product must be state-of-the-art; (b) name recognition and reputation; (c) customer must perceive you are

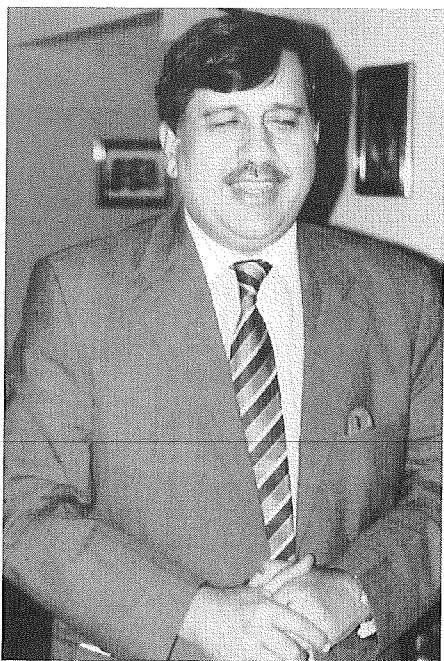


At the WZCC Business Breakfast at the Hyatt, preceding the opening of the congress: WZCC corporate secretary Edul Daver of New Jersey, Chicago chapter chair Sarosh Khambatta and WZCC president Rohinton Rivetna; banner, created by Farida and Sunita Khambatta.

adding value; (d) followup with customers; (e) get references from customers; and (f) ethics and trust.

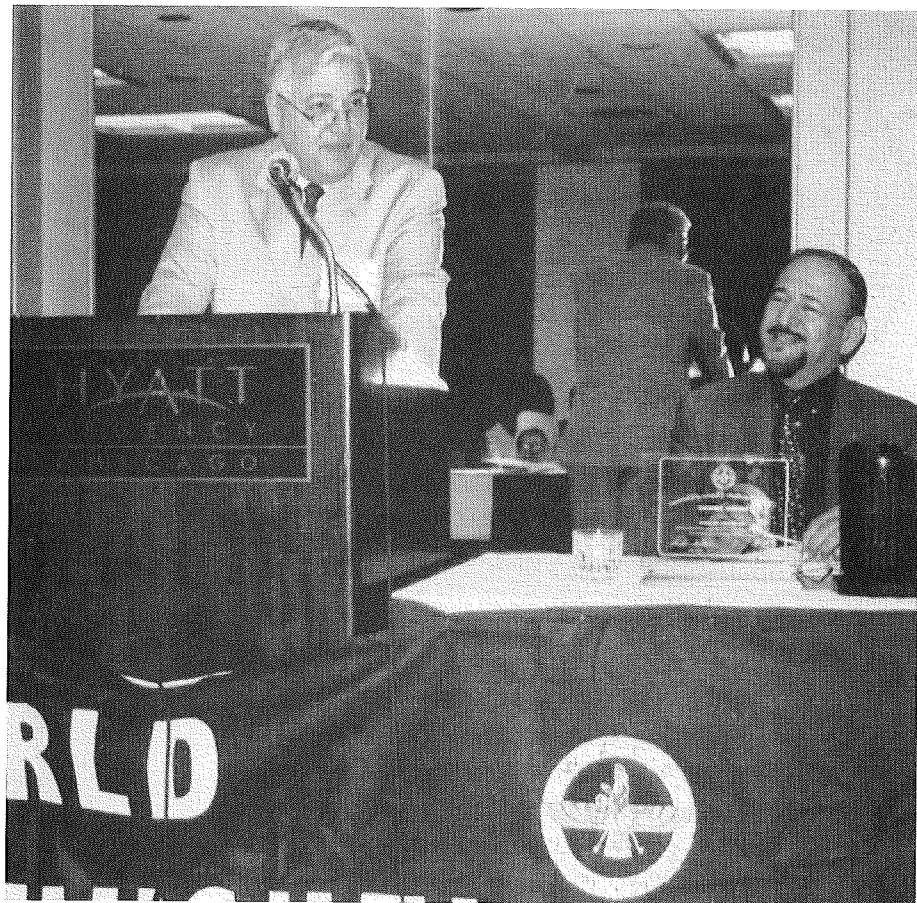
Farokh Billimoria [Chicago, *billimoria@att.net*] president of Bilimoria Wealth Management, Inc. investment advisory firm, spoke on *Risk Management*, listing risks such as lack of a business plan, inadequate financing and dependence on one client or product. Nevertheless, one has to take calculated risks, because:

"... the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing; the person who risks nothing: does nothing, has nothing, and is nothing." - Anonymous



At luncheon, at the nearby Jaipur Palace restaurant, invited guest, **J. C. Sharma** [above] secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, extended an invitation to all members of the Indian diaspora (of 20 million persons) to a conference in New Delhi, January 9-11, 2003, to commemorate the declaration of January 9th as "Bharatya Pravasi Divas" (Indian Diaspora Day). The conference, to be inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, will provide excellent opportunities for business networking. Register at www.indiaday.org.

Keynote speaker at the luncheon was **Arda-e-viraj Minocherhomjee** [Chicago] a principal and a manag-



At the Business Breakfast on July 4th: keynote speaker Homi Patel, president and CEO of Hartmarx Corporation, and WZCC director Ness Lakdawala.

ing director at William Blair, which manages a \$400M venture capital fund, presented "Where is the Money?" Arda discussed forms of loans and guarantees, including venture capital, and gave valuable insight into the process of obtaining venture capital.

In the afternoon, the **Open Session** enabled participants to bring up a variety of topics. **Natalie Vania** of Arshiya Ventures, which fosters creative enterprise, [www.malch.com/arshiya] stressed that the one thing that you must know about being an entrepreneur is Integrity.

Roundtable Discussions were led by **Farokh Patel** (*Trials and tribulations of starting a business*); **Ness Lakdawala** (*Opportunities for Zarthushti business*); **Zareen Karani Araoz** (*Cross cultural consulting business*); **Alayar Dabestani** (*Entertainment business*) and **Yaz Bilimoria** (*evaluating franchise opportunities and securing financing*).

A WZCC director's meeting was held after the Business Conference [see page 103].

BUSINESS BREAKFAST

The Business breakfast on July 4th, was attended by about 80 persons.

Keynote address. The keynote speaker was **Homi Patel** [above] president and CEO of the Chicago-based apparel-maker Hartmarx Corporation.

In an inspiring address, Mr. Patel stressed that the intensity of effort and belief in what one is trying to accomplish is far more important than hard work or even intelligence. Speed in accomplishing one's objectives and quick steps towards success are an important part of entrepreneurship. Waiting to get all facts close to certainty, before making decisions, allows competitors to gain an advantage. Dealing with ambiguity in decision making is crucial to a successful entrepreneur.

"As our ancestors did in assimilating into India, Zarathushti entrepreneurs must assimilate in this country," said Patel, "To be successful, we must become part of the American mainstream of business."

Business showcase. Three noteworthy Zarathushti businesses were then showcased. **Prudential Jewelers** [*One North Wabash, Chicago, IL 60602, tel: 312-782-3766, www.PrudentialJewelers.com*] a jewelry store, founded in 1985 by **Rumi Engineer**, and built up from scratch, with his wife **Beverly**, through hard work and sound business ethics, into a 2,500 sq. foot store on Jeweler's Row in downtown Chicago – one of the largest independently owned jewelry stores in Chicago. After Rumi's untimely death, Beverly has been carrying on the tradition of Total Customer Satisfaction.

ACuPowder International, LLC, New Jersey, president and CEO, **Edu D. Daver** [*daver@acupowder.com*] is the oldest continuously operating metal powder company in North America. It consists of manufacturing plants in Union, NJ and Greenback, TN, manufacturing 30 million lbs/yr of metal powders, utilizing 120 employees to generate a revenue of \$50 million/year.

Dectron Internationale, Montreal, president and CEO, **Ness Lakdawala** [*ness@dectron.com*] designs and manufactures environmental control solutions for industrial and commercial applications. Founded in 1976, it went public in 1998. Its shares are listed on the NASDAQ under the ticker symbol of DEC. Employing 450 employees with manufacturing plants in Quebec and Niagara Falls, NY., it is one of the very few manufacturers in the world to combine

multiple technologies in indoor air treatment systems.

Honorary Memberships. Three Zarathushti stalwarts were recognized with honorary membership to the WZCC. **Alayar Dabestani**, owner of 21 theater screens in 10 theaters in the Washington State, Vancouver and Toronto areas, a partner in A Theater Near You, with some experience in movie production business, is also committed to serving the Zarathushti community. He has been a director of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia and a co-founder and president of the Zoroastrian Society of Washington State, and a staunch supporter of the WZCC.

Minoo Shroff, a senior trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and vice chair of Raymonds Limited, was awarded honorary membership for his strong commitment and vision for WZCC. He writes: "The achievements of Zoroastrians, particularly in North America, should serve as a beacon to the present generation to launch out on their own into commerce, industry and services."

Nadir Godrej, managing director of Godrej Industries Ltd, is one of the leading industrialists of India and UK and was an inspiration, with his presence and support, at the launching of WZCC in Houston in 2000. He was awarded honorary membership for his inspiration and leadership.

Exhibits. Delegates were then invited to the Congress 2002 Exhibit area, and the opening of the WZCC exhibit tables, by FEZANA president Firdosh Mehta [*see Marketplace, page 38*].

The first **Annual General Meeting** of WZCC was held following the Business Breakfast [*see page 103*]. ■

WORLD ZARATHUSHTI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WZCC RECOGNITIONS

Call for Nominations

The WZCC, in its quest for promoting entrepreneurship among Zarathushtis, will annually recognize the following, from among nominations received worldwide:

- **Outstanding Zarathushti Entrepreneur of the Year**
- **Outstanding Zarathushti Professional of the Year**
- **Outstanding Young Zarathushti Entrepreneur/Professional of the Year (≤ 35 yrs)**

Candidates must have achieved an outstanding standard in their field of business or profession. All nominations received will be presented to a distinguished panel of judges for their evaluation and ultimate selections. Nominations must be sent along with all accompanying credentials and a detailed narrative explaining why the individual is nominated, what are his/her achievements and their eventual (professional) contribution to the world Zarathushti community.

Forms may be downloaded from www.wzcc.net (click on "update") or requested from Yasmin Pavri. **Nominations must be received by October 31, 2002.** Send to: Yasmin Pavri, Recognitions Committee, World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce, 5400 Memorial Drive, #802, Houston, TX 77007, tel: (713) 880-5727, email: yspavri@yahoo.com.

World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce

All Zarathushti businesspersons and professionals are invited. Visit:

www.wzcc.net

(Website designed, maintained and hosted by Avesta Computing Service of New Jersey.)

To join the Zarathushti business email group send an email to:

zehamber_subscribe@yahoo.com



Success is to be measured not so much by the position one has reached in life, as by the obstacles one has overcome while trying to get there.

What the press said ...

ZOROASTRIANISM

Faithful from North America hold meeting here.

BY CATHLEEN FALSANI
RELIGION REPORTER
CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, JULY 6, 2002

The Zoroastrian religion is 3,500 years old – older than Christianity and Islam – but few people know what it is, or know any Zoroastrians for that matter.

There are about 700 Zarathushtis, as Zoroastrians prefer to be called, in the Chicago area ...

Once the state religion of ancient Persia, now Iran – which is 99 percent Muslim – Zoroastrianism is a monotheistic religion that worships Ahura Mazda, the “Wise Lord” ...

Friday afternoon, the North American Zarathushtis ... hosted an interfaith dialogue, with Jewish, Roman Catholic and Protestant speakers.

“Our religion teaches us tolerance for all religions, even if we may disagree with them,” said Maneck Bhujwala ...

Ervad Jehan Bagli said, “... the post-Sept. 11 climate makes interreligious dialogue not an option, but a necessity ... barriers of religion and faith that separate the diverse melt down in the face of the grief of human disaster”...

During the congress, they will discuss the challenges facing their tiny minority religious community, how to bring up their children in a pluralistic society, and how to educate their neighbors about their religion.

The goal, organizers of the event said, is not to convert anyone to the Zarathushti faith tradition, but to foster respect among America's diverse religious groups.

Bridging the religious divide

Interfaith talks highlight Zoroastrian N. American conference in Chicago



BOB BLACK/SUN-TIMES

Young Zoroastrians, or Zarathushtis, as they prefer to be called, meet Friday at the Hyatt Regency as part of the group's North American conference. About 700 Zarathushtis live in the Chicago area. The religion emphasizes living in harmony with others and with nature.

600 Zoroastrians discuss challenges facing community

BY ELA DUTT
NEWS INDIA-TIMES, AUGUST 12, 2002

Some 600 Zoroastrians of Indian, Pakistani and Iranian origin met ... to discuss the challenges facing the community ...

“We had a lot of discussions and people incredibly eager to voice opinions and thoughts,” said Rashna Ghadialy ... She said the young had an attitude that said, “yes, we have been handed down this culture but we live in North America which is a mosaic and future will tell”...

[www.newsindia-times.com/2002/08/16/1]

Gathering draws Zoroastrians to Chicago

BY ALLISON HANTSCHL
DAILY SOUTHTOWN, JULY 5, 2002

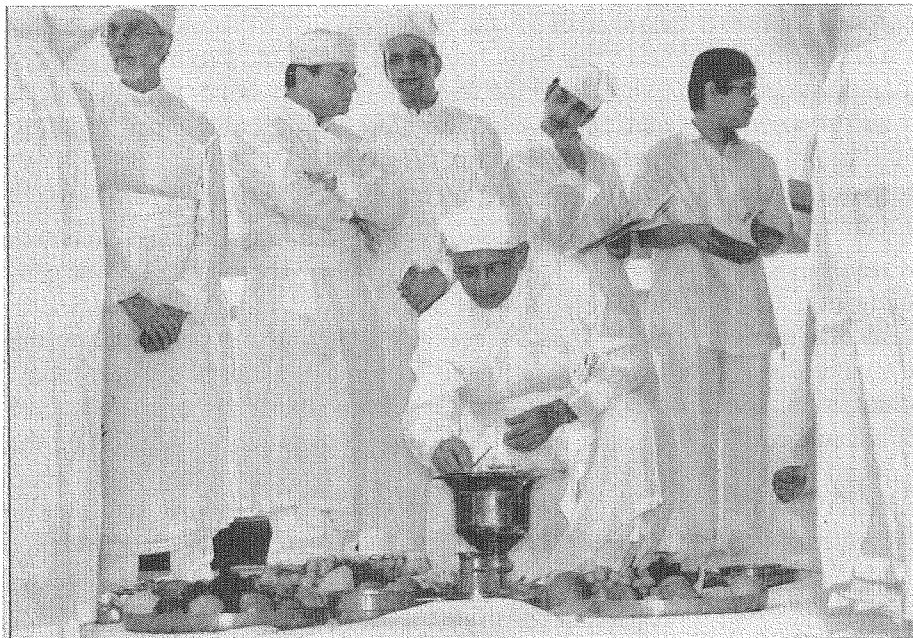
More than 500 representatives of “the Switzerland of world religions” are converging on Chicago this week to discuss using faith to put out the fires of conflict instead of fanning the flames ...

“It’s an opportunity to learn within our own community what we have to offer others,” said congress spokesman Jim Engineer, “This is a faith based on tolerance and understanding, and we’ve always been very active in interfaith work” ...

[www.dailysouthtown.com/southtown/dsliving/054ld2.html]

1 of oldest religions, 1 of smallest

Followers of Zoroastrianism, founded 2 centuries before Christianity, meet in Chicago to discuss how best to keep their faith in the future.



Tribune photo by Chuck Berman

Young priests in training join their elders Sunday for a ceremony of thanksgiving at the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago.



Tribune photo by Chuck Berman

Neriosang Karanjia lifts his grandson Zarius, 2, to a ceremonial fire at the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago.

Zoroastrian meet in Chicago discusses questions of faith, identity

BY ABRAHAM THARIATH

INDIA ABROAD, JULY 26, 2002

... They discussed ways to foster inter-generational dialogue and spirituality, and promote Zoroastrian identity in the continent ...

"We discussed at great length the identity of the North American Zarathushti," said convention chairperson Rashna Ghadialy, "To dissemble culture and religion to analyze one's identity is never easy. Obviously, living in North America, the challenges are greater for the preservation of a minority community's identity when we are bombarded from all sides by the dominant white Judeo-Christian culture" ...

[www.newsindia-times.com/2002/08/16/1]

Zoroastrian Congress in Chicago

BY A STAFF REPORTER

INDIA-WEST, JULY 5, 2002

... "Zoroastrians worldwide believe in the concepts of free will and the individual's responsibility for their own actions," said Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley [in a letter to the Congress].

... Zoroastrianism is credited as being the oldest monotheistic religion. It has influenced post-exilic Judaism, and its precepts were then transmitted through Judaism to Christianity, and later to Islam ...

BY JULIA LIEBLICH

TRIBUNE RELIGION REPORTER

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, JULY 8, 2002

Mazda Antia, a 27-year-old attorney, is used to people asking if he's named after a car.

"No, the God of the Zoroastrians," he tells them ... Young Zoroastrians often have a lot of explaining to do...

One of the oldest monotheistic faiths, Zoroastrianism is also among the smallest... Few people in this country have heard of their code of ethics, their prayers or fire ceremonies. Fewer know what it's like to be a young Zoroastrian living in the U.S.

Zoroastrianism was founded about 1800 BCE in Persia by the prophet Zarathushtra ... He encouraged his followers to develop the values of righteousness, service and devotion to attain perfection and immortality. Each individual is responsible for improving the lot of humanity ... ■

What the people said ...

FEZANA Journal invited comments and suggestions about Congress 2002. What did they like about the congress and what could be improved.

The opening ceremony was energetic, especially the two opera singers ... the youth sessions were the most popular ... the jashan demonstration with audience participation was educational, inspirational and thought-provoking ... with programs such as gender, health and elder issues, the congress was composed very well ... the jashan at the darbe mehr was brilliant and memorable.

It was splendid to see traditionalists and reformists in peace and harmony throughout the congress. The congress had more of a Parsi flavor than Iranian, American or Zarathushti; considering there were more Parsis than all the rest combined. I would list three important facts for future survival not emphasized in the congress: (1) The Zarathushti faith is universal, conversion; (2) Support Fezana and/or your association, donate 10% of your income to a Zarathushti cause; (3) Promote having at least three children per family.

Arman Ariane, Claremont, California

Thank you to all, for a tremendous effort to run things smoothly, on time and the banquet meals were great!

What I particularly admired was Rashna Ghadialy's humility in everything she did. There was no outward show, no big long speeches from her and she wasn't differentiated from the other volunteers. She truly took the leadership in the organization of the congress the Zarathushti way! I particularly enjoyed the youth session ... they did us proud. Thank you for your hospitality at the darbe mehr, it was a perfect ending.

I'd like to suggest that after each session there should be a feedback form to rate the speakers, the content, the facility, the format etc etc. You will be amazed at what feedback people will write but not give you orally!

Guloo Austin, London, Ontario

Our family really enjoyed the congress. The downtown location allowed us to really take in the city. I have one suggestion: please rotate the dinner table numbers, so those who are at the back for one dinner can be in the front for another.

Sarosh J. Bharucha, Markham, Ontario

I found this congress significantly different from previous congresses, particularly the fact that they had broadened the scope of the subjects covered. Before it was the same thing over and over again – the doctrine and history – it was good to see the spiritual. The religious and spiritual are never complete without the physical; the body is a temple. The fact that we have the

essence of Mazda in us, makes it a responsibility to preserve our body because it is sacred. From that perspective I found the sessions very beneficial. Also the social questions about the elderly and community building were very relevant.

Jehan Bagli, Mississauga, Ontario ()*

Overall, the congress was well organized and executed. The Elders session was very appropriate, as our generation is growing older.

The interfaith session was very timely, considering the dangers of religious extremism facing the world today. Rohinton Rivetna made a good decision to invite leaders of other faiths – that helped us get some visibility in the media and public. The fact that we do not invest in a formal conversion program makes us stand out as a friendly and respected religion, and not a threat to other faiths.

I would like to suggest the organizers collect all the papers and distribute them to congress registrants.

Maneck Bhujwala, San Jose, California ()*

The best session was the one on community building. It was really interesting how some of the parents were asking the youth for ideas and help; and I learned a lot also from what the parents had to say.

I was really glad to be among so many Zarathushtis. I went into withdrawal again after I returned home.

Laila Contractor, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania ()*

I should confess this was my first congress. I was reassured by veterans of other congresses that we rehearsed the same subjects, doing little more than talk. Interfaith dating, for instance, is a popular subject among younger Zarathushtis, for whom it is an option, but less popular among older married Zarathushtis, who don't wish to see their ways eroded. There is more to the debate, of course, but even just talk (1) keeps doors of communication open, and (2) allows ventilation.

I think Iranian Zarathushtis felt marginalized; also Zarathushtis married to non-Zarathushtis (harking back to interfaith dating). We might show more sensitivity to this in future congresses.

Story-walas was a favorite session despite the acoustics problem, perhaps because it was new, different, and contemporary. Kudos mainly to Tamina Davar.

Boman Desai, Chicago, Illinois

Congratulations for an extremely hospitable, comfortable and well-organized congress ... the location of

the hotel by the lake, was great! The sessions were not crowded and not overlapping too much. It was more of a social get-together ... The *natak* was fun with just the right, comprehensible Gujarati. We were delighted to be included in the very interesting interfaith lunch meeting. The gala on the 4th was very good, enhanced by the orchestra under Farobag Cooper who had arranged a beautiful and moving program. Well Done! I hope that in some way, the cost of the non-Zarathushti musicians was underwritten. The awards brunch was organized very well with Dinshaw Joshi. Dinshaw has undertaken this event over the years very diligently and with absolute impartiality. Well Done!

Rashna Ghadialy and her team did an excellent job. May I suggest that the Saturday dinner could have been served earlier ...

DhunMai and Phiroze Dalal, Los Angeles, California

The congress was somewhat differently planned, and it worked well, I would say. Congratulations to all in ZAC, especially to Rashna Ghadialy. I had stricken it off this year, especially for the reason of expenses. To get the senior discount, one had to be 70! This is ridiculous. The idea should be to encourage many more to come for such congresses, I therefore suggest that the registration fees should be nominal. The trend to make profit from the congresses for the local association should be shunned.

Best of all, we got a Senior rate at the hotel of \$89 plus tax (the congress rate was \$120!). Why was that not advertised so that many more could avail of it?

The interfaith event was recorded by the media. Since "awareness" is our goal, much more needs to be done.

On the first day I saw a movie of a navjote and a sort-of wedding. What I saw made me connect it to the 'revolutionary' and 'evolutionary' changes taking place, also referred to in the keynote speech, a very well delivered one, by Bomi Damkevala. As I have often said, evolution *is* going on, it is very visible.

Maneck Daroowalla, New Hyde Park, New York.

... All of our out of town guests were raving about the spirit, fraternity and the teamwork of the Chicago Zarathushtis. We can all take a lot of pride in the success of this congress. Thanks to all the Committees!

Hoshi Deboo, Hinsdale, Illinois

The congress was very well organized. The facilities at the Hyatt were comfortable and the program flowed smoothly. The sessions were extremely topical, the subjects were of current interest, the speakers well-informed and articulate. We particularly enjoyed the sessions on the Zarathushti authors, the interfaith discussion and the community building session. The entertainment programs were immensely enjoyable. All the participants and Farobag Cooper are to be commended for their huge efforts.

I do need to point out one criticism that was felt by many – the predominance of Parsi culture throughout the congress. Being half-Iranian and half-Parsi, I have no cultural bias, but am only making an observation.

It was obvious that an effort was made, through the Persian night event being on the same night as the Gujarati *natak* to please all, but didn't anyone realize that this causes segregation as well? An English translation of the *natak*, and non-overlapping timings for the Persian and Parsi events would have helped, so that all may enjoy both cultures.

Cyrus Dholoo, Gaithersburg, Maryland

Well organized. Numbering the tables alleviated a lot of problems. All major events were well done. Modern presentation techniques – giant screens, Power Point, etc. allowed all to enjoy the events. For me, the highlight of the congress was our beloved Dr. Farhang Mehr receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Game Show Night was a lot of fun. I wish they had interviewed more people about Zarathushtis/Parsis; and they should not have limited their picks to those of Indian descent. Interviewing some non-Zarathushti Persians and other Americans would have brought out some very interesting comments and compliments too.

The give-away of the business card holder with the congress logo was a fantastic idea! For next year I would suggest giving a 4x6 photograph holder to tuck away our precious congress memories.

Finally, I do think that these congresses appear like Parsi congresses instead of Zarathushti congresses. We must make every effort to avoid this.

Jimmy Dholoo, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

I enjoyed meeting a lot of very interesting people. The entertainment was excellent, lots of variety, liveliness, hilarity, bon vivant and intermingling of people.

Many of the speeches were kind of what you get from motivational speakers – "vision", "building bridges", "unity"... These platitudes are important, but we should now start to get some solid facts. I did not see anything specific that came out of the congress.

The youth sessions were interesting. I warned our youth that within the last months things had changed, the whole world situation is changing fast, the status quo could not remain for very long. They should be flexible in their thinking, be forewarned, and read the alternate press.

Soonoo Engineer, Vancouver, British Columbia ()*

What I like most about Zarathushti congresses, is the unusual feeling of being in the midst of so very many Zarathushtis all in the same place. In Jacksonville, where I live, I'm practically the lone Parsi.

I was also happy that the congress held a book reading/discussion featuring some of us Parsi authors and was very pleasantly surprised to see the great turnout of

about a 150 interested listeners. Much thanks to Tamina Davar for her tireless efforts.

The entertainment at the closing banquet had a very fresh, engaging tone. The skits were creative and spirited, giving me a strong, contemporary flavor of where the North American community is at and where it's going. It's a very positive, vibrant picture, I might add.

Sohrab Homi Fracis, Jacksonville, Florida ()*

If I had to summarize the congress in one phrase, I would say that it was "the most organized Congress" I have so far attended. No lines at the door before the opening/closing/award ceremonies, no "dhakka mukki", no rushing in advance to get seats.

I found the content of the sessions very interesting. I felt that more time was needed in some sessions for active participation in small groups. I was very gratified to see a very healthy and meaningful contribution by the youth.

It was sad that many could not come because of clash of dates with the Games in Los Angeles. FEZANA organizers should aim to avoid such scheduling conflicts.

It was a very rewarding experience to be at the concluding jashan at the darbe mehr. I was in awe, sitting at the ceremony conducted by *twenty* priests, with *fifteen* from Chicago itself. The Chicago Zarathushti community deserves all the kudos for a job well done!

Homi Gandhi, Glen Rock, New Jersey ()*

The Gender Identity session format was good, with a lot of interaction from the audience which made it quite lively and interesting. I am not very sure about the content though. There is definitely equality in our religion; I think it is up to the individual.

People come to congresses for different reasons. Some come to learn about our religion, some come to meet people, some come to socialize. As for me personally, I come to meet old friends, make new ones, and learn something about the religion too. Even if I make one new friend, it is worth it for me.

Minoo Italia, San Jose, California ()*

The congress was well organized overall, but I felt that the level of interaction and discussion could have been greater for many of the sessions.

I would have taken as a model the session that Farrokh Mistree and Khorshed Jungalwala did, for the way they interacted with the audience and got them involved.

Also, obviously since it was a North American congress, it didn't quite have the same "grand" feeling as Houston did last year (being the World Congress).

Farokh Karani Lam, Winchester, Massachusetts ()*

As a general gathering of Zarathushtis, it was okay. However, if the intentions were to bring the Zarathushti community together, I am not sure how successful it was. Having Persian and Gujarati programs

parallel with each other, did not help in bringing these two communities together. They should have been staggered. I understand the planners wanted to meet the needs of both groups and provide diverse programming; however "bridge-building" sessions would have been more appropriate.

The wonderful orchestra/symphony was too long. Other groups didn't get a chance to use the stage and practice their routine. I understand it was expensive to have them perform. We have many Zarathushti artists who could have performed for free, and their works would have been supported.

Farida Sharyari (and other dedicated volunteers) did a wonderful job of organizing the events. Thank you for giving so much to the community.

The Award acceptance speeches and introductions were too long. The Game Show skits were interesting, pointing out the issues the youth are concerned about. It would have been good to show a short film about Zarathushti festivals – Jashne Tirgan or Nouruz or Sadeh.

Since congresses are a good means for making youth "connections" and finding mates, the organizers should address this specific need in creative ways.

Khodadad Kaviani, Federal Way, Washington State

The congress was, indeed, a very well planned and enjoyable event. On attending the various sessions, I found the "Interfaith: Building Bridges – The Zarathushti Imperative" to be extremely informative and interesting.

The Gala Banquet and the orchestra was extraordinary and I enjoyed it very much. However, the Game Show Night entertainment was somewhat disappointing. I am not sure whether the MC for the evening misconstrued the fact that Parsis are Zarathushtis because he constantly used the phrase "Parsis and Zarathushtis." Or was he referring to Parsis and Iranian Zarathushtis? I strongly believe that for future congresses we should omit addressing the public as Parsis or Iranians and simply use the word Zarathushtis.

Jerry Kheradi, MD, North Providence, Rhode Island

This congress has sparked me to take some decisive action and has once again fueled my desire to help unite the Zarathushtis of my state, Michigan. We do get together for functions and there is even a Zarathushti directory, however, my friends and I feel we can now take it to the next level, and form an association. I plan to get the ball rolling. I was very inspired by the last youth session entitled "The Future".

Yazad S. Lala, 20, Farmington Hills, Michigan

The entertainment was enjoyable. The hotel food was so-so. The rooms were comfortable. It was nice to have color coded tickets and the same table, so there was no pushing and shoving to get seats. The youth sessions had some very good discussions. In the large hall, the

microphones were not the best; moreover, the pillars blocked the stage and the screens.

Some suggestions: (1) Have copies of speeches available; (2) Put a "Comments Sheet" in the registration package, and a box at the registration desk to collect them; (3) Have youth make the award presentations; (4) There should be at least one session where Iranian and Parsi Zarathushtis are on one panel discussing problems and resolutions, so that there is more co-mingling.

Dolly Malva, Downey, California

The word Thanks does not do justice to the praise and compliments that all the congress organizers deserve. "Job well done" also does not describe the well organized and orchestrated events you put together – all very inspiring and thought provoking. We have attended all the congresses, but this one was the best one.

The only thing that bothered me, was that the Iranian Zarthushtis were noticeably few in numbers, not only in attendance, but also in participation in most events. Though it is not at all the fault of the organizers. I think, partly it is due to the language barrier among elder Iranian Zarathushtis, and partly due to the difference of opinion regarding the concept of universality of our religion, that some Parsi and Iranian Zarthushtis hold.

I pray to Ahura Mazda, that our youth bridge the gap and all address themselves as North American Zarthushtis.

Dr. Rustam Jam Mehdiabadi, Greater Dallas, Texas

I met so many interesting people – I did not totally agree with everything that was said in the sessions, but its great that people are sharing their opinions with each other. Many interesting points were made including the fact that we're not interested in converting other religions, we respect all religions and nations, appreciate the diversity and we believe in quality not quantity.

I wish the interfaith session could have been organized in a way that the youth could have come too.

Mandana Mehrayin, Escondido, California

I applaud the Chicago Zarathushti community for their hard work and hospitality in organizing the congress. The 530 attendees poured in over half a million dollars into the US economy. How did the North American Zarathushti community benefit? How did the congress "advance communities and empower generations" when only 2% of the North American Zarathushtis attended?

The performance by talented Zarathushti soloists was awesome. It was insensitive to have events where more than a third of the attendees could not understand the language. The award ceremony was bureaucratically long and repetitious. The youth sessions were the most enlightening and engaging.

Can the next congress be held under the auspices of *all* North American Zarathushti associations, with FEZANA as the coordinator? Can future congresses be made more affordable so that a larger segment of the community

attends? Can future congresses invite national media and prominent personalities in creating national awareness of the Zarathushti religion and community?

Shahrokh Mehta, Syracuse, New York

Our (ZAC's) intention was to have the congress run by the youth, predominantly, which we did, and give emphasis to youth issues. I think we succeeded in that.

Kayomارش Mehta, Palos Hills, Illinois()*

This congress has been different from any other congress I've attended in the past. My wife and I had a very good time and learned a lot. I enjoyed all the sessions I attended; found the speakers very good and courteous to one another. I got a lot out of it personally.

Farhad Minwalla, Cincinnati, Ohio ()*

From the onset, this congress was planned to be an experience that would be different for all attendees. I commend ZAC for committing themselves to this task. The youth played a central role in the organizational process. I believe we did accomplish what we set out to do as far as what our community needs are, i.e., give more time for social interaction amongst our fellow Zarathushtis. However, we could have had more interactive sessions.

In the end, the young had a gala time getting together, the in-between generation had an enjoyable time and the older generation too had something to celebrate. There was something for everyone at this congress. Was it perfect? I think not. Can it be better? Always. This was a beginning of what future congresses should be.

Mahrukh Motafram, Brookfield, Wisconsin

I came to the congress all the way from Germany, because I want to build a bridge between the Zarathushtis of North America and the Zarathushtis of Europe. I want to promote the well-being, prosperity and growth of Zarathushtis all over. Here are a few comments to improve future congresses:

The business sessions could have been more productive. It is nice to talk about things like "entrepreneur" and "motivation", but the important thing is to implement the plans that you talk about. I hope they do. I suggest that we have gold label buttons like the rotarians, for business people to wear when they are traveling.

The congress sessions were quite good. One that I specially commend is the interfaith session. It is high time that Zarathushtis not only strengthen ourselves, but also convey this to outsiders.

We must submit a post-conference analysis, so we can learn our lessons and improve future congresses. Of course one most important thing is to do a proper report of the proceedings.

Sam Motashaw, Petersfenn, Germany ()*

I appreciate all the hard work put in by the organizers. Here are some points, to improve future congresses.

At a national meeting like this congress, we must take the opportunity to all come together as 'Zarathushtis'. We should not differentiate between Parsi and Iranian Zarathushtis. We are not like other religions (Christians, Jews, Muslims) that can afford to have divisions and sects. Our numbers are small, and we must be united.

The second night's banquet program (which went on until a very late dinner at 10 pm) featured only Parsi entertainment and Gujarati jokes that the Iranians could not appreciate. Some key speakers during the congress also focussed only on Parsis and did not mention Iranians or Zarathushtis. We should use a universal language in public, and recognize and be respectful of one another.

Many delegates were also not happy about the Awards. The selection of judges as well as the selection of prize winners, which were weighted heavily towards Parsis, with very little Iranian representation, did not appear to be fair. The selection process needs to be improved to represent all sections of the Zarathushti community in an equitable manner. Moreover, I am personally against giving expensive Awards and paying expenses for the winners. Those who work for the religion and the community should be recognized with a simple certificate. We should curtail high expenses for the Awards, and instead, spend the money for charitable and welfare needs or for publication of books or education.

Borzoo Nadjmi, MD, Lincoln, Rhode Island

We must congratulate our volunteers who have worked so hard with love, harmony, peace, and patience in a very well managed and organized manner. We are impressed that there was no finger-pointing; they performed their duties with respect, kindness and hospitality to our small ZAC community. I have received many praises and words of appreciation from many families saying that Chicago Zarathushtis are a loving and helpful group. We should keep this attitude throughout our life's journey on this earth.

The last day's jashan was the best – with 21 mobeds in pure white, praying together. It sounded great to our ears and peaceful to our body, mind and soul.

Baji and Perviz Patel, Schaumburg, Illinois

The congress went off really well. The youth and the adults were all extremely enthusiastic and there was a sense of community that really struck me. The youth sessions were really well-attended, even the elders packed into the halls. I really enjoyed the three days.

Jehan Panthaky, Washington, DC.

What did I like about the congress? Health and educational activities: the senior session, healthy living session and nutrition workshop and exhibits. This will hopefully be the beginning of a trend for future congresses.

What could be improved in future congresses? (a) In one word, "punctuality"; and (b) replace abstract, imagina-

tive and unattainable topics like "gender identity", "community building" and "spirituality" with focused, pragmatic, action-oriented topics.

Mehroo M. Patel, MD, Westchester, Illinois

Our religion is so based on our 'culture'. Just look at our darbe mehrs – the building is basically a large gathering hall for entertainment, meeting and community interaction. Just a small portion of the building is the prayer hall. In India and Iran we are surrounded by our culture; then when we come to North America, we literally have to work hard to create our culture. The congress was a great way of doing that.

So, was the congress a success? Yes, I'd say it was a great success. How could it *not* be a success, because to me, the measure of success was just being with so many Zarathushtis together.

Cyrus Rivetna, Chicago, Illinois ()*

This congress was amazing! The city was amazing! The events that took place were fun, entertaining and showed what amazing talent we have among our Zarathushti community. I truly enjoyed attending the workshops as I enjoyed hearing others' views. To make the next congress as good as this one, if I were you, I would not change a thing.

Dustyn Shroff, Boca Raton, Florida

I have seldom attended a conference as superbly organized, or as elegant, as this congress. It made one proud to be Zarathushti, proud to belong to a gathering so accommodating and civilized. Rashna Ghadialy and her commit-tees are to be commended.

The sessions were not only informative but also enjoyable. Ironically, both the seniors session and the youth session gave one the most hope – the seniors session for seriously considering the needs of older Zarathushtis in North America, and the youth session for presenting us with a panel of young Zarathushtis so poised and articulate that one felt reassured about the future.

One of the highlights was the orchestra, superbly conducted by Farobag Cooper. The performance brought the audience to its feet again and again. The fabulous soprano Anita Parakh and baritone Dinyar Vania delighted the audience with their arias. Besides having an exceptional voice, Dinyar has a remarkable stage presence – he will go far.

I have only one grouse – dinner was served much too late, at almost 10:30 pm, at the Game Show Night. The uproarious entertainment would have been even more appreciated after dinner. But it is a minor quibble, and only adds piquancy to a memorable occasion.

Bapsi Sidhwa, Houston, Texas

It was great to meet old friends, make new ones and come home sleep deprived! However, I was a little disappointed – having lived in Chicago, I am aware of your

capabilities, you could have done better! Here are some points to make the next congress even better:

(1) We need to bring *the cost* down. You do not have to provide so many meals – Zarathushtis do not enjoy the hotel food anyway! The luncheons with the dry, cold sandwiches were a waste of money. (2) The *opening ceremony* – 2 hours of rambling on with thanks and speeches? Could we not come up with even one piece of entertainment? (3) The *natak* was hilarious and well performed – an absolute hit! (4) The *midnight cruise* was fantastic. Another mega hit! Farida Sharyari was extremely accommodating. (5) Next time, choose a *hall* which has no pillars. Why choose one of the most expensive hotels in Chicago and then take the worst available hall in that hotel? We were literally in the basement! (6) *Seating*. We were told that early registrants had the best seats! I signed up in November, was on Table 11, but had one of the worst seats in the hall. Further if you are forced to sit at the same fixed table with the same table companions for the entire congress, that defeats the purpose of the congress – to meet and mingle. (7) The *orchestra* was excellent. However, the acoustics in the hall were terrible. (8) The *Game Show Night* was a good concept, but, I do not think most people even understood half the show; and the video interviews could have been better. (9) The *video about the Toronto youth congress* just blew away everything else that night – it was superb. Quite a few lessons can be learnt from the capabilities of these Toronto youth.

Mehernosh Sodawaterwala, Houston, Texas

The congress took place under relaxed and enjoyable circumstances. The program was very well coordinated and implemented. The banquet entertainments were professional and enjoyable. The orchestra, and the individual performers did an excellent job. The poetry contest sponsored by this congress was an excellent idea and generated great compositions. Compliments to Rashna Ghadialy and all the volunteers of the congress.

Viz-a-viz future congresses, I suggest great emphasis be put on making the congresses very accessible and affordable by more Zarathushtis to increase participation. Consideration should be given to hosting future events on college campuses and in rural resorts to facilitate greater interaction among the participants.

Mehrborzin Soroushian, San Diego, California

This was my first congress, and I had a wonderful opportunity to meet a large number of people from all over the world. The youth sessions raised some very interesting points about identity, which conversation we carried on in the session on Gender Identity, which I found to be among the more interesting ones. It was very well moderated and I was impressed with the substantive points that many individuals made. I was very pleasantly surprised by how enthusiastic people were, how convinced they were about their perspectives and yet how willing they

were to keep their minds open and listen to others. We have a very long and rich tradition, of which we are justifiably proud, but if we look to our history for affirmation of who we are, if we turn to our history to look up to the heroes of the past, we must also look back into our history for villains too, because we have as much to learn from them as from our heroes.

Overall, I came away with a very positive experience, which has motivated me to become more actively involved with the community in the future.

Xerxes Spencer, Washington, DC.

The orchestra, the singers and dancers at the first night's Gala were of a high caliber and very entertaining. The assigned seating was a great improvement over the Houston congress where one had to jostle to get a seat at table. I enjoyed the poet and three authors reading from their works (*Story-walas*). The sound system provided for this event was inadequate. Not only was it indistinct but an electronic screech drowned out some sentences.

At the talk sessions, there were usually too many speakers which resulted in some sessions over-running their allotted time. This was most apparent at the interfaith session where the breakout into small groups had to be cancelled for lack of time. In many cases speakers over-shot their allotted time.

At the opening ceremony, most association representatives took about half a minute to give their greetings, except one or two who insisted on giving a 5-minute lecture. The speakers who spoke at unnecessary length did not impress the audience, they just bored them and also showed a lack of consideration for the others. There should be a time keeper at all sessions who makes it plain to the speaker that his/her time is up.

Jamshed R. Udvardia, Lansing, Michigan

I thought the congress was informative. I did not think I stood out among the ones to be most remembered, but it was definitely not among the ones to be forgotten. I hope we accomplish a lot from now on.

Dinyar Vania, New York, New York

I loved the congress. I loved reconnecting with my Chicago crowd. For future congresses, we really have to focus on placing Zoroastrianism in a North American context, taking the whole vision of Zarathushtra and implementing it in the context we're living in; making our North American culture interact with Zarathushtra's thought, philosophy, spiritualism and vision.

Natalie Vania, Mountain View, California

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The above impressions were received in response to announcements in various Zarathushti e-groups and personal communication. Those marked () were excerpted from taped interviews at the congress courtesy of Mandana Mehrayin.*

Congress 2002 Poetry Contest

The purpose of the Congress 2002 Poetry Contest was to provoke thought about the congress theme of "Advancing Communities, Empowering Generations." The ten entries received were submitted to the judges (Jennifer Darukhanavala and Zarina Mullan Plath) anonymously for review. The main selection criteria were style and how well the writer captured the theme. The winning poem [below] received a \$100 gift certificate to Amazon.com and was recited by Magdalena Rustomji at the Congress 2002 Gala Banquet. The poetry contest organizers were Diana Damkevala, Jim Engineer and Farida Sharyari.
- By Diana Damkevala [diana.damkevala@rrd.com]

On the Occasion of the North American Congress in Chicago ***By Magdalena Rustomji, Houston, Texas***

In your City, Carl Sandburg,
Zarathushtis gather
transplanted or born
immigrants, generations X, Y, all Z's
in the land of your laughing corn
and your proud, Aztec Mask,
wanting to make connections,
wanting to draw a larger circle

We see tradition of the past,
reflected in the present
with wisdom
advising
consoling
empowering
teaching
meditating
chanting

So also, we remove
walls of fearful obstacles
and in their place,
we build a path
of righteous order
of support and strength,
of family and humanity

We set the foundation
for a communal home
with architecture
of Gathic values,
the Good Mind
the Good Word
the Good Deed,
the Way of ASHA

With the red radiant fire
from our prayer altar
lighting our way,
guiding our generation X, Y, Z's,
on the road to unearthing
a view of the new world
on the road to discovering
our ancient way of life

We see the vibrant
faces of the future
transcending all times,
riding the gentle and stormy winds

of our world soul
on sun filled clouds
in our new times

Empowered by
thousands of years
of collective unconscious,
a potential to tear down,
or to build up,
stoic
accepting
celebrating
dreaming
thinking
learning
evolving
creating

In the circle
of the present,
where past and future meet,
in the very cradle,
where our children cry out,
cover us with your warmth,
and tell us your stories

This is where it all begins,
or it all ends,
the choice is ours,
to usher in frashokereti,
renewal and progression
of the earth

Our future thus
begins each day,
in our enlightened mind
progressing
innovating
creating

The ties that bind Zarathushtis
are wool strands of righteousness,
binding and unbinding endlessly
over the garments of eternal souls
The sun is rising now,
the fire is kindled,
the prayer chanted,
And now, a new day begins

I am a Zoroastrian ***By Carl Darukhanavala*** ***Naperville, Illinois***


I am a Zoroastrian
Strong, young, and proud.
I like my voice to be heard,
Really very loud.

I do think
That my religion,
Has taught and shown me
A big vision.
That big vision
Teaches me,
About God, love,
truth, and happiness
Inside, you see.
When I think
About my race,
There is a smile
On my face.

I love my kushti,
Sudreh and Mother.
I also know that
God's my brother.
I do my best
Every day.
Because I know God
Will show me the way.
My friends and family
Give me the light,
To show fear
My awesome might.
I love my
Great, powerful religion.
With it I feel
As free as a pigeon.

If there is one thing
My religion has taught me
It is to be
All I can be.
Looking back
On all I know,
I realize the world,
Is one big family, friend and foe.

[One of the entries received for the
Congress 2002 Poetry Contest]



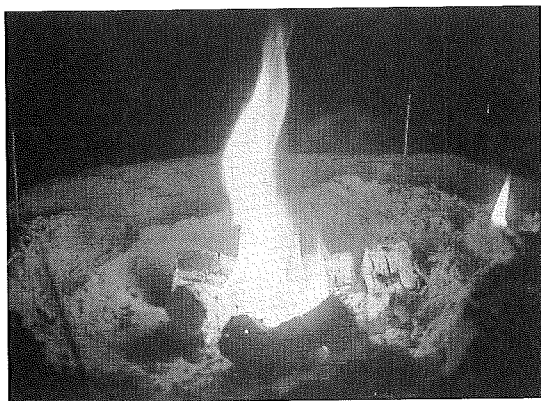
on fire & fire temples

A fire, scrupulously tended with sandalwood and frankincense, is kept burning in an 'afargan' (urn) in the inner sanctum of every Zarathushti fire temple. It is through the medium of a consecrated fire that a Zarathushti is able to develop an experiential link with the divinity. In the Avesta, Ahura Mazda is described as "full of luster, full of glory" and hence His luminous creations – fire, the sun, the stars, light are regarded as visible symbols of the divine, and of the inner light, the divine spark that burns within each individual. It is a physical representation of the illumined mind, enlightenment and truth – all concepts elevated to central importance by Zarathushtra.

It is important to note that Zarathushtis do not "worship fire" and take offense at being called "fire worshippers". The sacred fire is not an object of worship in itself, for the religion vehemently denounces the worship of any idols or deities other than the almighty Ahura Mazda.

In these articles, we explore the significance of fire in the Zarathushti doctrine and take a look at fire temples, from ancient times to the present day.

The views expressed in these articles are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA, the Journal or the guest editor. Per its editorial policy, FEZANA Journal does not endorse or espouse any specific perspective.



One of several ancient sacred fires that have been kept burning continuously for centuries, in sanctuaries in the villages near Yazd, Iran.

atar - fire: emblem of ahura mazda

Of all the elements of nature, Zarathushtra raised fire, or light, to a place of the highest distinction in his faith. Ahura Mazda is eternal light.

[Excerpted by Roshan Rivetna from "History of Zoroastrianism" by Maneckji Nusservanji Dhalla. The Gatha translations are from "The Religion of Zarathushtra" by I. J. S. Taraporewala]

Ahura Mazda is eternal light, his very nature is light. He lives in the everlasting lights of the highest heaven. Light in its various manifestations, whether as the fire of the hearth on earth or the fiery substance in the bowels of the earth, or as the genial glow of the sun in the azure vault of heaven, or the silvery sheen of the crescent moon in the sky, or the flickering brilliancy of the stars in the firmament, or even in the form of the life-giving energy distributed in the entire creation, is emblematic of Ahura Mazda.

No wonder, then, if the prophet of ancient Iran made fire the consecrated symbol of his religion, a symbol which in point of sublimity, grandeur, and purity, or in its being the nearest earthy image of the heavenly lord, is unequalled by any of its kind in the world.

When Vohu Manah approaches Zarathushtra, and enquires of him what is his most ardent desire, the prophet replies that his inmost yearning is to think of righteousness through the

devotional gifts of his homage to Atar's fire:

*What is Thy Holy Will?
To whom daily my utmost homage
shall I pay?"
Since then unto Thine Inner Flame
I pay my homage,
and to Thine Eternal Law.*

[Ys. 43.9]

When the chosen of the Lord is thwarted at times in his great mission by the *druj* (lie), he turns to Atar as one of the protectors that will best help him in the furtherance of the mighty cause of righteousness:

*Whom shalt Thou send,
O Mazda, to protect us all, when
Untruth threatens us with hate,
Other than Thine own Fire
and Thy Love?
When both these are aroused
within our hearts
Asha shall be fulfilled, O Ahura.*

[Ys. 46.7]

The fire of Mazda plays an important part in the work of the last judgment at the final renovation of the world. Mazda has promised through Asha that he will give award unto the contending parties of good and evil through fire:

*What Thou hast through
the Inner Fire disclosed,
The Bliss through Asha
promised to us all ...*

[Ys. 31.3]

The Heavenly Father will deliver His final judgment upon the righteous and the wicked through fire together with the Holy Spirit:

*Through this Thy Holy Spirit
dost Thou seal,
O Mazda Ahura, our destiny
Our due reward
Thy Fire shall bestow;
As Armaiti and Asha grow within,
True Seekers shall be led
to tread Thy Path.*

[Ys. 47.6]

It is through fire that the Creator will bestow profit upon the righteous and bring harm unto the wicked:

*Both parties, True and False,
are put to test, O Mazda,
by Thy blazing Fire Divine;
This Fiery Test lays bare
their Inmost Souls,
As Thy award to each one indicates;
Complete frustration
shall the False One find,
Thy blessings full the
Truthful One shall reap.*

[Ys. 51.9]

Mazda will apportion reward and retribution to both the good and the evil through the glow of fire, which is emblematic of righteousness:

*I know Thee, Lord,
as both Divine and Strong,
When from Thy hands
we gain our hearts' desires,
When Thou dost grant their need
to False and True,*

*Then in my heart
Thy Flame shall brightly shine,
And strength of Vohu Manah
shall be mine.*

[Ys. 43.4]

The believers therefore pray that fire, which is mighty through righteousness, may be a manifest help unto the faithful, but a veritable harm unto the foe:

*Thine Inner Fire, Ahura,
to see we yearn,
He blazes mightily through Truth;
He has Thy Strength;
Our Goal and Hope is He,
He lights the Faithful
clearly through Life;*

*But Mazda, in the hearts
of Infidels
He sees the hidden evil at a glance.*
[Ys 34.4]

The noble truth of the prophetic words of Zarathushtra will, in this manner, be vindicated when, at the final dispensation, divine judgment shall be meted out to man through the red fire of Mazda:

*O Mazda, through
Thy Fire, blazing clear,
Unto each man
his place do Ye assign.*
[Ys. 31.19]

Gems from Atash Nyaesh ...

Yasnemcha vahmemcha hubertimcha ushta-bertimcha,
vantabertimcha afriname, tave Atarsh puthra Ahurahe Mazdao...

I admire the reverence, and praise of a good offering, conducive to health, a friendly offering to you, the purifying fire of Ahura Mazda, you are worthy of praise and homage.

Daityo aesme buyao, daityo baoidhi buyao,
daityo pithwi buyao, daityo upasayane buyao,
Perenayush harethra buyao, dahmayush harethre buyao,
Atarsh puthra Ahurahe Mazdao.

*[May you] become bestower of light,
[May you] become bestower of intellect,
[May you] become bestower of nourishment,
[May you] become bestower of high praises,
[May you] become protector of life abundance,
[May you] become protector of pious life,
O purifying fire of Ahura Mazda.*

Vispanam paracharentanam Atarsh zasta adidhyaha,
chim hakha hashe baraiti fracharethwao armaeshaidhe.

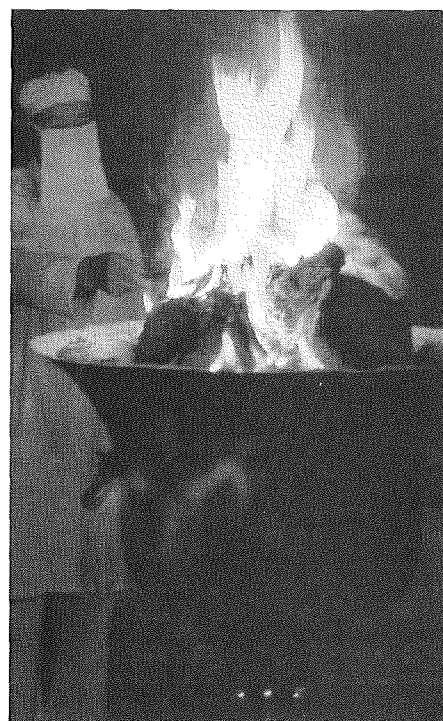
*The (inner) fire looks at those coming to it [as if to ask]:
"Has the friend who is able to move around (the human body) used his energy to develop his inner friend (soul, who is locked inside and hence unable to move around).*

At toi Atrem Ahura! Aojonghvantem asha usemahi,
Asishtem emavantem stoi rapentem chithra-avanghem,
At Mazda! Daibishyante zastaishatish deresta-aenanghem.

Therefore O Ahura! We yearn for Thy divine energy (Thy fire) which develops further through our following the Law of Asha and which is the intrinsically mighty force, which serves as a force of ready assistance to Thy adherants, but can readily overpower with His hands, those who nurse enmity and revenge (in their heart).

Verses from the Atash Nyaesh prayer. Translation by:

T. R. Sethna (first two verses); and Er. Kersey Antia (last two verses).



Mobed offering prayers at the atash kadeh in Yazd.

Photo: Khojeste Mistree, "A Zoroastrian Tapestry by Phiroza J. Godrej & Firoza Punthakey Mistree

fire & fiery test

By Daryoush Jahanian, MD
Kansas City, Kansas

Spiritual men, through illumination of the mind, envision *The Light*. Shah Nematollah Wali, a fifteenth-century Persian Sufi, expresses this state of mind: "Be sure that any eye which sees light has seen it only by the light itself" [1]. In simpler terms, "One should illumine in order to see the light." The state of illumination and beholding light is reflected in different verses of the Gathas, e.g., in Ys. 31.8, Zarathushtra realizes God by grasping Him in vision [2], [3], [4]:

*Thus may I realize Thee as the First
And also Last, O Mazda, in my mind.*

In Ys. 45.8, the prophet declares, "I beheld Him clearly in my mind's eye." [5].

Yasna 43 reflects meditation and attainment of divine illumination as correctly titled by Bode, since many verses begin with: "I realized You God when I was encircled by good mind Vohu Manah," and Yasna 29.8 indicates a relevance when Vohu Manah picks Zarathushtra for prophethood as it allegorically illustrates that the prophet through Vohu Manah (contemplation) has attained illumined mind and the knowledge of God.

Finally, Zarathushtra discovers that silent meditation is the best for attainment of spiritual enlightenment [Ys. 43.15] [5] and in two verses [Ys 43.4, 43.9] he alludes to the envisioned fire.

State of illumination. The key is Vohu Manah or good mind, wisdom and good thinking, which has a very prominent place in the Gathas. Wisdom stands first among the list of the divine attributes, whereby the others (truth, strength, love, wholeness and immortality) are perceived and imbibed, the path to God is treaded and the state of illumination attained, at which point man beholds the light and becomes one with God. This is indeed a state of extinction in which man's being incorporates into God.

God upholds the best mind, which brightens our mind:

*He, through His Holy Word
did first declare,
His Light shall stream through
all the Lights on high;
Himself, All-Wise,
the Law of Truth declared,
That this His Light might glow
as Love Supreme;
Make it blaze higher, Mazda,
through the grace of
Thine own Spirit,
evermore the same. [Ys 31.7]*

He pours out His holy wisdom on all living beings [Ys. 45.6] [5]. Through His wisdom, God has fashioned the

world [Ys. 31.11], ordained the creation with universal order (Asha) [Ys. 31.7], and granted man free will to make his choice [Ys. 31.11]. The divine dominion (Kshathra) is the fruit and blessing of wisdom [Ys. 30.8, 31.5, 31.6, 33.15] and through wisdom God is realized [Ys. 28.6, 33.6, 34] and the path to God is found [Ys. 28.5-45.6] [6]. Good thinking generates good words and good deeds, which lead the world to evolution and perfection.

“ One can conclude that the divine light in Yasna 31.7 signifies God and the radiated lights are indeed His attributes, the prominent one being His absolute wisdom, from which man's wisdom emanates. ”

Nature of light and the meaning of Fiery Test. In Islam, "God is the light of the heavens and the earth, [Koran XXIV, 35] [1]. In the Bible, "God is a consuming fire, Himself comes very fire" [7], [8] and in the Old Testament and the Koran, He manifests to Moses as fire [9], [10], [11].

In the Gathas, the envisioned light is a divine one and fire is only a faculty of God which, like other divine qualities, is shared by man. It represents the divine wisdom (Vohu Manah) and man's knowledge of God. When Vohu Manah comes to Zarathushtra he realizes God, and it is Vohu Manah who picks him for prophethood [Ys. 29.8]. This fire is called by Zarathushtra *Mainyu Athra* [Ys. 31.3], which means spiritual or mental fire, an abstract or inner fire and not a physical one. It is radiated by the divine wisdom or the best mind (Vohu Manah) [Ys. 43.9] and Vahishta Manah [Ys. 31.7], brightens the mind [Ys. 31.7] and brings the strength of Vohu Manah (wisdom) [Ys. 43.4]. The working of the divine fire and wisdom in hardship enlightens one's inner-self, whereby one receives salvation [Ys. 46.7 *Kemna Mazda*].

The divine fire is empowered by truth (Asha) [Ys. 34.4-43.4], whereby the

rewards of two groups of righteous and wrongful are determined [Ys. 31.3, 31.19, 34.4, 43.4, 47.6] hence Asha, or truth and justice prevails [Ys. 46.7]. This is the **fiery test** (or *ayangha khshushta* [Ys. 51.9, 32.7, 30.7] literally molten metal) that illustrates the Law of Asha or action and reaction [12] and once comprehended many seekers will convert [Ys. 31.3-47.6]. As noted, the fiery test is also a spiritual one. In this context the unburning fire that the leg-

endary Seyavash, for the proof of his innocence, passed through [13] and the unburning molten zinc that Adarbad Maraspand, for the proof of accuracy of the religious books, applied to his chest [14] should be construed in allegorical and spiritual terms.

The light of lights and absolute Wisdom. According to

the Gathas, the divine light radiates other lights [Ys. 31.7] [6] (light of lights), God upholds the best mind (or Vahishta Manah) that brightens minds [Ys. 31.7] [6], His wisdom pervades all living beings [Ys. 45.6] [5]. Sohravardi, a twelfth-century Persian philosopher, compares God to light of lights [4], [15] from Whom other lights are radiated that are not separated from the Source, but enriched by it. The first light or the most proximal one to the Source is Bahman (Vohu Manah).

Considering the above analogy, one can conclude that the divine light in Yasna 31.7 signifies God and the radiated lights are indeed His attributes; the prominent one being His absolute wisdom from which man's wisdom emanates. Sohravardi, in another text, defines God as the essence of First Absolute Light who gives constant illumination whereby it is manifested ... Everything in the world is derived from the Light of His Essence ... and to attain fully to this illumination is salvation [1] [for state of illumination – also see Ys. 46.7].

Seyyed Ahinad Alavi, a prominent scholar of the school of illumination

(eshragh) after discussing the concept of emanation of existence from the Source (God) or derivation of many from a single unit, which is the essence of Sohrevardi's view, maintains that this notion is from Zarathushtra [16].

The concepts of illumination and joining the beloved (God), unity of mankind and oneness of their origin, have profound roots in the Persian mysticism and they derive from the Gathas. Persian mysticism may be compared to a river that temporarily went underground but eventually surfaced during the Islamic period. In the words of Jami, a fifteenth-century Persian poet [1]:

*The Essences are each
a separate Glass
Through which the Sun of Being's
Light is passed.
Each tinted fragment
sparkles in the Sun
A thousand colors
but the Light is One.*

And in the words of Saadi [17]:

*Mankind is the body,
men as the limb
Of one essence at the
dawn of genesis.*

School of illumination in the Islamic period of Iran. Many Iranian gnostics of the Islamic era have contributed to the Persian mysticism by utilizing the philosophy of ancient Iran [16]. They were able to differentiate the Gathic songs of Zarathushtra from the religion introduced by the clergy of the Sasanian era. These writings present the true philosophy of Zarathushtra and the concept of illumination. The founder of this school of the Islamic era is Sohrevardi (Sheikh el Eshragh or the Sheikh of illumination), who was martyred for his Zarathushti views. He had access to Zarathushti literature and in his time the spoken language of the city of Zanjan where he lived was Pahlavi.

Fire in this school, is a Gnostic term and is used as a means of enlightening or consuming a devotee to attain truth and love, and join the abode of the beloved (God).

In the ancient Iranian mysticism, the true Gnostic is KeiKhosrow, who, prior to his ascension, undergoes physical cleaning, wears white attire and resides in a fire temple so that by proximity to the symbolic fire, his being purifies as pure gold. This is an allegorical expression of enlightenment or illumination in which one ecstasies and feels nonexistent and his being becomes incorporated in the essence of God.

In mystical terms, hard hearts melt by this fire as a molten iron, in the words of Movlavi Rumi who vociferates: "I am fire, I am fire." The term of molten metal in the philosophy of ancient Iran or "glowing and consuming in oven" is an allegorical means of attaining the Ashoi, truth and love. This fire, in its broadest mystical term, is the science of discovery and recognition of God, the divine knowledge that descends as

“ God's being manifests as a glaring fire to Zarathushtra, and Vohu Manah, which signifies the perfect knowledge of God, is presented to the prophet as a man embodied in absolute light. ”

fire to Zarathushtra. It is said he holds it in His hands without being burned. It should be added that God's being manifests as a glaring fire to Zarathushtra, and Vohu Manah, which signifies perfect knowledge of God, is presented to the prophet as a man embodied in absolute light [16]. In the Koran, too, Moses beholds a distant fire and tells his wife, "I will bring a part of it or will lead myself into its light" [9], [11].

Conclusion. Fire and fiery test should be construed in spiritual terms. Fire in the Gathas represents the divine wisdom that on reckoning delivers justice. In humans, it indi-

cates illumination or bright mind, whereby God is realized; hence, in its broadest mystical terms, it is the science of discovery of God.

Fiery test, or the test of molten metal, is indeed a spiritual purification and refinement process to attain love and perfection and join the abode of the beloved. This process is summarized by Movlavi Rumi: "I was raw, I was roasted, I was consumed." In the words of Zarathushtra such a person who has passed the fiery test, has attained physical and spiritual strength, wisdom, truth and love with serenity [Ys. 30.7] and belongs to God [2]. ■

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Roz Adar of the month Adar is observed as “Atash-nu-Parab”, a day set aside to revere and worship Ahura Mazda by venerating His grand creation – the element of fire. Special prayers are recited at home and at the fire temple in the presence of fire. Prime among these is the *Atash Nyaesh* [see page 63], a litany in praise of the divine fire energy.

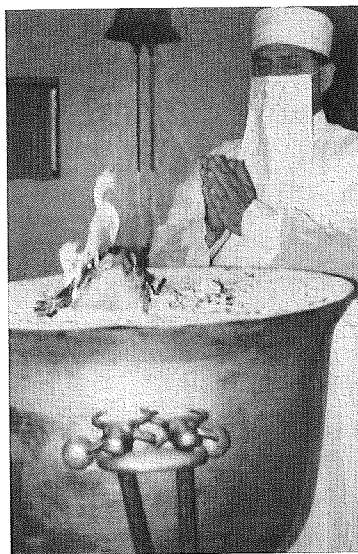
Adar, symbol of Ahura Mazda. The word Adar or Atar means fire. Fire has various forms: it could be in the form of energy, such as a light or it could be a physical fire with a visible flame. While, on the surface, atar seems to refer to a physical fire with visible flames, a deeper understanding of the wisdom of our scriptures will reveal that Atar represents a deeper and more mature concept.

Atar is referred to as the ‘flaming fire of thought’ implanted in each person, the divine spark, the *fravashi* that dwells within each one of us. Atar is the fire that is our inner instructor.

Zarathushtis believe and worship one God – Ahura Mazda. Fire is revered, adored and given a high place in Zarathushti prayers, rites and ceremonies, because of its high place as the most important creation of Ahura Mazda, almost a symbol of God. It is considered the most sacred emblem of purity.

The physical fire, as a sacred element, sanctified, purified and held in reverence, helps Zarathushtis realize the in-dwelling nature of Ahura Mazda.

Modern science confirms that light (energy) was the first creation of God. Nay, in fact, the Almighty is conceived of as ‘boundless light’. Each and every creation of God has in it a spark of this vast ocean of light (*asar roshni*). Long before modern science, Zarathushtis believed that Ahura Mazda is the source and foundation of all light and radiation.



Mobed offering prayers at the darbe mehr in Chicago.

What was manifested in creation was worthy of reverence. Physical fire is considered a sacred emblem, a symbol, very much like a cross is to a Christian.

Scriptural references. Besides the large number of references in the Gathas [see previous pages], there are numerous references to fire in the Avesta. *Haptan Yasht* [Ys. 36] says:

Through the agency of Thy Divine Fire, Thy Living Element, Approach we Thee and Thee alone, O Ahura, with good thoughts and prayers.

In the *Kemna Mazda* prayer,

... athrascha mananghascha yayos-nyothoish ashem throstra Ahura

clearly suggest that the prayer does not refer to a physical fire, but the “flaming fire of thought” (*mananghascha* means that which relates to the mind).

In the *Atash Nyaesh* prayer, the fire is repeatedly referred to as the ‘son of Ahura Mazda’:

“Athro Ahurahe Mazdao puthra.”

[Note: This phrase, however, is not to be taken literally, of course. Some scholars, including I. J. S. Taraporewalla, have translated it as “purifying fire of Ahura Mazda”].

Mayest thou shine in this house forever. Mayest thou glow in this house up to the time of resurrection.

adar atar

Thoughts on the veneration of fire

Atash nu Parab is a day set aside to revere and worship Ahura Mazda by venerating His grand creation – the element of fire.

This implies that the individual is the holy shrine, the fire temple, and the fire is the spark of the divinity that is deeply enthroned within.

The guardian angel of fire looks at the hand of the devotee and says: What has the moving friend brought for the seated friend?

The ‘moving friend’ here is the devotee and the ‘seated friend’ is the fire of the inner self. The devotee (the body) has an obligation to feed the inner fire (the soul). While one may have enjoyed worldly pleasures in this life, one should not forget to help the soul make progress; for spiritual advancement of the soul is the ultimate goal.

The significance of offering sukhad and loban. When a devotee offers a piece of sandalwood, the fragrance spreads all around. It reminds one of our duty to emanate the spiritual fragrance of purity by living for others. Just as sandalwood burns on fire and becomes ashes, one should kindle the internal fire to root out and discard one’s evilness from within by resolving firmly to observe righteousness. If the devotee is not affected in spirit and if the act of burning fragrant incense does not produce noble and virtuous thoughts in his mind; or if he does not return from the sacred precincts meek in spirit and contrite

of heart, then his offerings of the handfuls of sandalwood and cartloads of fuel are of no consequence.

The priest offers sacred ashes to all devotees. The devotee takes a pinch as a reminder that ultimately, one day, all of us, rich or poor, will be mingled with the dust.

Offering of sandalwood and incense to the physical fire to keep it burning is a suggestive gesture, to kindle the divine spark within, by following the path of Asha. The eternal flame within us, when sanctified, helps us to purge out all the evil that seeks sanctuary within us. ■

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Kayomارش P. Mehta is recipient of the FEZANA Outstanding Zarathushti Award for 2002 [see bio-data on page 42].

the sacred fire of the zarathushtis

A review of the sacred fire of the Zarathushtis and the establishment of fire temples.

By Phiroz Dastoor, PhD
Etobicoke, Ontario

*The gift of veneration to you Fire...
I shall think of Truth to the utmost
of my power. [Ys. 43.4, 43.9]*

Through fire (Avestan: *Atar*; Md. Persian: *Adar*; New Persian: *Atash*) Zarathushtis develop a link with truth and purity and ultimately generate an intimate communion with Ahura Mazda:

*Tave atash puthra, Ahurae Mazdao
[Atash Nyaesh 5.4]*

When a Zarathushti prays facing the fire, he/she is praising the creation that represents life and energy and its Creator; he praises total goodness, truth and purity. The worshiper feels the quality of endless light, and doors

opening showing the path to the abode of God, and to the eminence of Ahura Mazda. He feels the power that is generated as a result of the fusion of the light and heat of the fire – a power that will smite evil and its evil forces.

Fire, God's seventh creation, brought all his other six creations to dynamic, bright, active life. It radiates light and truth and dispels darkness and falsehood. It brings the whole of creation to light. It reflects the inherent nature of God, mirrored back to Himself, through His finest creation, man.

VENERATION OF FIRE

The veneration of fire can be traced back to the earliest times.



Jashne Sadeh festival celebrates the discovery of fire.

Jashne Sadeh (the Festival of the Hundredth Day) is the late winter festival, celebrated on the tenth day of the month Bahman (on January 30th) to commemorate the discovery of fire, by King Hushang of the legendary Peshdadian dynasty. As recorded in the Persian epic *Shah Nameh*, King Hushang, while hunting, came upon a huge black snake, and shot at it with his flint-tipped arrow. The arrow hit a rock and sparked a blaze – thus fire became a part of human existence. The festival is celebrated with a large bonfire, with everyone contributing a branch of wood. The bonfire is lit after a folk dance by seven little girls dressed in white. The priests recite prayers including *Atash Nyaesh*, in honor of the fire, the giver of warmth and light. As is the tradition for most Iranian festivals, the prayers are followed by a communal feast, with music, singing and dancing. With the passage of centuries, the festival of Sadeh was almost forgotten. In recent years it has been revived, in Iran as well as in the western diaspora. Photo at left shows a recent celebration in Houston, Texas.

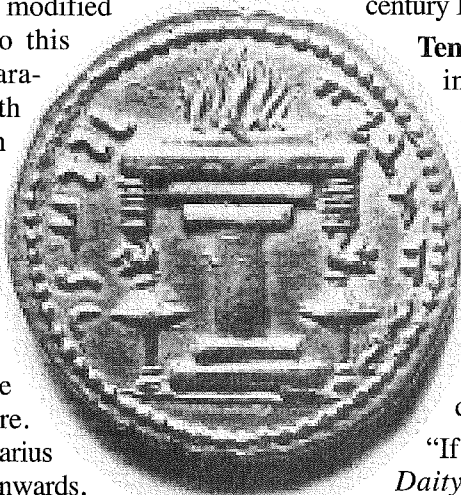
Hearth fires. For millennia, Zarathushtis have venerated hearth fires in their homes, taking care to keep the embers alive night and day.

This practice, in a modified form, continues to this day in many Zarathushti homes, with the burning of an oil lamp (*divo*).

Fire altars for monarchs. During Achaemenian times (559 - 334 BCE) fire altars were used for the veneration of fire.

From the reign of Darius I (522 - 486 BCE) onwards, the monarch and noblemen are depicted in rock carvings and coins revering the fire, which is set on a pillar-shaped altar. While these fire altars

appear to be personal fires of worship for the monarch, public communal worship to Ahura Mazda was practiced in the open, as far back as the 5th century BCE.



Temple worship. During the reign of Artaxerxes II (404 - 359 BCE) Zarathushti priests introduced the temple worship of fire. The earliest mention of temple fires occurs in the Vendidad [8.96]:

“If a man brings to the *Daityo-gatu*, the fire of his own hearth, what shall be his reward?”

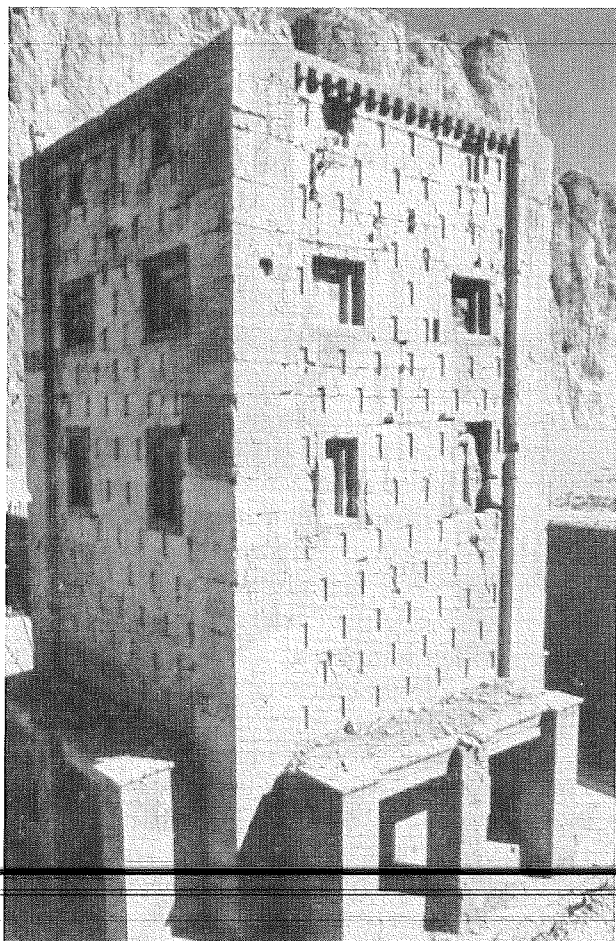
These early fire temples were dedicated to Bahram Yazata, or Lord of

Victory, for they were carried into battle by the Persian armies who derived their strength and power from them. The fires were tended by the priests who developed elaborate rituals of purification and consecration.

Grades of fires. This fire of victory was the most highly revered and came to be known as the *Atash Bahram* fire. The consecration of an atash bahram fire is a very complex and elaborate process [see page 72] performed by a team of mobeds over a period of over a year. A lesser grade of fire, the *Atash Adaran* fire, was also developed for public worship. This was consecrated by gathering fires from four sources: priests, warriors, farmers and artisans and is usually installed in fire temples called *agiaries*, *dar-e-mehrs* or *atash kadeh*. The early hearth fires, eventually gave way to the third grade of

Top, silver drachma of Ardashir I (224 - 240 CE), founder of the Sasanian empire; the fire altar with its column and plinths, is similar to ones seen on Achaemenian carvings and seals. Below left, structure, possibly a fire temple, at Naqsh-e Rustom, dating to Achaemenian times, 5th-6th century BCE. Right, twin fire altars at Naqsh-e Rustom, Iran, dating to the Sasanian period.

[PHOTOS: PERSIAN MYTHOLOGY, JOHN R. HINNELLS]



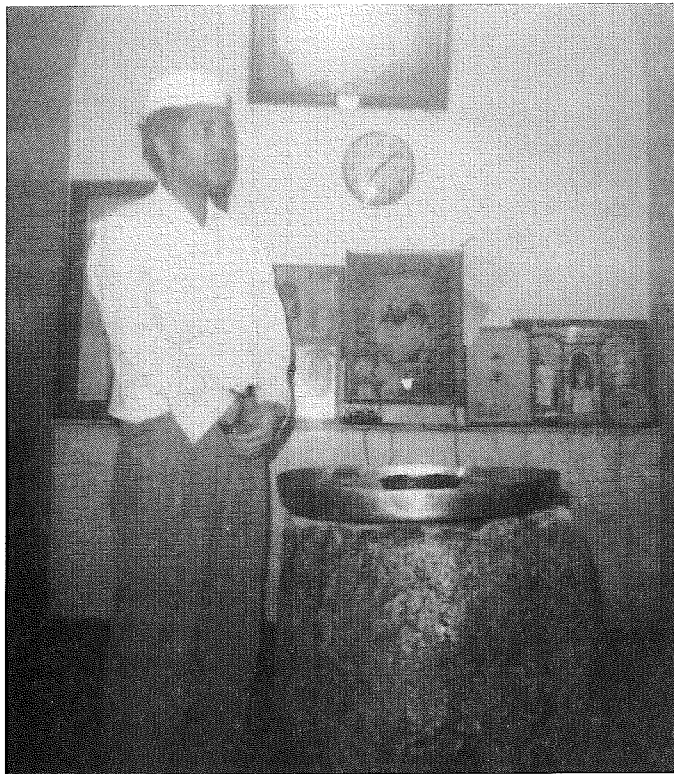


PHOTO: Khojeste Mistree, "A Zoroastrian Tapestry by Phiroza J. Godrej & Firoza Punthakey Mistree

The atash bahram at Sharifabad [right] a village near Yazd, Iran, is believed to have the oldest existing atash bahram fire in the world, probably 2,000 years old. In the prayer room there is a large Egyptian stone cylinder, left, in which the fire once burned, on which a diva now burns. The fire is kept continuously burning in an inner chamber.

fire, known as the **Atash Dadgah** fire. Some of the dar-e-mehrs in India, Pakistan and Iran, and every one of the dar-e-mehrs outside those three countries, have a *dadgah* fire.

The Parthians (250BCE-227 CE) invoked three great fires, believed to have miraculous powers of healing and imparting knowledge. The legends behind these fires are described in the *Bundahishn* [18.10, 12, 17]:

- **Adar Farnbag**: the fire of fortune, of the priests, kept burning in the province of Fars.

- **Adar Gushnasp**, the fire of stallions, protector of the kings and warriors, kept burning in Media.

- **Adar Burzin Meher**, dedicated to Meher (truth, light and love), of the farmers, kept burning in Parthia.

Dastur N. Minocher-Homji [“What are Adaran-Atashan?”, quoted in *125th Anniversary celebration book of Behramshah Shroff, 1983*] describes six classifications of fires:

- (1) **Atash Berezo Savang**: the light of the glow, sublime, manifesting in the aspiring (berejya) soul, aspiring to rise

from the *ushahina*, the lowest spiritual stage to *aiwisuthrema*, the highest stage of the spiritual life and the final stage of self-realization (*fravashi*).

- (2) **Atash Vohu Frayana**: light of vital warmth, so dear and precious to all life.

- (3) **Atash Urvazisht**: light of the moving force in plant life.

- (4) **Atash Vazisht**: light in the mighty lightning, caused by the discharge of atmospheric electricity.

- (5) **Atash Speynisht**: light within the holiest spirit, the “all light” that is Ahura Mazda [*Hormazd Yasht, 14*].

- (6) **Atash Nairyosangh**: light within the human bosom, which serves as an unfailing counselor, guide, friend and philosopher, to man.

FIRE TEMPLES IN IRAN

The oldest existing atash bahram in the world is in the village of Sharifabad in Iran [photo above]. Here the holy fire, kept perpetually burning for over 2,000 years, is believed to have its origins in Adar Farnbag, one of the three great ceremonial fires of ancient

Iran. There is another atash bahram in Iran, in Yazd, built in the nineteenth century [see page 71].

There are dar-e-mehrs in Shiraz, Tehran [see photo next page], Isfahan, Kerman and in the villages around Yazd; as well as numerous smaller shrines in the Zarathushti strongholds near Yazd and Kerman.

The **pirs** (shrines) in the desert and rugged mountains around Yazd, are little islands of refuge for Zarathushtis to gather, to pray, celebrate, sing and dance, and enjoy their ancestral traditions. Each shrine has a legend built around it, mostly about Sasanian princes and their families fleeing from the invading Arabs. The most popular pilgrimage place is the mountainside sanctuary of Pir-e Sabz [photo page 70]. Other popular shrines are Pir-e Herisht, Pir-e Banou and Pir-e Nareke. There are also some shrines in remote places in Iran, such as Demavand Koh and Chaeachast Var.

FIRE TEMPLES IN INDIA

Arrival in India. Following the defeat of the last Sasanian king



PHOTO: SILLOO MEHTA, MAZDAYESNIE MONASTERIE, CALIFORNIA

Left, the mountainside shrine of Pir-e Sabz, a pilgrimage place for Iranian Zoroastrians. Right, the Tehran dar-e-mehr (the Bhicajee Behram Dadgah) built in 1917, with help from the Parsis of India, in 1917. A girls' school is in the adjoining building.

Yazdegard III in 652 CE, a few faithful followers fled from Iran and after several hundred years, as described in the *Kisseh-i-Sanjan* [translated by Bahman Kaikobad Sanjana and Shapurji Hodiwalla, 1900], settled on the west coast of India at a place they named Sanjan (their arrival is placed at dates between 716 and 936 CE). While on the treacherous high seas, they had taken a pledge to establish a consecrated fire temple if they reached safe shores, which they eventually did. They had brought

with them, only *alat* (ritual implements), *nirang* and ash from Iran. These were used by our holy dasturs to create the fire of Bahram. No fire was brought from Iran. Our ancestors were fleeing from Muslim persecution and carrying a burning fire in open sailboats does not stand to reason. Also, our religion forbids transporting holy fire over water. Fire could have been transported over land routes, with proper ritual tending and prayers by our priests, on other possible trips to India.

Iranshah fire temple. With his spiritual powers, Dastur Nairyosang Dhaval established the sacred Iranshah temple, in Sanjan, the first atash bahram in India. When the Muslim king Mahmud Begdo and his general Alaf Khan attacked the kingdom and defeated the Hindu king, a parsi general, Ardeshir, with approximately 1,000 Parsi warriors, lost their lives fighting. In the late 1300s, therefore, Iranshah was moved and sheltered for 12 years in the caves of the Bahrot hills.

Due to persecution started by the Portuguese invaders and forced conversions to Christianity, the Parsis fled, with their sacred Iranshah fire, and lived in the jungles of Bansda for another 14 years. In 1516, Iranshah was moved to Navsari. It was temporarily moved to Surat for three years, and back to Navsari in 1736.

Following feuds between the *panthaks* (ecclesiastical diocese) in Navsari, the Sanjana priests fled with the sacred fire to Bulsar in 1741, and thence a year later to Udvada. Since

GLOBAL DIRECTORY OF ZOROASTRIAN FIRE TEMPLES

by Marzban J. Giara

232 pp, 200 color illustrations, hardbound. 2nd edition, release date: last quarter of 2002. The first edition in 1998 was sold out in 18 months.

**A vivid historical account, in full color,
of all fire temples around the world.**

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1742, Iranshah has been enthroned at Udvada, and remains one of the holiest pilgrimage places for Zarathushtis today.

Fire temples in the sub-continent. Marzban J. Giara [*Global Directory of Zoroastrian Fire Temples, see announcement previous page*] and Dr. Meher Master Moos [*Mazdayasnie Monasterie newsletter September 1981*] list 8 atash bahrams in India, about 50 agiaries and dar-e-mehrs in Mumbai, over 100 in the rest of India, 5 in Pakistan and 1 in Sri Lanka.

Among the oldest in **Pakistan** are the Heerjibhoy Behrana (adaran), established in 1849; and the Avabai Ardeshir (Cooper) Limboowalla dadgah, established in 1893.

In India, there are eight atash bahrams:

(1) **Iranshah** [see cover photo] in Udvada since 1742, is the most revered and exalted of the fire temples. It is a Shenshai Atash Bahram, in the diocese of the Sanjana mobeds.

(2) **Anjuman Atash Bahram** (Shenshai) in Navsari, the second in India, was established in 1765, by the Bhagarsath anjuman.

(3) Dadyseth Atash Bahram (Kadmi) was established in Mumbai in 1783.

(4) Modi Atash Bahram (Shenshai) was established in Surat in 1823.

(5) Vakil Atash Bahram in Surat (Kadmi) was established in 1823.

(6) Wadiaji Atash Bahram (Shenshai) established in Mumbai in 1830.

(7) Banaji Atash Bahram (Kadmi) was established in Mumbai in 1845.

(8) Anjuman Atash Bahram (Shenshai) established in Mumbai in 1897.

The oldest three dar-e-mehrs outside Iran are listed below:

(1) Vadi dar-e-mehr [photo below] is the oldest, established in Navsari, in 1142 CE.

(2) Sir Saporji Bharucha (old Dastur) dar-e-mehr was established in Bharuch in the 11th or 12th century.

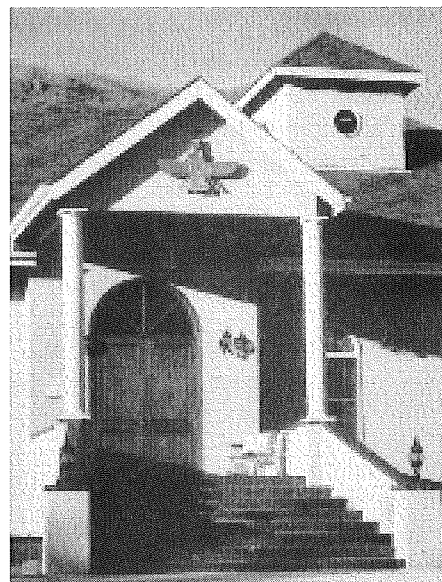
(3) Narsang Dhumpal dar-e-mehr established in 1549 in Ankleswar.

We can presume that for several centuries after Iranshah, there were no other fire temples in India. Then, too, for a thousand years, there was only one atash bahram, and one or two dar-e-mehrs. There was a sudden rise in the number of fire temples in the 18th century (about 15) and in the 19th century (about 80).

FIRE TEMPLES OUTSIDE IRAN AND INDIA

In central Asia, which was once part of the Persian empire, ancient fire temples have been known to exist; as also in China, Japan and Germany. However, until archeological evidence emerges, details of these are not known.

Outside Iran and the subcontinent, the oldest Zarathushti centers, dating



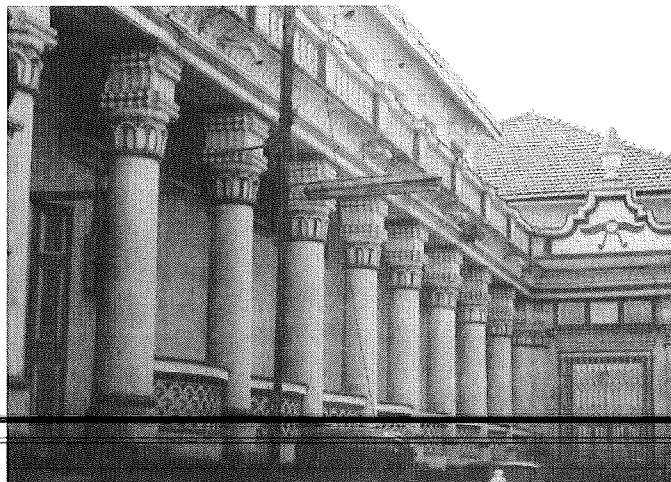
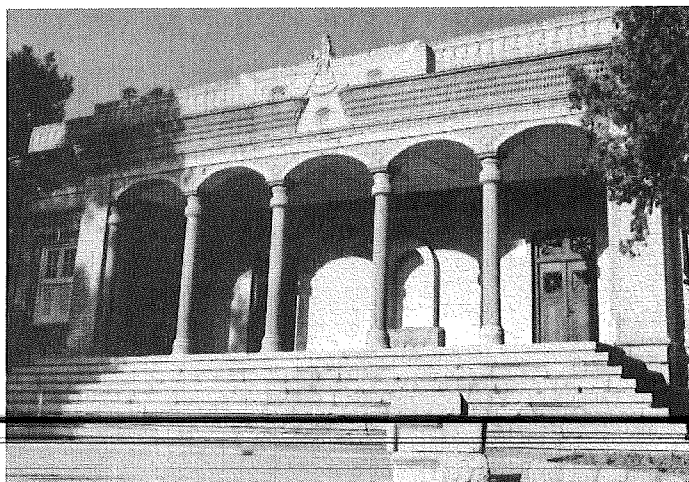
Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr, San Jose

to the early twentieth century are Zoroastrian House in London, UK, and Zoroastrian House in Hong Kong. The dar-e-mehrs in Zanzibar and Aden were closed down in the late 1900s.

There is one dar-e-mehr in Sydney, Australia (estd. 1994), and eight in North America: in New York (1977), Toronto (1978), Chicago (1983), Vancouver (1985), San Jose (1986) [photo above], Los Angeles (1987), Washington, DC (1990) and Houston (1996).

We Zarathushtis in the new world should be grateful to philanthropists like Arbab Rustom Guiv and Morvarid Khanum Guiv, and take pride in being blessed with the presence of

Below left, the atash bahram in Yazd, built in the nineteenth century; right, the Vadi dar-e-mehr in Navsari, the oldest known dar-e-mehr in India, consecrated in 1142; the building was rebuilt in 1795.



[illegible]

In Japan, Zoroaster has been kept for 1400 years as a branch of Buddhism with the name “kenkyo”. Todai-ji temple has continued the fire feast for 1200 years.

They also burn a bundle of bamboo to make fire dust from the roof. People touch the dust to repel evil spirits.

Consecration of an Atash Bahram

Rituals and prayers stretching over 18 months are performed to consecrate an atash bahram fire.

**By Phiroz Dastoor
Etobicoke, Canada**

The ceremonies. Each of the following 16 fires are first procured and allowed to kindle, with the natural wind, a piece of sandalwood placed a foot away.

Each step of the process of procurement and kindling is repeated from 33 (for the fire from a shepherd) to 184 (for the household fire) times, each with recitation of recommended *Yasna* and *Vendidad* prayers.

These 16 ignitions are tended separately, for the next three days with elaborate *heshne* and *vendidad* rituals, following strict principles of

These 16 purified fires are now combined, in a large afargan, with Yasna and Vendidad recitations for 34 more days. After the final Ijeshne, the Atash Padshah is carried by the dasturs in procession from the inner ritual chambers, the *ijeshne gah*, through a *pavi* (a purified path) and enthroned in the inner sanctum sanctorum of the fire temple, which has been similarly purified and sanctified with the aforementioned rituals. A final, celebratory jashan is then performed.

The consecration ceremonies for an Atash Adaran are less elaborate and require fire from only four sources. No elaborate consecration ceremony is performed for the Atash Dadgah fire.

The meaning. The constituent fires in these ceremonies are taken from various sources, without discrimination, and by the process of purification, have acquired an exalted place, in the inner sanctum. This should remind a Zarathushti that before Ahura Mazda, men of all races, color and creed, are equal, provided they pass through the process of “purification”, with purity of thought, word and deed.

Standing in front of the Atash Padshah, a Zarathushti devotee thinks: “When Thou, the noblest of the creations of Ahura Mazda, thyself had to undergo such tortuous purification, how much more important is it for me, a mere mortal, prone to commit sin, to undergo the process of purity, with good thoughts, words and deeds, so that I may also deserve an exalted place in the higher, spiritual heaven.”

Evidence of Achaemenid Fire Temples

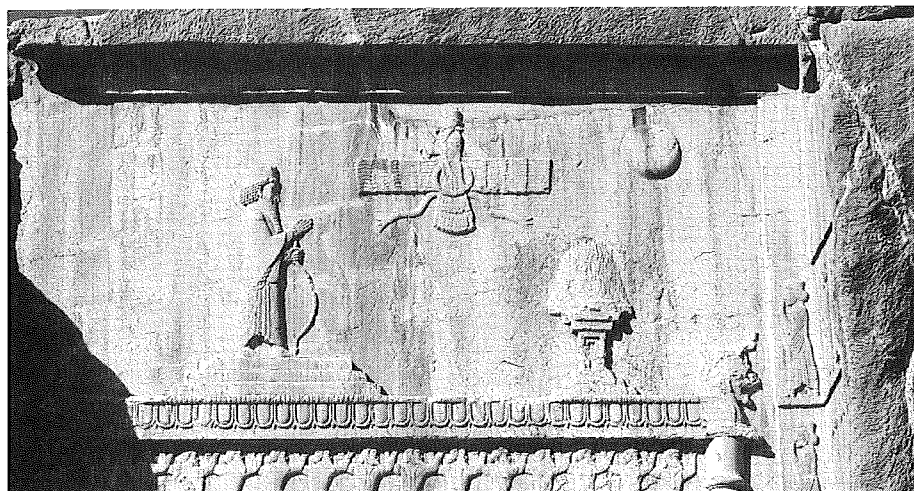


PHOTO: CYRUS RIVETNA

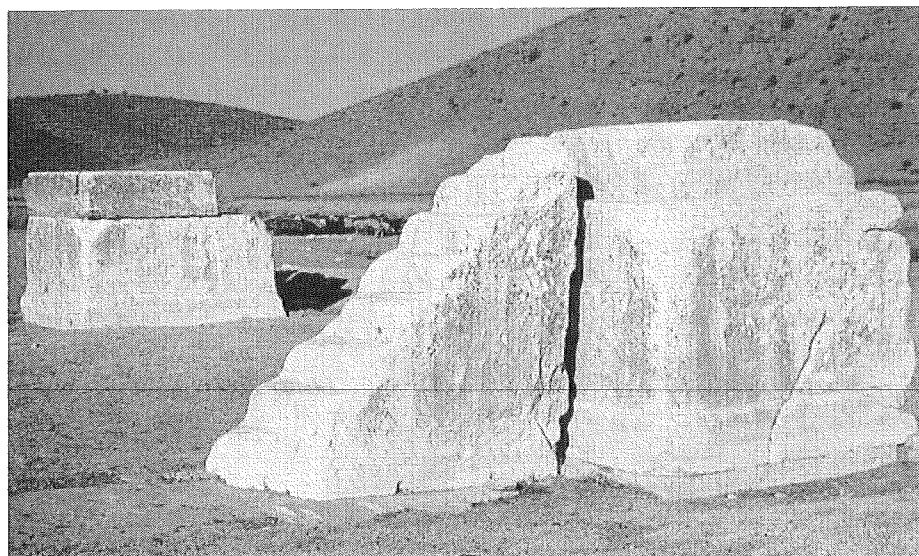


PHOTO: Khojeste Mistree, "A Zoroastrian Tapestry" by Phiroza J. Godrej & Firoza Punthakey Mistree

Some opinions that construction of fire temples was alien to the original Zarathushti religion, need revision in the light of new discoveries.

Under earlier Achaemenids, there were fire temples which were not just small facilities for keeping the fire. Images of Darius and other Achaemenid kings in front of fire are seen on the tombs in Naqsh-e Rostom [top photo] and on seals.

In 1964 a British expedition conducted excavation and ascertained the original design of the fire altars in Pasargadae. One of them was a fire temple, with the fire altar having a massive socle (plinth) of light colored sandstone 2.16 meters high, with a stairway of seven steps [photo above]. Small stepped altars were

originally located on all four sides of the block, similar to one found at the tomb of Cyrus. Two slabs resembling the foundation of the fire altars have been preserved on the socle.

The design of this fire temple undoubtedly dates to the time of Cyrus (6th century BCE).

As excavations have shown, the terrace-like hill situated behind the altars was likewise a stepped platform, and the main stairway led to it. Yet another structure, a small temple was located at the center of the platform.

Thus we now have indisputable evidence that fire temples with installed fire altars existed in the early Achaemenid period.

- Pallan Ichaporla

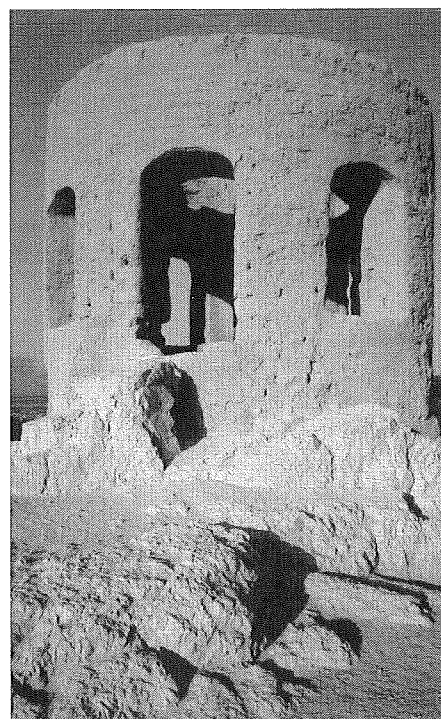


PHOTO: Khojeste Mistree, "A Zoroastrian Tapestry" by Phiroza J. Godrej & Firoza Punthakey Mistree

Hill of the Fire Temple

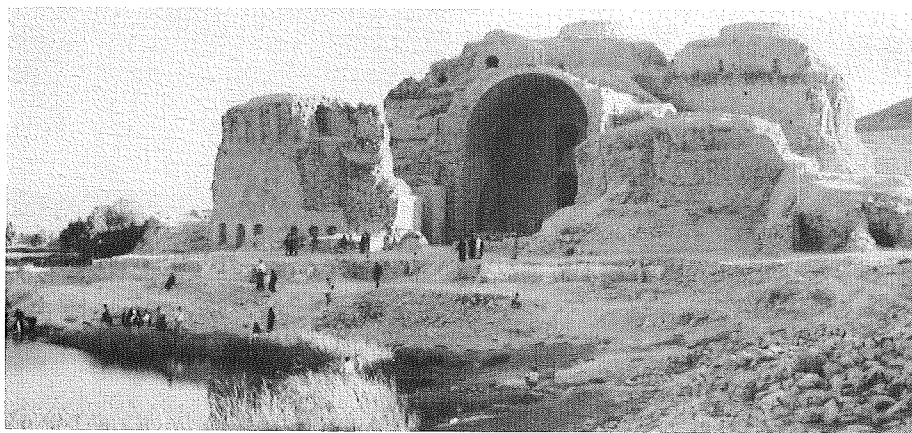
About four miles from Isfahan there is a hill called Kuh-i-Atash Kadeh – Hill of the Fire Temple. On top of the hill which rises about 700 feet above the plain, are the ruins of a structure about 15 feet high.

It would appear that the building was a fire-tower or temple and was in existence before the 10th century, for the writer Masudi, who died in 957 CE wrote:

"There were idols in this [temple], until they were removed by King Yustasf (Vishtaspa, patron of Zarathushtra) when he adopted the religion of the Magi and converted the shrine into a temple of fire ... it is held in great veneration by the Magi."

Another tradition associates the temple with Achaemenian emperor Artaxerxes Longiamanes who ruled Iran from 465 to 425 BCE. The site and the structure supports this antiquity.

[Excerpted from "Remnants of the Mazdayasnan Empire" by Nowzer P. Mehta, *Informal Religious Meetings*, 1996].



Sasanian Palace or Fire Temple?

Is this site at Firuzabad, Iran, a royal palace built by Ardashir, founder of the Sasanian dynasty, or the site of a fire temple?

By Jamshid Varza

www.vohuman.org [see below]

Firuzabad (“place of victory”) is an ancient town about 60 Km south of Shiraz in the province of Fars (or Pars) in central Iran.

Ibn Istakhri, a Muslim Iranian historian, mentions this site as a fire temple of great importance built during the Sasanian dynasty. Other scholars, historians, and archeologists report this site to be the palace built by Ardashir during the late Parthian or early Sasanian times.

Ardashir (son of Papak of the house of Sasan) a minor prince of Pars, who had the ambition of recapturing the power of the Achaemenids from the reigning Arsacids (Parthians), took several towns, defeating the reigning princes, and asserted his power by conquering the province of Kerman. Having succeeded his father as priest-king, master of Pars and Kerman, he had a princely palace built at Gur (present-day Firuzabad).

This excited the jealousy of the sovereign, the Arsacid Artabanus V, who wrote: “You wretched Kurd, how did you dare to build such a royal residence?” Ardashir, so the story goes, revolted against his sovereign, slew him (in 224 CE) and went on to expand the Sasanian domain.

The palace of Ardashir overlooks a small lake fed by a rich spring; water from this lake feeds the ancient city of Gur (called Ardashir-Khurra, or “Glory of Ardashir”). It is believed that a Persian style garden enclosed the palace and its lake.

The *iwan* or arched entry was a building innovation of the later Parthian era which is found predominantly in Sasanian palaces and buildings of importance. The Sasanian style *iwan* is usually constructed between two halls as supporting elements of the *iwan* hall.

As one walks toward the main *iwan* of the Firuzabad palace, we see the majestic size of the 44 feet arch, built in about 224 CE using local construction techniques. The two parallel walls were gradually built closer by the arch-shaped ceiling while the main load was carried by the thick background wall.

The throne room is a majestic room with the height of almost a three story building. Plaster works still remaining on the walls depict use of Achaemenian patterns.

The throne room’s ceiling is a large dome built using construction material found in the area – rock set in mortar covered by stucco. It is a wonder to see this dome still standing after eighteen centuries.

All interior walls of the palace have niches built in them; every niche is covered by an arch centered on top of it. Internal doorways and openings of the palace all enjoy a similar style of arch centered on top of the opening or doorway. The exterior walls are thick and tall providing protection for the palace.

A huge stone tower stands in the middle of the ruins of the city. Perhaps it was a fire tower or a commemorative structure.

With all the overwhelming archeological evidence one might think the site was a palace built and used by Ardashir. Then why would Muslim historians refer to this place as a fire temple of great importance? It is my opinion that as the Sasanian dynasty progressed, Ardashir as a priest-king, and his life achievements became a role model for his descendants; and so his palace was elevated into a royal fire temple.

Jamshid Varza is a member of the Zarathushti community of Northern California, living in Palo Alto. Jamshid devotes his time toward preparation of www.Vohuman.Org web site and teaching the Zarathushti



youth at Sunday classes.



www.Vohuman.Org

A Zoroastrian Educational

Institute. A web journal on

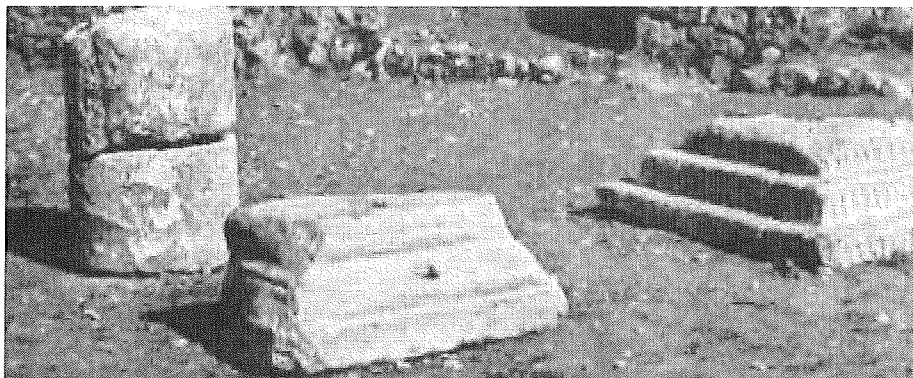
Zarathushti religion and heritage

The vision of Vohuman.Org is to preserve and promote the universal message of Prophet Zarathushtra and the Zarathushti heritage through education and distribution of information.

Only excerpts of the articles on Firuzabad, Bishapur and Baku are published here. The full text may be viewed at www.Vohuman.Org, under ‘library’ and ‘visual essays’.

Temple of Anahita in Bishapur

Where is the fire altar of this temple, built next to the Sasanian king Shapur's palace, in Bishapur?



By Jamshid Varza
www.vohuman.org

On a beautiful spring day in 1999, I set out to visit the site of Bishapur, the ancient city built by Sasanian emperor Shapur I, in celebration of his victory over his Roman adversaries. From Shiraz, the capital of Fars (Pars), it took me about two hours on the west bound highway to reach Bishapur, the "beautiful city of Shapur."

The large city walls and gate lead us to Shapur's palace and temple complex. Stairs take us down to the floor of a temple known as Anahita "the guardian angel of waters" in the Zarathushti religion.

The structure of this fire temple has remained relatively untouched, being covered by several feet of dirt until the 1940s, when French archeologist Roman Ghirshman excavated the site of Bishapur.

As I walked around this palace and temple complex, a question came to my mind: "Where do I find the fire altar of this temple?" The Zarathushti Sasanian kings held high regard for fire temples and maintained continuous burning fires in their altars.

A number of findings from this site indicate Sasanian designs and patterns built using Roman techniques. It is believed that Roman artisans and builders were employed in building

the site of Bishapur. This could explain the Roman influence in the Bishapur buildings.

Sassanian monuments used styles from Achaemenian monuments. The bull shaped head stones which were used to hold the wooden roof structure of the fire temple, were similar to the column capitals at Persepolis.

Search for the fire altar. My search in the area did not result in locating the fire altar that I was looking for. But I wasn't ready to give up and admit that the altar did not exist, or could not be found.

Upon my return home and several months later, while working on this essay, the thought of finding the fire altar returned to my mind. This time my only tools were books and I was half the world away from the historic monument of Shapur I. I was reading the *Cambridge History of*

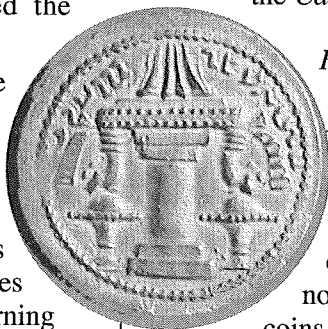
Iran [Vol. 3(1), page 337] where I saw pictures of Sasanian coins. The reader may also see Dr. Sam Kerr's collection [see below]. Sassanian coins are quite accurately identified and catalogued. I could identify a few coins from Ardeshir and Shapur all depicting the king's profile on the front, and a fire altar on the back. Perhaps this was proof of the importance of fire temples and altars to Sasanian kings.

From these coins I could learn what the shape of the fire altar stone could have been. All the coins from this era represented the fire altar with a flat stone base, a small column and the fire table.

My search took me to my final source, Roman Ghirshman's *Persian Art*, 249 - 261 CE, published in 1962. He provides an elaborate record, with photos, of his excavation projects at Iranian sites including Bishapur. This rare book is quite a feast for an enthusiastic student of Iranian archeology like myself.

While reading the chapter "Sassanian Art: Architecture and Monumental Decoration, Rock sculptures", I came to the pages on the Bishapur site. There, on page 151 was a picture [see photo above] clearly that of a fire altar stone, similar to the images on Sasanian coins. The text below it explained that the stone was buried in the wall of a structure built on the ruins of Bishapur which was recovered by Ghirshman.

A pleasant surprise! I told myself while finishing this article, that my search for the fire altar stone did after all, come to a positive conclusion. ■

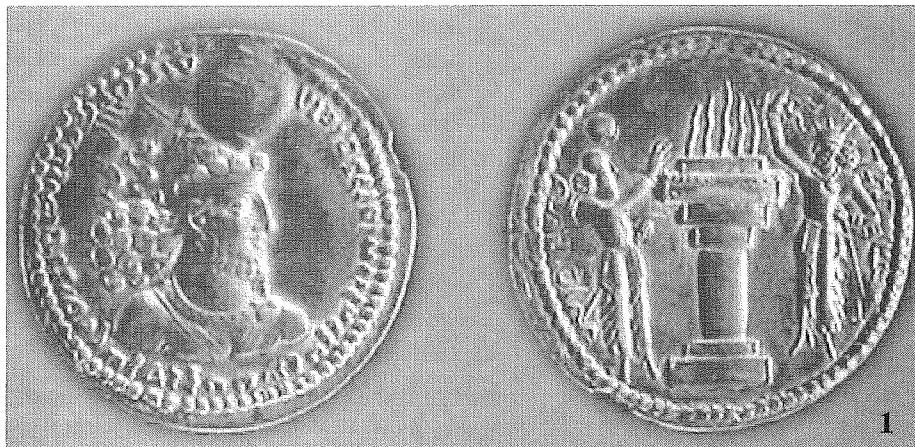


Reverse side of coin of Ardeshir I (224 - 240 CE), showing a fire altar of the Achaemenian type.

Exhibit of Sasanian coins and brief history.

Dr. Sam Kerr's entire exhibit of Sasanian coins (as color slides) with a brief chronological history of the Sasanian dynasty, displayed at the World Congress in Houston, is now available on the internet. It includes color slides of rare coins from the British Museum, which has kindly granted permission for the display. Provision has been made to enlarge the coin images, to allow closer study of each coin. [Also see next page].

To view the exhibit, go to www.fezana.org, select "Links", then select "Zarathushti Culture and History", and scroll to "Sassanian Dynasty History". Contact Dr. Kerr (Sydney, Australia) at simica@ozemail.com.au. ■



Fire Altars on Sasanian Coins

Ancient Sasanian coins give a fascinating glimpse into the religious practices of the times.

By Dr. Sam Kerr
Sydney, Australia

Fire altars in a variety of styles are a common feature on Sasanian coins.

The fire altar on Achaemenian coins is massive with huge decorated altar plates, which are supported by lion's feet (as seen on the thrones of the Persepolis relief) resting on mushroom stools. The king/priest had to climb up steps to a podium to light the fire or offer homage. There are no fire attendants.

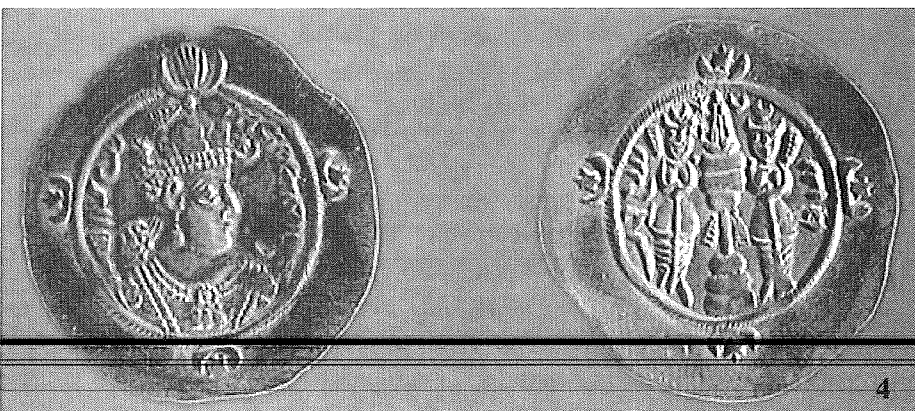
In comparison the Sasanian fire altars are smaller. At left are four types. The fire attendants in these Sasanian coins are the king (identified by his crown showing the globular 'orymbos' of hair, which only the king could have) and the priest (identified by the radiating crown of Mithra).

(1) Coin of Hormazd I (271 - 272 CE). The altar shaft is moderately broad. Fire plates and base plates are smaller and do not need support.

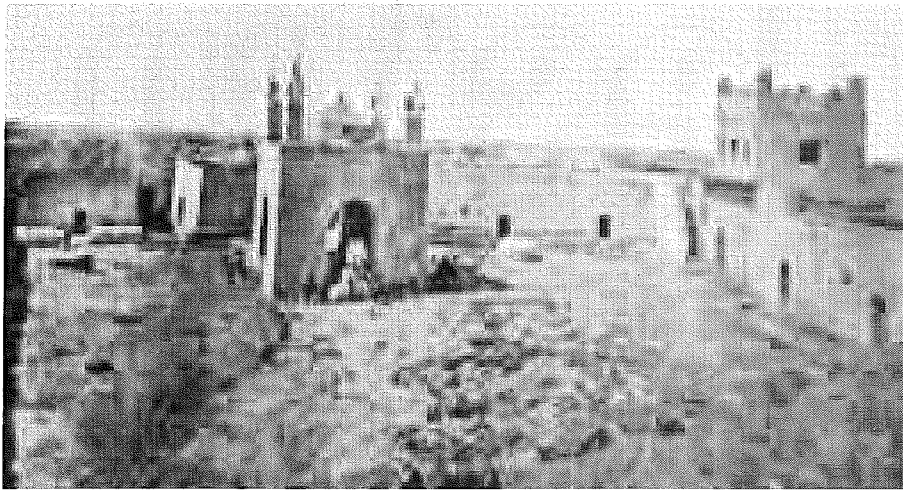
(2) Coin of Hormazd II (303-309 CE). The altar is less broad. Fire plates and base plates are still smaller. The bust of the king is engulfed in flames of the fire.

(3) Coin of Ardeshir II (379-383 CE). The altar shaft is peculiarly double conical with ribbon decoration at the waist.

(4) Coin of Ardeshir III (628-629 CE). The altar shaft is thin rod-like. Fire plates and base plates are thin, small and narrow.



[To view the exhibit on the internet, see announcement on previous page]



Oil fields and Fire Temple of Baku

Scholar A.V.W. Jackson concludes that the "temple" at Baku appears to be more Indian than Persian.

Excerpted by Roshan Rivetna from "From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam" by A. V. W. Jackson [Chapter IV, MacMillan Company, 1911]. For full text and pictures visit www.Vohuman.Org, 'library' section.

Oil fields of Baku. A visit to the oil wells in the petroleum fields near Baku, is an interesting experience. On entering the fields, one becomes lost amid a maze of towering derricks, erected over the wells to operate them. There are over two thousand of these wells in the Apsheron Peninsula, on which Baku stands. Sometimes the borings strike 'fountains' and the magnificence of this spectacle is surpassed only by the awful grandeur when fire adds terror to the scene.

The fire temple. All who have been at Baku, know of the fire temple, (*atashgah*) at Surakhany in the northern environs of the city. Common tradition has long associated the one-time sanctity of this region with the veneration of the Zoroastrians ... though whether with absolute justice must remain to be seen ... [The Zoroastrians] see not God but the purest effulgence of God in the Flame Divine, and it is not strange that local tradition associates their name with the igneous realm of Baku as the very source of eternal fire.

I have not, however, been able to trace it back more than two hundred

years, and I believe that some of the sweeping statements made on the subject by modern writers may have to be modified so far as Zoroastrianism is concerned.

The present shrine is apparently of Northern Indian rather than of Persian foundation, although possibly the site itself may have been a hallowed one in ancient times.

The sacred precinct consists of a walled enclosure. The structure is about twenty-five feet in height. In the middle of the floor is a square well or hole. Evidences are seen of pipes once used to conduct the naphtha to this and to the roof. The top of the shrine is surmounted by four chimneys at the corners, from which the flaming gases used to rise when the temple was illumined in times gone by.

Hindu character of the shrine. In the middle of the roof is a square cupola, from whose side there projects, a three-pronged fork that resembles the trisula, or trident, of the Indian god Siva.

High over the archway is a tablet, the upper section of which shows a

swastika emblem ... The lower section is devoted to an inscription in the Nagari character of India, beginning "Sati Sri Ganesaya namah" ("Homage to the Honored Ganesa") the common invocation, in Sanskrit writings ...

So far as my researches go, I have not been able to find any allusion to a temple on the site in the classic writers of Greece and Rome; nor in the early Armenian authors; nor do the medieval Arab-Persian geographers refer to it; nor yet, earliest of all, by Marco Polo.

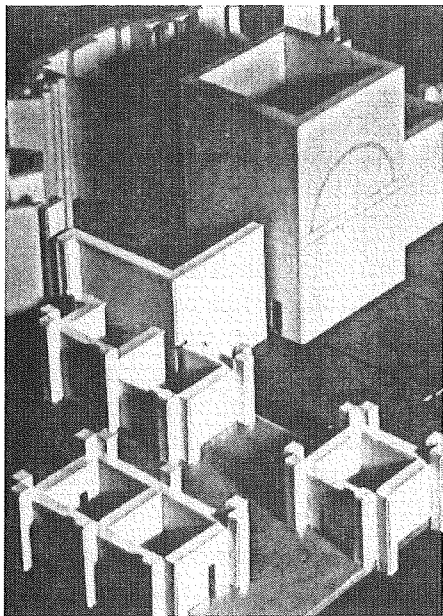
Accounts of travelers mention names of Hindu divinities invoked in the worship – Rama, Krishna, Hanuman and Agni, the god of fire. All this leaves no doubt as to the Hindu character of the shrine.

Additional weight from the Hindu side is given by the style of architecture of the building. Judged from this standpoint also, irrespective of anything else, the structure appears to be Indian rather than Persian ...

From all this I believe that, even against our will, we must reach the conclusion that, whatever the site may possibly have been originally, the Baku fire-temple, as we now have it, is a Hindu product, and that it is, more particularly, of Northern Indian origin, where fire-worship was cultivated from the ancient time of the Vedas.

In age the sanctuary can hardly be more than two centuries old, if we may judge from the half dozen dated inscriptions, as they belong mostly to the eighteenth century.

Thus, to our regret, vanishes the legend of the 'Zoroastrian' Atashgah at Baku. The sacred flame that was its source has likewise vanished, for in 1879 the temple passed over into Russian hands by a concession of the government, when the last priest sold out his interests to the Baku Oil Company near the old Kokorev refinery, and the fire was extinguished forever.



By Neville Rustomjee
Arlington, Virginia

This article comprises excerpts from Neville Rustomjee's thesis project for his Bachelor of Architecture degree from Virginia Tech in 1991.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history some of the most magnificent structures have been devoted to the worship of the Lord: Stonehenge, Mesopotamian ziggurats, Egyptian pyramids, Greek temples, Gothic cathedrals, Islamic mosques, Hindu temples, Buddhist shrines, and the list goes on. In all these architectural wonders the designers have strived to create a feeling of piety and awe. Serving as links between heaven and earth, they are executed with utmost care and sensitivity.

These structures evolve within each religious group. Advancement of form is influenced by ritualistic demands, traditions, socio-political and economic conditions, climate and geography, and other regional factors. Each successive generation of architects attempts to surpass its predecessors. Thus architecturally, sacred spaces present an enormous challenge since they are representative of the most exalted entity the human mind can possibly conceive,

design of a fire temple

Architecturally, sacred spaces present an enormous challenge since they are representative of the most exalted entity the human mind can possibly conceive.

and they are judged against some of the best examples of architecture.

In addition, they are one of man's oldest institutions, out of which others like education, emerged. In light of these historical realities, a religious structure captures the timeless quality that is present in its building type around the world and endeavors to come face-to-face with its past as well as to serve as an inspiration for those yet to come.

“ I wanted to sculpt the light in a manner that would evoke an ethereal feeling. ”

This thesis involves the design of a fire temple, which is the Zarathushti place of worship. Fire temples are generally simple structures, and yet there is an undeniable feeling of piety perceptible upon entering them. They are extremely sensory spaces, with luminous sparks flickering out of the radiant fire, the sweet scent of burning sandalwood and frankincense, the crackling of the sandalwood under the consuming flames, the melodious

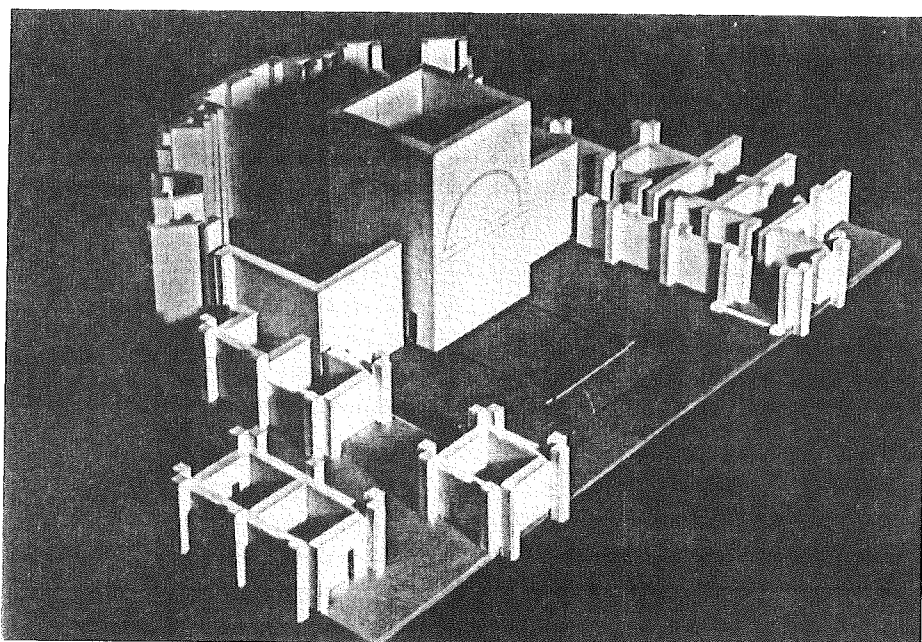
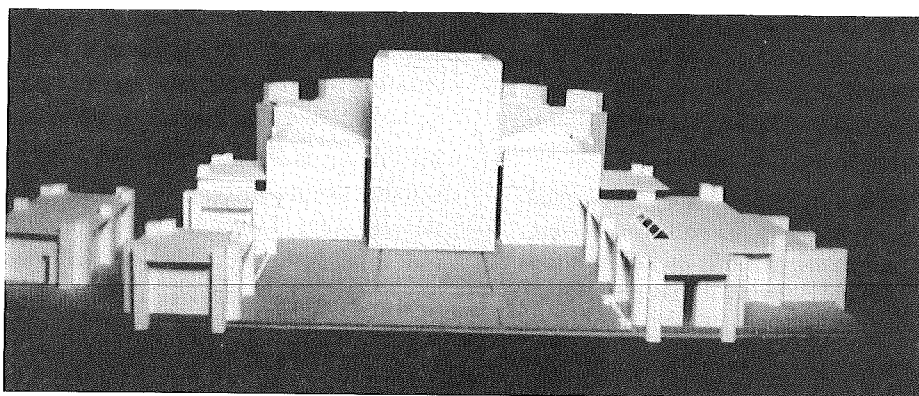
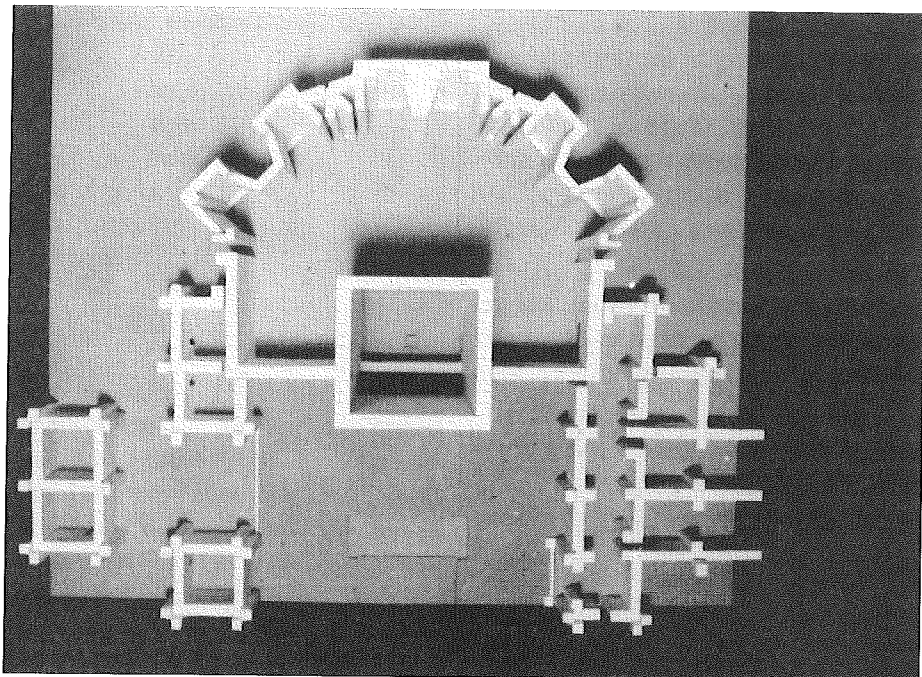
quality of the prayers, and the vibrational sound of the bell ringing.

These sensory qualities, along with ritualistic experiences are impressed in a young Zarathushti's mind at a very early age and cherished throughout his lifetime. Throughout the design process, I have not forgotten these feelings and experiences, but have tried to incorporate them into the architecture. I have attempted to heighten the sensory experience so as to encourage the worshippers to return to the temple, not out of necessity or social pressure, but out of a desire to once again experience the spiritual quality of the place.

This is the challenge I seek to undertake in this thesis. It is my dream to see this structure actually built. In the words of one of the architects I most respect, Louis I. Kahn, I present this design as

“... an offering to architecture in the hope that this work can become part of the treasury of architecture.”

Rather than designing a fire temple in a particular historical style or combining historical architectural components, I strived to find the essential elements of Zarathushti fire temples through the ages.



THE PRAYER HALL

One of the primary challenges of the prayer hall was to design a form that has the power to create a feeling of piety within each devotee who enters it. In the words of Louis I. Kahn,

"One might say that architecture is the thoughtful making of spaces ..."

Since Zarathushtis should not pray facing north, I decided that the southern wall should be extremely simple, thereby negating attention to itself, and the northern wall should be inviting and curved so as to direct its focus on the *kebla* (the inner sanctum housing the fire). Another condition, of not allowing any northern light to enter the prayer hall, gave rise to the notion of overhead light.

Next came the task of formalizing the curved wall. I wanted to house benches in the niches provided in the wall; admit overhead natural light, so that the seated devotees could read their prayer books; and sculpt the light in a manner that would evoke an ethereal feeling.

Since the devotees should feel the connection between themselves and the fire, I came to the realization that the form of this wall should be generated out of the windows in the *kebla*. Sections of the curved northern wall admit overhead natural light by reaching out higher into the sky to greet the sun. The natural light is collected by these light wells and diffused into the prayer hall.

I wanted to capture the spiritual quality of the light that enters the curved eastern wall of Le Corbusier's church Notre-Dame du Haut at Ronchamp, France. Le Corbusier realized the vital role that natural light plays in sacred architecture. He wrote,

"Architecture is the correct and magnificent play of masses brought together in light."

Louis Kahn remarks,

"A space in architecture needs that life-giving light – light from which we were made."

Two bells are provided for use in the *boi* ceremony. A long chain is connected to them, and they are struck

Models of a fire temple. Top to down, plan view, south view with roof; southwest view, without roof. MODELS AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEVILLE RUSTOMJEE.

nine times during the beginning of each of the *gehs* (watches of the day when the priest services the fire). The bell is rung to make the devotees aware of the boi ceremony; to drive away evil thoughts, words and deeds; and to sound the ultra-high frequency of the bell which is supposed to send out vibrations that bless the devotees. The prayer hall was designed with the following considerations in mind:

- It protects and surrounds the kebla. It prevents view into the kebla from outside, since non-Zoroastrians are not permitted to see the consecrated fire.

- It should be planned to limit the possibility of devotees praying facing north.

- It should provide provision for people to sit.

- It should create a feeling of serenity and encourage piousness.

The following sequence of ritual performance, corresponds to the design in this thesis.

(1) Wash hands at the well before entering the temple complex.

(2) Climb up the stairs which are flanked by statues of Assyrian bulls that date back to the ancient Persian empires and serve as symbolic guardians of the sanctity of the temple.

(3) Enter the main temple.

(4) Remove shoes and place them under the benches.

(5) Wash hands after touching shoes.

(6) Go to a kushti room and perform the initial kushti prayers, facing east. One can step onto the patio and recite the prayers outdoors on nice days.

(7) Proceed to the anteroom, light oil lamps (*diva*), buy sandalwood, and pay respect to the picture of the prophet.

(8) Enter the prayer hall.

(9) Approach the kebla entrance and kneel on the floor with one's head on the threshold, having a silent communication with Ahura Mazda.

Place sandalwood and a monetary donation in a tray at the entrance, as an offering to the *Atash Padshah* (the enthroned fire). Take a pinch of *rakhia* (ashes) from the ladle in the tray, and apply it to the forehead to invoke the blessings of Ahura Mazda and show loyalty to Him.

(10) Step backwards from the kebla entrance, whilst facing the fire, and without turning one's back to it.

(11) Move to the seats provided in the curved northern wall, or stand facing the kebla and recite prayers.

CONCEPT OF LIGHT

Since the concept most closely associated with Ahura Mazda is **light**, I felt it incumbent on me to treat it with utmost care and respect. The difficulty lies not in admitting light, but controlling it, molding it, and shaping it to generate the desired effect. In *Beginnings: Louis I. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture*, Alexander Tyng notes:

"Kahn's fascination with light had given rise to his observation that structure actually makes or molds light by taming it into a workable state."

Just as fluids take the form of their container, light takes the form of the structure. In the curved wall of the prayer hall, in a sense, the nature of light dictates the form. Light is the element of importance. In his book *Tao Te Ching*, Stephen Mitchell translates a passage of Lao-tsu's writings that elucidates this point:

"We shape clay into a pot but it is the emptiness inside that holds whatever we want."

In *The Tao of Architecture*, Amos Ih Tiao Chang translates one section of Lao-tsu's book that expresses the same notion:

"Molding clay into a vessel, we find the utility in its hollowness."

Cutting doors and windows for a house, we find the utility in its empty space."

Therefore the being of things is profitable, the non-being of things is serviceable."

Neville Rustomjee has a Bachelor of Architecture with a minor in



Interior Design from Virginia Tech in 1991. He is currently working with MTF Architecture, Inc. in Arlington, VA, involved with the design of religious buildings, historic renovation,

governmental, institutional, commercial and high-end residential work. He helped the European Zarathushti Fire Temple Trust, in London, UK, plan a fire temple complex [see *FEZANA Journal*, Spring 2001]. He is serving as a consultant to the American architect for the Washington, DC Zoroastrian Center, and is on their building committee.

Neville is very interested in offering his talents in the service of the Zarathushti community. Contact him at neville_rust@hotmail.com. Please put "Fire Temple" in the subject line.



Fire

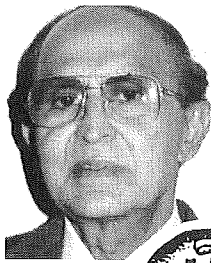
By Farida Bamji

The body is a Temple
Afarganyu is the Heart
Fire contained within it
Begins to smoulder
Then it starts to spark.

Zarathushtis aren't
fire-worshippers
As it's made out to be.
We worship it as a Symbol
Of Vitality, Energy
As well as
Asha, Wisdom and Purity.

"Nem-sete Atash Mazdao
Ahure Hudhao Mazist Yazd"
Thee I Bow
And beg to be heard:
"I shall pass this way but once
Any good therefore I can do
Let me do it now
For I shall not pass
this way again!"

Achaemenian Columns Recreated in California



The Achaemenian column with the bull capital [photo right middle] as seen in the 5th century BCE "Hall of a Hundred Columns" at Persepolis, [see sketches below from *"The Persians"* by Jim Hicks, Ed. Time-Life Books, ISBN 7054 0126x, 1976] was the inspiration for the four columns that adorn the facade of the Rustom Guiv Dar-e Mehr [photo right] in Westminster, California. Architect **Keki Amaria** [above], who has worked with prominent US architectural projects, including Epcot Center and some Los Angeles Walt Disney projects, writes:

"Through a recommendation by Farokh and Naju Dastur, Goolbanu Sukhia, and an opportunity given by Ardeshir and Shida Anoshiravani, I am proud to have been introduced to the project. With the much appreciated help and supervision of general contractor, Iraj Mavandadi, we successfully designed and built the Achaemenian style facade."

The columns, with the bull capitals, as well as the farohar on the facade, were fabricated locally in concrete and steel by an Italian sculptor in his pre-cast concrete moldings workshop. The 23 ft. high columns, with the 6 ft wide bull capitals are an exact copy of the Persepolis columns, and were built from full-size, detailed drawings, provided by Mr. Amaria. The columns and the Asho Farohar, which is also made in concrete and steel, cost \$30,000 in 1986, when the dar-e-mehr was built.

The *kebla* (inner prayer room), about 25' x 30' in size, is located behind a half-inch thick glass wall, which stretches across the back wall of the stage in the main hall of the 8000 sq. ft. dar-e-mehr complex. The glass wall is a feature often seen in fire temples in Iran.

The prayer room houses a large afargan, which was shipped to Los Angeles from an agiary that closed down in Surat, India. Jashans and other religious ceremonies are performed within the prayer room, though for large gatherings, the congregation sits outside in the large main hall.

- By Roshan Rivetna



PHOTO: KEKI AMARIA

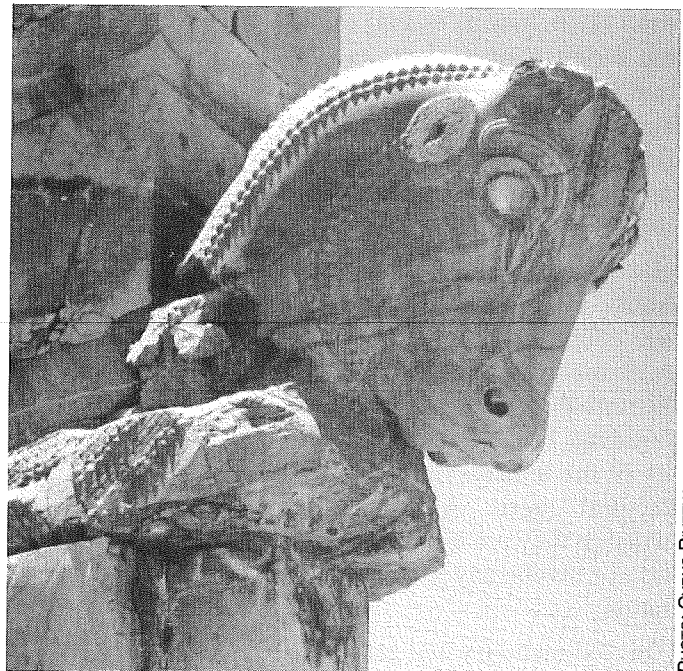


PHOTO: CYRUS RIVETNA

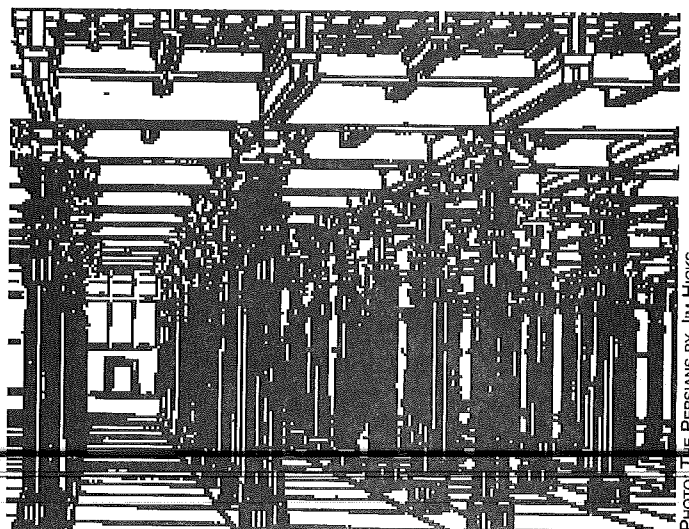


PHOTO: THE PERSIANS BY JIM HICKS

Plans for a Fire Temple: a Personal Odyssey

It is time to start thinking seriously of the relevance of our faith in the modern world and of the need to express that faith by building fire temples that proclaim Zarathushtra's teachings in a contemporary way.

By Kersey D. Moddie
Essex, England

Recently, there have been efforts by Zarathushti organizations in UK to acquire premises or sites to establish a fire temple and community hall. As an architect I felt that their efforts lacked vision and their subsequent purchase of a derelict cinema was ill-conceived.

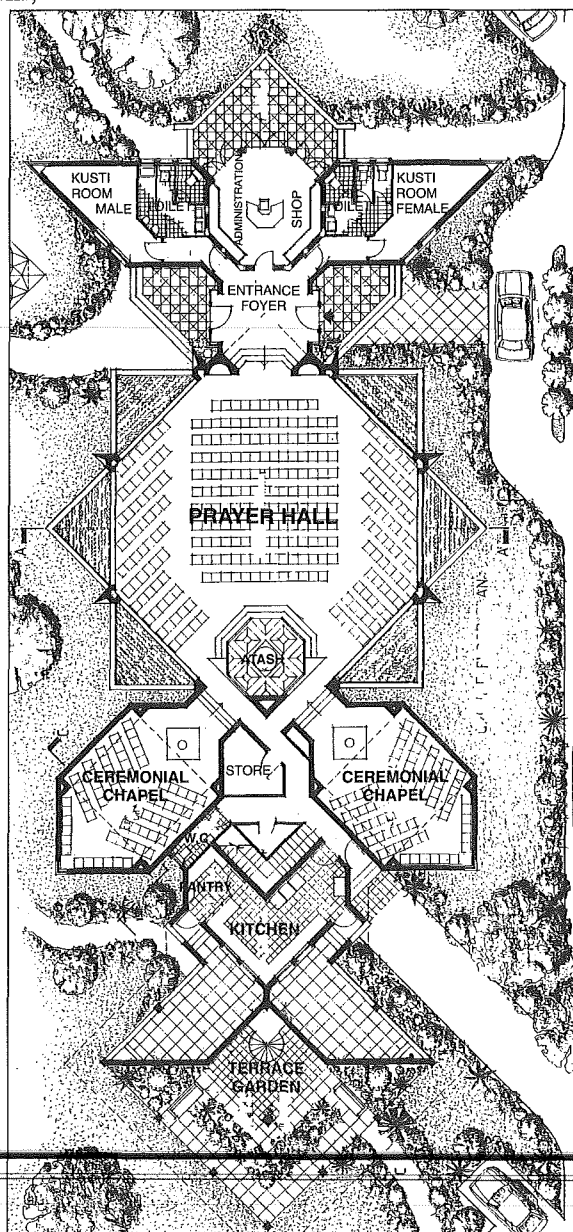
Is it not time, in the new millennium, for us Zarathushtis to start thinking seriously of the relevance of our faith in the modern world, and of the need to express that faith by building fire temples that proclaim Zarathushtra's teachings in a contemporary way?

Historically, it is unfortunate that, unlike other religious buildings, fire temple designs are not in the mainstream of architectural and historical studies for religious buildings because the vast majority of fire temples have no architectural merit. As places of worship they are a failure if they do not invoke any spiritual aspiration.

This led me to try and gather relevant architectural data concerning religious and liturgical procedures, before preparing a schedule of requirements and attempt, albeit empirically but very seriously, a design that would give contemporary expression to the Zarathushti faith. It is not directed at any particular location or community. It is a concept that glorifies fire and endeavors to symbolize modern Zarathushti practice.

It seems to me that there was insufficient awareness in our community of the important

design and architectural implications of embarking on a project of this nature. If the worship of God is the highest form of idealism, then surely, to give relevant and contemporary expression to that ideal, we must design and build with a zeal and integrity that is commensurate with that vision.



DESIGN DESCRIPTION.

An effective design of a fire temple complex, is shown in the diagrams [facing page and below].

A site of 2 acres was considered suitable for the community's needs, and of sufficient size to permit an attractive landscaped environment.

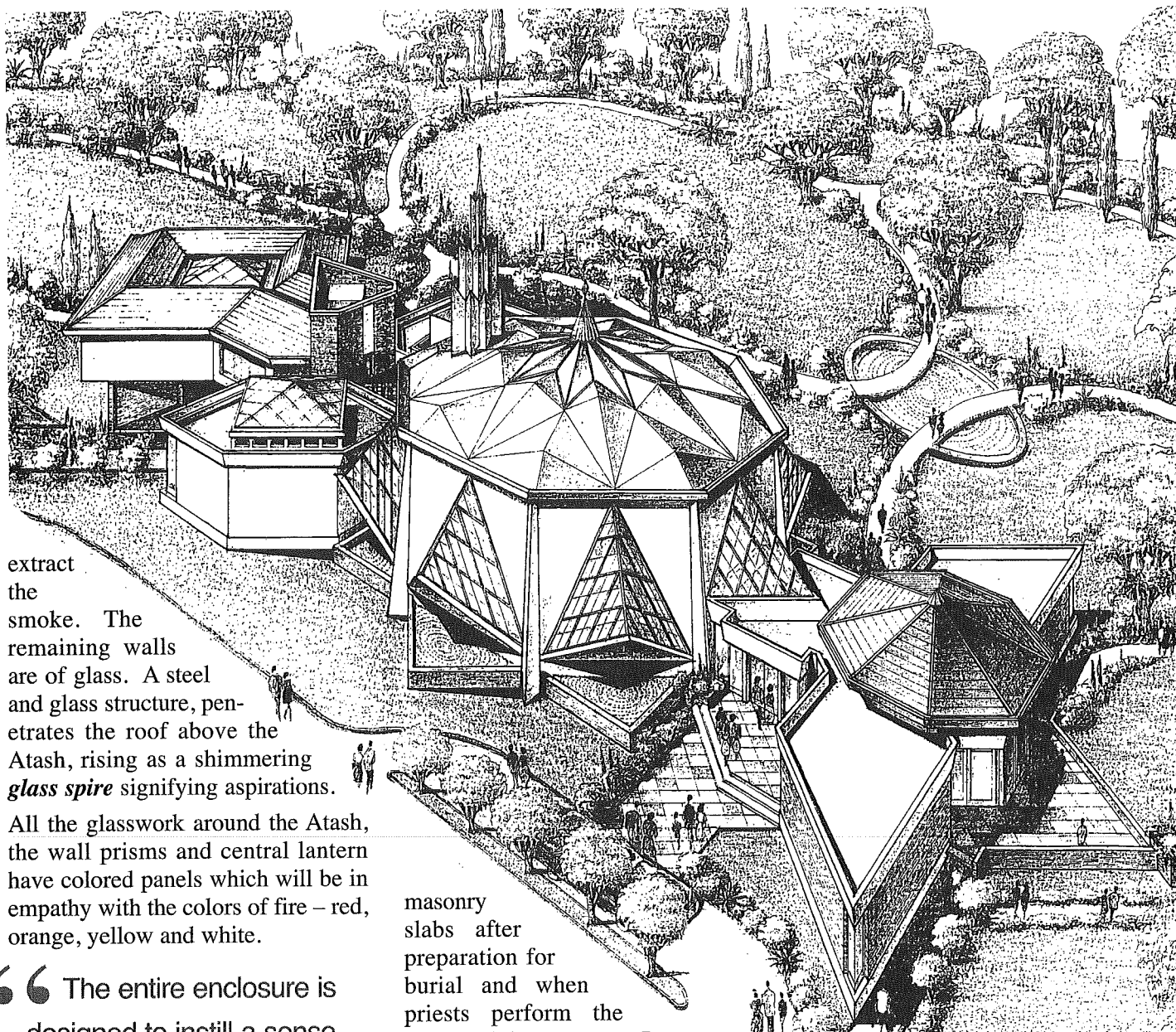
To the right of the *main entrance* and foyer is the *administrative wing*, with a central office which houses a reference library and community records (births, marriages, deaths, navjotes, weddings, etc) and shop for purchase of sandalwood, frankincense, sudrehs, kushtis, etc.

Flanking the office block are the male and female *washrooms* with spaces for performing *kushti* prayers.

From the foyer, the worshipper is drawn into the main *prayer hall* up a flight of steps under the sky-light glazed canopy with the Atash (fire) enclosure straight in front. The six faceted walls of the temple have triangular glass prisms attracting light into sloped triangular surfaces, resulting in a subdued light.

The roof consists of faceted folded slabs with a glazed central lantern forming a sunburst central feature. The entire enclosure of the place of worship, floors, walls and roof, are designed to instill a sense of reverence and inner sanctity in the minds and hearts of the worshippers.

The *Atash enclosure* is designed to glorify the flame. The rear wall contains a chimney to



extract the smoke. The remaining walls are of glass. A steel and glass structure, penetrates the roof above the Atash, rising as a shimmering **glass spire** signifying aspirations.

All the glasswork around the Atash, the wall prisms and central lantern have colored panels which will be in empathy with the colors of fire – red, orange, yellow and white.

“ The entire enclosure is designed to instill a sense of reverence and inner sanctity in the minds and hearts of the worshipers. ”

Branching out are **two chapels** for liturgical ceremonies such Yasna, Visperad, Vendidad, Baj, Nirangdin. The Atash is visible from both chapels.

A corridor leads to a communal **kitchen** and **storage** rooms. Above are two **priests apartments** with independent access for resident priests and their families.

Near the entrance to the site is a separate site for the **Bungli**, for funeral ceremonies. It consists of a small chapel where the corpse is laid on

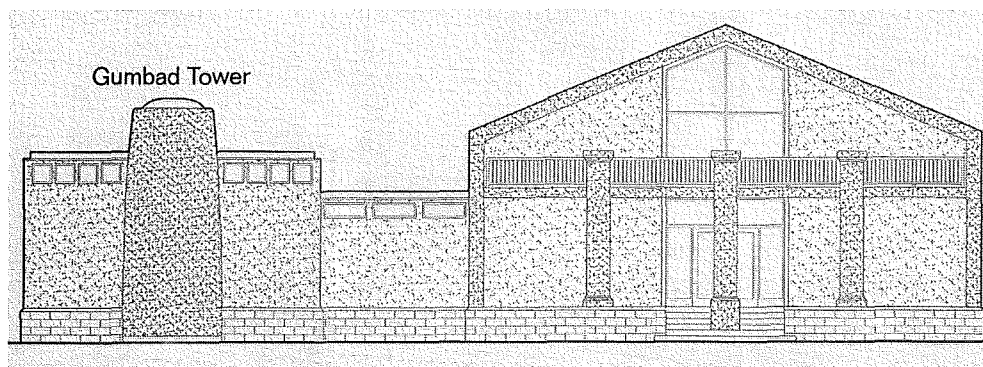
masonry slabs after preparation for burial and when priests perform the ceremonial prayers. It also includes residential accommodation where the deceased's family may temporarily reside during the prayers.

Provision is made for **car parking** commensurate with the size of the community. The site is pleasantly **landscaped** to provide a suitably reposeful environment for relaxation and contemplation.

Traditionally, an essential requirement for a fire temple is a **well** from which fresh water is drawn for ablution and ceremonial purposes. This may be controlled by local statutory requirements. This design envisages an arrangement whereby clean water supply can be provided through a chamber surrounded by an ornamental pond

integral with the gardens, footpath, trees, lawns and ornamental shrubs. ■

Kersasp Dorab Moddie has been in the architectural profession for 51 years. A graduate of the Sir J. J. School of Art in Bombay in 1951, Mr. Moddie has worked in Kenya, Zanzibar, Uganda, UK and India, on projects ranging from individual houses, large housing and urban development, educational, leisure, commercial, industrial and furniture design. Now 78 years old, he writes: “As age is not necessarily an impediment in design work, I have tended to give myself theoretical design projects to do at home. The Zarathushti Fire Temple is the latest of these.”

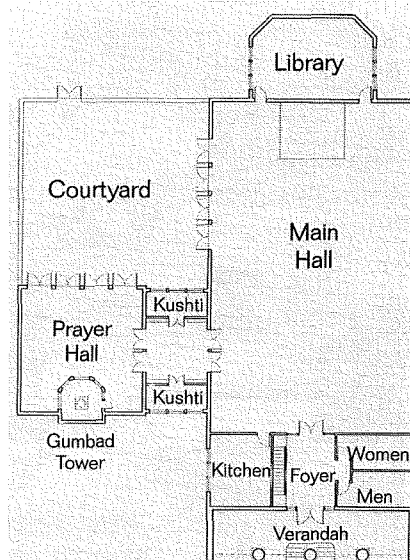


Conceptual design for a dar-e-mehr in North America

When constructing any building one must reference and understand the past, but build for the present and future. To build without referencing the past is to disregard centuries of thought and evolution.

Dar-e-mehrs of North America are no different. In this proposed design of a dar-e-mehr, I have created a building that attempts to fill the needs of the North American community. There are two major spaces in the building – the religious and the secular. Central to the religious space is the *gumbad* tower, the inner sanctum for the sacred fire, and a surrounding prayer room, which need not be very large, since Zarathushtis do not congregate to worship or to listen to sermons. The secular spaces include: a large, dominant, multi-use hall for community gathering, a library/classrooms and a kitchen. Both areas share a common exterior courtyard in the rear. The exterior of the building is likewise in two areas, neither dominating over the other. The forms are simple and designed to fit into a residential community. ■

- By Cyrus Rivetna, Chicago, Illinois



Understanding the fire temple tradition

By Rohinton M. Rivetna

There are many traditions we take for granted, until their absence makes one ponder and the light begins to shine!

The 'gumbad'. One such tradition is the design of the '*gumbad*' or '*kebla*' or inner sanctum where the atash is kept, in an afargan. In our traditional fire temples the spaces for worship, outside the kebla are quite free of smoke, even though the fire may be roaring within the inner chamber. Whereas, here in North America, smoke often permeates the outer chambers, and even heavy duty exhaust fans do not have enough capture velocities to be effective.

The principle used in the traditional gumbad is that of creating a "natural draft" versus a "forced draft". The afargan is placed in a narrow enclosure, perhaps 20' by 20' with walls extending upwards 30' to 35'. The openings (doors and windows) at the base of this 'chimney' cause a natural

draft upwards, that carries the smoke outside. The doors and windows are used to control the amount of draft, eg. at times when the fire is allowed to smolder.

This principle could serve us well in the design of our temples, except that in the northern climes, the release of heated air to the outside may be wasteful and expensive. Innovative, static conservation techniques, to utilize outside, unheated air for combustion, may have to be devised.

The halls. The *prayer hall* surrounding the kebla need not be very large, as traditionally Zarathushtis do not congregate to worship as do Christians or Muslims. However, we do congregate for festivals, jashans, gahambars, weddings/navjotes as well as for secular activities (parties, meetings, conferences, etc.). Hence a large *community hall* with kitchen, maybe elsewhere in the complex, with ample parking is a necessity.

Yazeshne Gah. An essential feature of traditional temples is the '*Yaza-*

shna Gah' with a '*pavi*' (water channels) in the floor, for '*pav mahal*' ceremonies, also called the 'inner' liturgical ceremonies, such as Yasna, Visperad, Vendidad and Baj. This however, should not be a consideration until such time as we have a properly consecrated fire temple.

Spaces for ritual purity. There are other spaces in traditional fire temple complexes, for maintenance of ritual purity, such as: space for performance of the *kushti padyab* by the devotees; a separate kitchen for preparation of ceremonial foods; quarters where the mobeds who take *bareshtnum* (purificatory bath), who tend the fire and who change the '*gahs*' (watches of the day) reside; and maybe a space for initiation of *navars/martabs* (initiates into the priesthood).

These are features that should be considered, should we aspire to building a continuously burning, consecrated fire temple in the western diaspora. ■

It is only befitting that fire be the symbolic representation of a faith so deeply rooted in antiquity. Fire – the purest form of all elements that gave light, warmth, protection, comfort and health to ancient man as he sat in the dark shadows of the night, on the vast and untamed steppes of Central Asia. What great comforter, fire, ‘son of Ahura Mazda’, must have been for these early humans. These early Aryan ancestors, from whom sprang the Indo-Iranian religious thoughts and tenets, revered and cherished fire.



Lest We Forget

By Dinaz Kutar Rogers

Do you remember any stories or sayings?

“Lest We Forget” is hosted by Dinaz Kutar Rogers, a high-school biology teacher and published writer. Readers are invited to contribute their stories, lores, legends and memories related to our faith, community, Iran, India, that we grew up with as young children. Jot down those sayings your mother used to say, and send them in, with your version of the meanings, to Dinaz at 1240 Takena SW, Albany, Oregon 97321, tel: (541) 967-1911, email: drogorsor@msn.com.

Our Holy Symbol Atar (Fire)



A fire temple in Isfahan

Zarathushtra taught that fire was the most sacred element, a gift from Ahura Mazda and an exalted badge of truth, as it had the power to dispel darkness, evil and lies. Thus fires were kept burning as the outward, holy manifestation of the faith, in fire temples, throughout ancient Iran.

Fire alone of all nature’s creations, destroys as it builds, its flames leap and aim only heavenward, transmuting all that it contacts, to become part of the actual or symbolic blaze.

Thus fire became the sum and substance, the very core of these ancient Iranians’ faith, making traditional temples with four walls and a roof unfit for the rising flames to reach

and confer with the heavens. Temple ceilings and four walls were more confining than liberating for this religious symbol and religious thought; yet surely there must have been some types of structures to protect the fire from dying out. Much to Herodotus’ surprise and puzzlement, the Persians had no images and icons of gods to worship, nor traditional temples, in the Greek understanding of the word, in which to praise and pray.

Ancient Fire altars. Much later on we do speak of Zarathushti buildings of worship as fire-temples but in the earlier days of the faith, fire altars were built with the sole aim of the upward leaping of unfettered flames in mind. So far, five such remains of tower temples from Cyrus’s time have been excavated.

In the 1960s, at Dahan-i Ghulaman in Eastern Iran, a more complicated tower built (sometime between 600 and 400 BCE) entirely of mud brick, its outer wall rising to about 175 feet

high, was unearthed. Yet another one excavated at Naqsh-e Rostam, more likely built by Darius I, of basalt and limestone, reached a height of about only 36 feet. The only time these eternally-burning fires were permitted to be reduced to ashes was when the king died. His successor, the new king, restarted the holy royal fire.

Thus even for ancient times, Zarathushti fire-temples were a magnificent sight – simple yet impressive, tall square structures, having one high-walled room with a stairway guiding up to where the magi attended to and prayed over the holy *atar* (fire).

Fire rituals. Even today, in our modern times, in our homes and fire-temples, we tend to the fires, pray over them and protect them. But then, any fire is *our* fire and most Zarathushtis still cringe at having to blow, for example, on lit birthday candles on a cake. This modern-day practice of not desecrating the holy fire was recorded by Strabo, the Greek geog-

rapher, about 2060 years ago (60 BCE). He wrote of large monuments and shrines to fire, called *Pyraetheia*, in the middle of which were altars, where the magi kept eternal fires burning, nestled in heaps of ashes.

He describes the daily, hour-long rituals of tending to the flames and prayers by the magi, holding bundles of *baresman/barsom* twigs in their hands and dressed in long white robes with high turbans made of felt that reached down to cover their lips and side of their cheeks, lest spittle from their own mouths should defile the blessedness of the flames.

“ Fire alone of all
nature’s creations,
destroys as it builds, its
flames leap and aim
only heavenward. ”

These magi were always cautious, attentive and vigilant, when starting a new fire or keeping one going, so as to never blow on the flame but instead fan it. In fact this injunction against the defilement of the holy fire was so severe that anyone caught blowing on the flames, throwing dirt, debris or dead things in it was put to death. More likely than not, Strabo gleaned this knowledge from the written, eyewitness accounts of Greek historians who had accompanied Alexander of Macedonia in the wars against the Persian Empire, some 300 years before his time.

Today, we Zarathushtis are still mindful of these practices and prohibitions against defiling fire, any fire – yet another continuous thread binding us to the Zarathushtis of yesteryear. A testimonial to the holding powers of time and tradition of centuries gone by, that has been kept alive through adversity, persecutions and prosperity. What a marvelous tribute to the resolve and strength of faith.

Fire, indeed the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end – an omnipotent representation of a great faith.

— By Dinaz Rogers

Takht-e Suleiman: City of Royal Fire

Even though Takht-e Suleiman [photo below] was rediscovered in 1819 by Sir Robert Kerr Porter, it was not until the 1959 discovery of stamped clay impressions by the German Archeological Institute that this location was unequivocally established as the “City of Royal Fire”.

One of the more interesting facts to emerge from these finds was that this site was sacred and revered even before the Sasanian King Khusrow I (513 - 579 CE) renovated and transformed the temple and the city to the status of Iran’s first city and first fire temple for religious ceremonies and pilgrims. The city’s impressive North Gate served as an entrance for the processional way which traversed the city, the fire temple, and culminated at the edge of the lake. Following their coronation, in Ctesiphon, these Zarathushti kings would make a humbling journey on foot, to be blessed at the most sacred fire altar in Iran.

Could this be an ancient practice that we observe even today? After a sacred occasion like a navjote or a wedding, Parsis are enjoined to make a pilgrimage to the “most sacred of all fires” – the Iranshah fire temple at Udvada, or to a local atash bahram, and if that is not possible, at least to the local agiary.

In the *Atlas of Mysterious Places* [1] the author unequivocally proclaims Takht-e Suleiman to be the holiest place of the Zarathushtis until the conquest of Iran by the Islamic Arabs.

The Mongols called these old and forgotten ruins *Satriq* and the Arabs called this once-thriving city, built for the sole purpose of Zarathushti religious rituals and practices, *Shiz*.

What drew out ancient, migratory ancestors, the Aryans, to this region? Iran then as now, sits on an active region of earthquakes and dormant volcanoes. These Aryans, the founders of Ariyana Vaeja, had always held elements of nature – earth, fire and water – to be sacrosanct, and their defilement to be an abominable sin. With such strong religious convictions, they found this an ideal location to honor their God Ahura Mazda and the water goddess, Anahita, and built a city with a fire



PHOTO: IRANIAN MYTHOLOGY BY JOAN R. HINNELT

temple as its central focus, wherein the royal fire, *Atar Gushnasp* was kept burning, on the shores of a deep, turquoise-blue lake, in the northwest corner of Iran (in Media).

Even though the sacred fires, spoken of as inextinguishable, and created by Ahura Mazda to safeguard His realm, were established and consecrated during the Parthian rule, in c. 150 BCE, it was not until the coming of the Sasanians, around 3 to 7 CE, when the Zarathushti religion was declared the official religion of king and country, that open-air fire altars and some fires enclosed in fire temples were set up in almost every village and for all social classes.

O! What an impressive yet spiritually satisfying and extraordinary scene it must have been to see these “flames of our faith”, from near and far, day and night, in those far away times.

The architectural scheme of these ancient fire temples, ‘*chahar taq*’ (four arches) consisted of a square with four pillars linked by arches and an all-encompassing dome. Knowing well that Iran gave Islam its architecture, art, music, poetry and many other fine refinements, could the *chahar taq* have been the architectural prototype for the conquering Arabs to model their mosques after?

The Persian dynasties did not leave much in writing, but they left behind their stories and rituals in the form of bas-reliefs carved into the precipitous inclines of high, rocky, craggy hill-sides (to prevent vandalism and revision?) and usually near riverbanks (a great location for a desert country), all over Iran but mostly in the province of Fars. Such gigantic, magnificent friezes served as the ancient world’s modern-day billboards, announcing the grandeur of the Persian sovereignty, especially the relationship of these kings with their Ahura Mazda (the Royal Farr).■

REFERENCE

[1] *Atlas of Mysterious Places*, Ed. Jennifer Westwood, Marshall Edition Ltd., 1987.

- By Dinaz Rogers

My mother used to say...

“The old forget. The young don’t know.” - Japanese proverb

“Bharuchi bhaaji chhaapre chhaapre nachi, saw chana baaray towpan kaachi ni kaachi”

Bhaaji (spinach) made in Bharuch dances from the rooftops, but even if a 100 chickpeas are roasted it still remains uncooked. Spinach cooked in the town of Bharuch (in Gujarat) is highly touted. But folks from other towns deride it, saying that even if 100 chickpeas are roasted (Bharuchi bhaji is special as it has roasted chickpeas in it) it will still remain unpalatable. This saying is used when some thing is much touted and then turns out to be not upto expectations. For example, this saying is apt when one boasts of being an extraordinarily gifted cook, but the result is not satisfactory.

“Kharow khoday, tay teh maj pareh”

The one who digs a hole, falls in it. The English equivalent is: “The biter bit”. One who wishes ill of others gets himself embroiled in trouble. This saying is uttered when someone’s bad deed backfires.

“Jay karey, tej bhuray” or “Jem kuray, tem bhuray”

One who does, is the one who pays or the way one does (things), is the way one will pay (for it); or “As you sow, so shall you reap.” This is a variation of the previous saying. You will pay for the way you do things. These sayings are used when someone is made to pay for his/her own misdeeds. I have rarely seen it used when someone’s good or smart deeds are appreciated or rewarded.

“Kaka kaha(n), tow jana tah(n)”

Where is the uncle? In the same place as before! He has gone nowhere or has made no progress at all. This saying is used when one’s great efforts in a certain direction, do not bear any fruit.

“Dur thi doongar raliyamna”

The mountains look lovely from afar. This is used when an object or person has to be kept or admired at a distance; e.g. when those you consider friends let you down or there is some disagreement between friends, and one would like to keep his/her distance. Or if an object is best admired from afar only without getting too close.

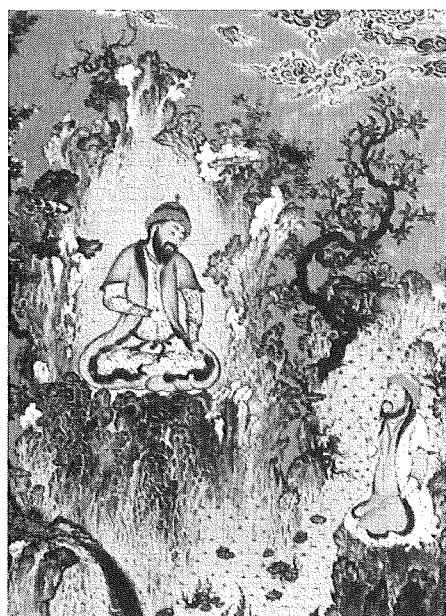
“Soonna karta(n) gharaman bhaari”

The workmanship is more costly than the gold. This saying is used when something that is secondary gains more importance, or an accessory costs more than the main item. When women have jewelry made, their main expense should be in the gold and not in the workmanship. This reminds me of an Adi Marzban natak (comedy) where Jimmy Poncha (Adi’s comedian) sells Adi an electric iron by quoting a ridiculously low price for it, but then tries to fleece Adi by quoting an exorbitantly high price for the power-cord!

“Mun bugray toh tun bugray, tun bugray toh dhun bugray”

Lose your mind and you lose your health; lose your health and you lose your wealth. This saying is full of wisdom in these times of stress. It shows the importance of remaining calm and keeping one’s wits and not losing one’s mind. My father-in-law used to emphasize that wealth without health is of no value at all. So, if you lose your mind or become very upset over something your health suffers, and if that happens you ultimately lose your wealth as well.

[Submitted by **Parvin Damania**, administrative assistant in the Institute of Toxicology at University of California, Davis. She has a BA in English literature and French from the University of Bombay and a diploma in Secretarial Practice, Bombay. Contact Parvin at padamania@hotmail.com].



King Kayumarz holds court on a rocky throne. The angel Sraosh is on a pinnacle nearby and his son Siamak is at right. Note the clothing made from animal skins. [FROM THE HOUGHTON SHAH NAMEH, C. 1530]

King Kayumarz fights Ahriman

At the very beginning of time, after Ahura Mazda created the world, the wise Lord realized that there was good and evil in the world. Ahura Mazda wanted his children, to have a strong leader who would show them how to live a good life. Ahura Mazda searched the earth for a man who was determined to make his world a better place. He realized that near the land of Iran there lived a man called Kayumarz who had all the qualities that Ahura Mazda felt such a leader should have. So he bestowed a divine *farr* on Kayumarz, and all men and beasts accepted Kayumarz as their king.

One night as King Kayumarz lay sleeping, Ahura Mazda's angel Sraosh appeared before the king in a dream. The king saw a bright golden glow fill his surroundings. He bowed to Sraosh and welcomed him with splendor, "O Welcome! Divine messenger of Ahura Mazda! To what, pray tell, do I owe this honor?"

SUNDAY STORIES

By Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi

While preparing for my navjote, I spent Sunday mornings, with other children, in the tiny flat of old Mr. Dhunjishah, who taught us our prayers. One rainy day when we were stranded in the flat, Mr. Dhanjishah gathered us around his easy chair and told us the story of Zarathushtra in King Vishtasp's court. He had us under his spell until the rain abated. It was difficult to go home that Sunday because we had so many questions and wanted to hear many more stories. We clamored for another story the following Sunday. From then on, Mr. Dhunjishah would captivate our attention each weekend with a wonderful story from our past. In the absence of a Mr. Dhunjishah, this column will excerpt tales from other sources, and provide them in a manner that will allow you to share our rich heritage with today's teens and pre-teens. The column begins with stories from Firdowsi's Shah Nameh.

Sraosh's expression was grim, for Ahura Mazda had sent Sraosh to warn the King.

"Beware! King Kayumarz," said Sraosh, "Take care in all you do, for the evil spirit of Ahriman has possessed many of your courtiers and is spreading evil thoughts throughout your kingdom. You must fight Ahriman and purge this evil, so that you shall have a kingdom built on good thoughts, good words and good deeds." Then just as swiftly as he had come, Sraosh was gone. In the morning, the king called for his son, Siamak, and told him all that had happened.

"We must fight the evil Ahriman with all our might!" said Siamak. "Father, lend me your armor; send me your men. I shall lead them into battle and destroy the evil Ahriman. You shall have a kingdom built on good thoughts, good words and good deeds, for such is the will of the great Ahura Mazda."

King Kayumarz blessed his son, and Siamak led his father's army into battle. He and his army fought for many long, hard days. But the fight against evil is not one that ends easily. Ahriman was cunning. He tricked Siamak and killed him. The soldiers

carried Siamak's body back to King Kayumarz and laid him down at his feet. In tears, Siamak's lieutenant told the King:

*"In the dirt Ahriman
laid your son low,
Clawed at his gut,
and struck the fatal blow:
So perished our beloved Siamak –
at a demon's hand;
Left leaderless his people
and his land."*

[Shah Nameh, translation by Dick Davis]

Siamak had been such a beloved son to the entire kingdom, that for years after his death the king and his people wept over his death.

Then one day, the angel Sraosh, appeared before the King again. "How could this happen?" Kayumarz cried to him.

Sraosh spread a light over Kayumarz that brought him peace. Then he said gently, "Kayumarz, weep no more... Siamak's son, Hushang, has grown to be strong and brave. Teach him to avenge his father with honor. Teach him to fight on the side of good. Build up your army again; do not lose hope! Now is the time for you to fight! Be courageous, so that you may purify this land and rid it of all evil."

Hushang avenges his father and discovers fire

The King summoned his grandson Hushang to him, and together, they crafted a plan of battle to fight the demons of Ahriman. Hushang returned victorious from the battle, where he had captured Ahriman's son. Siamak had been avenged and Hushang became a hero in all the land. When the great King Kayumarz died, the divine farr passed to Hushang who became the next great king.

One day, when King Hushang was hunting, a vicious black serpent sud-

denly darted out of the bushes and appeared before him. The brave king quickly picked up a rock and threw it at the serpent. Hushang stared in disbelief! The serpent had quickly slithered away, but the rock had struck another rock and there was a spark! Hushang realized you could create fire by striking one rock against another!

Hushang shared his discovery with his people, and said:



PHOTO: ROYAL PERSIAN MANUSCRIPTS BY STUART CARY WELCH

Hushang goes to war against the demons and slays the black div. [FROM THE HOUGHTON SHAH NAMEH, C. 1530]

"Fire is a thing of divine splendor; we must revere it and rejoice in its presence for it will bring us many blessings. We shall have warmth in the winter and light in the dark, and that, my friends, is just the beginning of what it shall do for mankind."

The people had a huge festival at which they lit a great bonfire in celebration of Hushang's discovery. To this day, every year, Iranians celebrate the *Jashne Sadeh* festival in remembrance of that night.

So continued the life of King Hushang and his son Tehmure who became king after him. They built a better world for their people and they constantly struggled to keep Ahriman's evil ways far from them.

Coming next time ...

In all the history of the world, however, there had never been a king as great as Jamshid, who was crowned with great splendor, after Tehmure died. Ahura Mazda had bestowed on Jamshid a divine *farr* more splendid than that of any king who went before him. Read about the rise and fall of Jamshid in the next issue of FEZANA Journal! ■

Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi

lives in New York City. She writes as a hobby and welcomes your questions, suggestions, concerns, comments and constructive criticisms at: sunday_stories@hotmail.com

Who wrote the Shah Nameh?

(www.factmonster.com)

This story was excerpted from Firdowsi's *Shah Nameh*. Firdowsi (c. 940–1020) was a Persian poet, who lived at the court of Mahmud of Ghazna. He wrote the *Shah Nameh* ("The Book of Kings") an epic history of pre-Arab Persia, in 60,000 verses, to glorify Persia's past. He dedicated the work to Mahmud of Ghazna,

but the King paid him less than Firdowsi expected. The poet wrote a savage satire on the king and fled.

The *Shah Nameh* is considered the first great work of modern Persian literature. In it, Firdowsi set the mark for Persian poetry with his even rhyme, stately cadences, and continuous flow. The poem has taken a singular place in Iran, and passages from it are recited by all.

Zarathushtis look to the *Shah Nameh* for stories of their ancestors. ■

READER'S FORUM

This column is a forum to present information and opinions. Letters (under 250 words) may be submitted to the editor. The Journal reserves the right to edit all materials for clarity and space.

Thank You! Thank You!

A big Thank You to all of you for the overwhelming response, in the way of congratulatory letters [see some below] as well as sales and donations for **"The Legacy of Zarathushtra"**, a book for sharing with our North American neighbors, which was sent as a complimentary supplement with the Summer 2002 journal.

Roshan Rivetna, Editor

To order **"Legacy of Zarathushtra"** please use the form on the inside back cover of this Journal.

On "Legacy"

The Legacy of Zarathushtra is an invaluable resource for anyone seeking an introduction to, and appreciation of the religion, history and culture of Zarathushtis. It possesses the rare quality of being simultaneously useful to academics and lay people. Above all, readers will discover how this ancient religion (which millennia ago,

had influenced some of the world's largest religions) continues its authentic existence in our modern societies. Thanks for your helpful work.

J. Nathan Kline
Interreligious Program Specialist
National Conference
for Community and Justice (NCCJ)
Graduate student, The Divinity
School of the University of Chicago

Legacy is an excellent introduction to the religion, very well compiled and suitable for all levels of Zarathushtis and their friends.

Cyrus Bulsara
Dallas, Texas

What an outstanding *Legacy* for our future generation. This book makes me feel very proud to be a Zarathushti. My heartfelt thanks to you for this superb "diamond" of our religion. I will be giving a copy to our central library in Los Angeles.

Dolly Malva
Downey, California

Touch of humor

In response to requests from readers (in particular from Er. Kersey H. Antia of Chicago) we will carry a joke or funny piece in each issue to bring a touch of humor to the Journal. If you come across a humorous piece, especially one with a Zarathushti touch, please send it in to journal.editor@fezana.org. Here's, one exemplifying the deep faith of our dasturs:

A Zarathushti from USA, decided to write a book about religions around the world. He started by flying to Rome, and working east from there. At a cathedral there, he spotted a golden telephone on the vestibule wall and was intrigued with a sign which read "Calls: \$10,000 a minute." Seeking out the priest he asked about the sign. The priest answered: "This golden phone is used to call heaven and if you pay the price you can talk directly to God." The man thanked the priest and continued on his way.

As he visited mosques, temples, pagodas, synagogues all around the world, he found more golden phones with the same high priced sign, and the same answer from each priest.

Finally, he arrived in Bombay. Upon reaching a Parsi agiary, lo and behold, he saw the same golden telephone. But this time, the sign read: "Calls: 1 rupee." Fascinated, he asked the priest why the sign read only "1 rupee a call".

The dasturji, smiling benignly, replied, "Son, you're in an agiary now – it's a local call."

I found *Legacy* to be an excellent resource while preparing my proposal for a Fulbright scholarship for a project on Parsis in India. All the facts were very well laid out and easy to find. It was very, very helpful.

Nasha Fitter
New York, New York

I was taken aback by your superbly crafted and edited *Legacy*. I am impressed! Congratulations on your labor of love and devotion ...

Dinaz Kutar Rogers
Albany, Oregon

Compliments on *Legacy*. Well written, very readable, and very informative. I'd like to buy a few copies for my non-Zarathushti friends.

Narges Kakalia
New York, New York

Legacy is a concise and illuminating study. It tells us why this religion is so noble and sublime in its teachings. It goes without saying that this book will be of great value to not only Zarathushtis, but also to non-Zarathushtis interested in our ancient and lofty religion now and in the future.

Aloo Jhabvala Driver
(Retd.) Prof. Sociology
American International College
Springfield, MA

Thank you, FEZANA! *Legacy* is excellent and very informative.

Jimmy M. Bharucha
Ardmore, Pennsylvania

I'd like to commend you for compiling the gems of wisdom in *Legacy*. It encompasses a wide spectrum of topics from ancient origins to modern challenges. Thank you for the exciting ride through the time channel of our Z-heritage.

Meher Amalsad
Westminster, California
www.Bread4theHead.com

Congratulations on your wonderful editorialship to produce *Legacy*. Many thanks for a job well done.

Noshir M. Khambatta
Durham, North Carolina

An excellent effort, *Legacy* will not only be a great help to Zarathushtis, but will clearly convey to others, a very concise view of who we are.

Perhaps if a way is found of translating it in several vernacular languages, it would be a tremendous service to ourselves.

Esadvaster (Ester) Bamji
Chevy Chase, Maryland

I gave *Legacy* to the religion editor of the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel, who interviewed me for a story. His comments were: he was very impressed; it was very well laid out; the information was easy to get at; he loved the different pictorial sidebars. Congratulations on a great job!

Mazda Antia
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Legacy is excellent. Thank you for all the hard work and beautiful results. It is appreciated by all.

Bella Tata
Vancouver, British Columbia

An excellent job – you've given us a lot more to read about our religion. In future issues of the Journal, can we have more knowledge about our religion and less photos of living people and their activities.

Farida Bamji
Ottawa, Ontario

Thank you for such a wonderful and informative book.

Rusi and Piroja Press
Ramsey, New Jersey

Legacy is a great book on our faith. Just magnificent! One proposal for future issues is to consider a fuller section on Zarathushti business enterprise, both historically and contemporaneously. Our younger generations need to see a life in business as being just as viable as in the professions.

Porus Cooper
Cherry Hill, New Jersey

Congratulations on an excellent book. The get-up, the glossy pages, the photos, is what encourages us to start reading. Dipping into it, I find

you have covered all aspects in an easy-to-read manner in 96 pages.

I loved "A Place in World History" – it is an excellent reference and you have made it so interesting and easy to absorb at a glance.

Please keep on printing such books, and count me in on purchasing them.

Daisy Mehta
Torrance, California

Thanks for the wonderful work FEZANA did in publishing *Legacy*. Excellent job!

Rusi Tavadia
Novi, Michigan

I love the layout, pictures and the brief information in the boxes. *Legacy* is excellent!

Toxy Cowasjee
Karachi, Pakistan

There are "insider" and "outsider" audiences for works on religion. *Legacy*, admirably, manages to bridge these in a way that the Zarathushti insiders can be proud and non-Zarathushti inquirers at the same time, can become knowledgeable.

Willard G. Oxtoby, professor emeritus, study of religion, University of Toronto; general editor, World Religions, 2 vols., Oxford University Press (2nd ed. 2002)

Thanks to all the workers without whom we would not have FEZANA or its journal. All of you are to be treasured.

Farhad Minwalla
Cincinnati, Ohio

Great job! Thanks!

Parvez J. Pohowalla, MD
Portland, Oregon

This issue of the journal with its special supplement is perhaps the best ever. The staff deserves highest commendation and approbation from the worldwide Zarathushti community.

The journal has grown from strength to strength and has developed into perhaps the Zarathushti community's

premier quality publication worldwide, disseminating much-needed knowledge of Zarathushti faith, history and culture.

Dinshaw Joshi
Chevy Chase, Maryland

I put out a ZAMWI group mailing about *Legacy* and within 3 hours of my posting, sold about 35 books. You should be proud and heartened by such a response.

Every Zarathushti family should have a copy on their coffee table and also give it out to interested non-Zarathushtis. I will send a couple to the Interfaith Council. Are we doing something to get *Legacy* to Zarathushtis in India and Iran; and to public libraries and public schools; and to the Library of Congress?

Jimmy Dholoo
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Fine work! Very laudable! The concept will bring the faith of Zarathushtra to the knowledge of a vast North American base. I will share *Legacy* with my wife, who is Jewish.

The production is excellent. The pictures are great. I have always enjoyed every journal issue, but this is the best. Thank You!

Sorab K. Modi
Washington, DC

I am impressed! This is the kind of book we need to give to our friends and neighbors to get them familiar with our faith and heritage.

Jamshid Varza
www.vohuman.org

Congratulations to the FEZANA team of dedicated Zarathushtis who compile these excellent journals with so many interesting articles and information. Thanks for a great job.

Roshan Mistri
Singapore

Legacy is an excellent resource, very informative and well produced. The history timeline is especially helpful.

I sent copies to my younger family members, and use it myself as a ref-

erence and for passing to non-Zarathushtis who show interest. People at my work were surprised to see the beautiful pictures of our ancient monuments and heritage.

Neelum Austin
Calgary, Alberta

Great work! Your lovely book helped me answer many questions. Your open and modern interpretations make Zarathushtis' lessons relevant even today.

I am giving a copy to a friend who teaches world religions at a local Catholic school, who has always asked me for information.

Fareesh J. Kanga
Lexington, Kentucky

Hats off to you for producing such an excellent and easy to understand book. Thank you for your hard work, we all benefit so much from it.

Nelly Doctor
Singapore

We at ZAPANJ liked *Legacy* so much, we are giving a copy as a gift to each of our graduating high school students at our Navroze function.

Arnavaz Sukhia
President, Zoroastrian Association
of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

The community should be so grateful to you. *Legacy* is a wonderful introduction to our religion – useful both for our own education as well as serving to introduce the faith and community to non-Zarathushtis. It is a tremendous production, extremely well edited, with excellent selection of material and a logical arrangement of the contents.

The timeline section, in particular, giving Zarathushti events in the context of world history, is an excellent reference source. I am giving copies to several Zarathushti and non-Zarathushti friends.

Farrokh Deboo
New Canaan, Connecticut

Legacy is interesting, informative, and makes good resource material.

The amount of time and effort to produce such a publication must be tremendous. It is much admired and appreciated.

Shirin Jagosh, Secretary,
Zoroastrian Association
of Atlantic Canada
Bedford, Nova Scotia

[We thank ZAAC for sending in a journal subscription, as well as a donation for "Legacy" for every single ZAAC member - Ed].

Thank you for bringing forth a "must read" book. I would say to all, read all the chapters and absorb the essence of our great religion and history. One definitely feels good after reading it.

As a Zarathushti Irani born and brought up in Bombay, our grandmother used to tell us stories about the humiliation and ostracizing, suffered by Zarathushtis in Iran. Yet we survived the ordeals. As long as our sacred fire keeps burning, we will survive all odds.

Purviz Batliwalla
Fullerton, California

You are doing a wonderful job in enlightening us. I find all the articles in the journal very interesting; once I start I want to read the whole magazine. I especially enjoy "My Mother Used to Say" by Dinaz Kutar Rogers, and quotations from our religious texts explained in English.

Here are some suggestions. Can you include: (a) Parsi Gujarati songs, in English, (b) Jokes and natak – our culture is known for fun, happiness and sharing joy; (c) articles on helping with stress – our youth have to face so much stress nowadays, and need to know how to manage it.

Tanaz Bamboat
Munster, Indiana 46321.

The journal stands out as a beacon of our resurgent Zarathushti faith and culture. I have learned so much from it, and want to learn more and pass it on to my children.

I especially enjoy Dinaz Kutar Rogers' fine articles in "Lest We Forget" and "My Mother Used to Say," which make me chuckle and nod when I recognize in them what *my* mother used to say. I loved the article about "Parsi Taro Thaberiyo" and quote this story and the power of our prayers to family and non-Zarathushti friends. Please continue your fine column.

FEZANA Journal is doing yeoman service for our community. I wish I could say more to express my appreciation. May Ahura Mazda bless you all, and may you continue to delight and enlighten us.

Kamal Mehta
Willoughby Hills, Ohio

Pateti, the 'day of patet'

May I point out a discrepancy in the Calendar of Festivals [FEZANA Journal, Summer 2002]; but first a minor (self) introduction. Born in a family of one parent (my father) a Kadmi (or Qaddimi) and one (my mother) a Shenshai (Shahenshahi), I chose to remain a Kadmi. My mother taught us to respect both customs and views, though. I can and do recite (at different times) both the Shenshai *Hormazd Khodae* prayers and our Kadmi *Naam-e-Yazad, Naam-e-Khuda* prayers. We (the Kadmis) also take great pride in reciting the heartfelt *Hamazor*, the Prayer of Unity at the end, since it was so important to our cruelly persecuted Zarathushti Iranians [see my English translation of the text of the kadmi kushti prayer recital on the (Iran Zamin) Ancient Iran home page at www.ancientiran.com]. It is almost identical with the Iranian kushti prayers, as composed by the mobedan-mobeds of the Anjuman-e Tehran.

July 17 this year was our (Kadmi) first Gatha day. The fifth (last) Gatha day, as the last day of the year (on 21 July), was observed by us, the Kadmis as the day of *patet* (repentance). In Iran the followers of the 'ancient calendar' (the old style pre-Julian calendar) are Kadmis. They resent

the Jalali calendar, which dates back from the 'hazira'.

The Faslis, the Iranians and we, the Kadmis of the subcontinent do not particularly 'celebrate' this last Gatha day as 'Pateti'. Some very orthodox Kadmis even become deeply resentful that Pateti has been inflicted on them, although they will, in deep humility generally, not speak out.

During my childhood days my great aunt in Surat used to spend considerable time on the 'day of patet' reciting various *patets* (prayers of repentance) from the Khordeh Avesta to prepare for the following most important day of the Kadmi year – the day of Nouruz, which, this year (1372 YZ) has fallen on July 22.

The Shenshais of the subcontinent do 'celebrate' the last Gatha day as Pateti (and, one would easily be tempted to say, "why not?") with such communal vigor and gusto that they seem to become exhausted. Some, through force of need, feel obliged to spend the following New Year's day (Nouruz) quietly as a more or less household family affair.

May I take the liberty of asking you to rectify the discrepancy thus [on page 7]: "Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd, Mon Jul 22 Nouruz (K)".

A community has, indeed, come of age when it becomes sensitive enough to cease remaining indifferent to the differences.

Dr. Sam Kerr
Sydney, Australia

In Memorium

By Farida Bamji
[Ottawa, Ontario]

On September 11th
That fateful day
So many innocent
Lives were snuffed away.
We know for sure
That heinous crimes
Do not pay
'Cause Ahura Mazda
Will always

Have His last say. ■

Honor and Shame

By Dinaz Kutar Rogers [Albany, Oregon]

The sky was as blue as skies should be
The sunshine golden as far as you could see
The planes, silvery swans on graceful flights
That turned our bright days into dark nights.

For

It was indeed a strange September song
When those planes came, and all went wrong
The tall, towers two
Against a backdrop of blue.
One female, the other male
Once hit, didn't fall, only to prevail.
But then came another piloted by hate
Those trapped therein knew their fate.
Spelled fiery, black, smoky doom
The towers then crumbled down too soon.

What happened?

The sky seconds ago was blue as a robin's egg
A picture perfect day, nary a snag
As the fire and furies raced toward some
They must have realized what was to come.
No place left but fly out those windows high
Desperate, yet knowing full-well their fate was nigh.
Against a backdrop of azure their flying ties fluttered.
"Don't let them suffer", the crowds watching muttered.

Soon, another aimed at that building with-sides-five
With deadly aim the fraudulent pilot did dive
With his cargo of blameless into the Pentagon-death and fire
"What's going on?" each of us horrified, started to inquire.

The last one into a Pennsylvanian field it flew
The doomed passengers fought back, as did the crew
For those on that United flight ninety-three
Did not take this wickedness passively.
Although by now they knew their fate
And must have felt their enemy's hate.
Realizing it wasn't too late they took a chance
Courageously battled pure evil under brutal circumstance.
Like true selfless heroes, they died, so others be spared
Gallant and caring, they perished—for they dared.

In far away lands and also in ours
Some were happy at the agony of others.
For they celebrate with song and smile
Gave out candies and danced for a while.

Wouldn't you know. Isn't it odd
All this was done, in the name of God.

For when all is said and shall be done
We shall never forget
Nine-eleven---two thousand one!

Message from Romania

While sailing on the internet, we found a link to fezana.org. We were truly amazed by your vision over the human spirit.

We are a small group of students, trying to evolve our spirit, mind and body. Sadly, in Romania, it is almost impossible to rise from the common masses, especially when you use methods which are considered "unorthodox". After a long struggle, we have succeeded to open a public library, and have become official as a non-governmental association.

At the moment, our patrimony consists of 600 books, 200 magazines, some video and CDs on all kinds of spiritual traditions, from Gurdjieff's teachings to Carlos Castaneda's way.

We get over 15 visitors per day. People are really interested, especially in eastern traditions. We have a great desire to study your works, but we also have a big problem. As students, our life is so precarious. We are rich in spirit, but the wind is the one who fills our pockets.

We are now asking for your help. Can we dare to hope that you may have some used or deteriorated books that you may not need anymore? If so, can you mail them to us? If we can do something for you from here, be sure to count on us.

Eduard Diaconu and friends
PO Box 3-70

Pitesti, Arges 0300, Romania
dyaconu_rom@yahoo.com.

Rohinton Mistry's Literary Awards

It is unfortunate that in mainland Europe we did not have the good fortune to view Mistry's appearance on The Oprah Show [FEZANA Journal, Spring 2002]. However, his thought-provoking novels, *Such a Long Journey* and *A Fine Balance* have provided much stimulus to the mind and enabled travel on some of the less obvious channels of thought.

Mistry has furnished his adopted country Canada with winners and

one can rightly hope that he now caters for another celebrity affair. His books reveal a giant leap for a man who appeared to move in the shadows when he arrived from the Indian subcontinent. Does he need to be Zen Rohinton Mistry to maintain his ironic detachment?

His knowledge, his qualifications and his economy with words deserve respect. The most successful writers are more inclined to be detached, patriarchal and above criticism, almost akin to mockery, simply because he has not accentuated reference to Parsis and Zarathushtis.

A dramatic escalation in scrutiny as inferred by a critique from Montreal, Quebec, is unlikely to engender endearment to life in the phosphorescent glare of celebrity. You can teach a child to walk, but you can't decide which way they are going in life. One's feelings for one's community do not require to be shouted from rooftops akin to unrealistic hype.

The eulogies evoked in FEZANA's Spring issue portrayed Mistry as a mixture of the archangel Gabriel and Huckleberry Finn. However, the coverage of the critique from Montreal, seemed in tone ill-judged.

The deluge of information thrown at us in the name of openness, leaves us less capable than ever of gauging the truth.

Furhok K. Tangree.
La Roche-sur-Furon, France

The Gathas of Zarathushtra

It is disappointing that very few Parsis in India are reading my study of *The Gathas of Zarathushtra* [Piloo Nanavutty, ISBN 1-890206-11-3, 1999, *Antique Collector's Club*, 1-800-252-5231], though I am heartened by the response from my Hindu friends (a beautiful Hindi translation is now ready) and my friends in ZTFE (Europe). For the first time the Gathas have received national recognition (in India) through the Presidential award of the Padma Shri.

This translation of the Gathas is different – in the first place, it is beauti-

fully printed with illustrations. Secondly, the evolution of the various ancient scripts is briefly discussed. I have described the various social groups which existed in Zarathushtra's day; and tried to face the vexing question of the Gaush Urva, with Vedic parallels.

I have covered the relationship between the various divine powers (the Amesha Spenta) and their role in the life of human beings; shown the relevance of Zarathushtra's teachings in this modern age; and tried to explain the origin of evil.

It is painful to watch the community torn to shreds by needless controversy, between say the "Gatha-wallahs" and the "non-Gatha-wallahs". The Gathas permeate many of our daily prayers – Kemna Mazda, Atash Nyaesh and Ahura Mazda Yasht. At the end of the kushti ritual, there are phrases such as *farash-paio khedran* – let us resolve all quarrels. Next follow the words *nidh-snai-thi-shem* – renounce violence. Difference should be peaceably resolved. Such an attitude leads to harmonious relations with our environment.

If we stop fighting with each other, but try to make ourselves knowledgeable there is a chance that we will survive as an intelligent community. If not who knows what our fate will be. ■

Piloo Jungalwalla
New Delhi, India

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■ ERATTA ■

We regret inadvertently omitting mention of Tanaz Bamboat's recitation of a story "A Pack of Cards" at the function to felicitate Maestro Zubin Mehta by ZAC (Chicago) [Summe 2002, page 9]. In this inspiring story, Tanaz related a young man's interpretation of playing cards in a deck in terms of Zarathushti teachings. ■

❖ PRAYER CORNER ❖

Sceptre and crown must tumble down and in the dust be equal made

By Sohrab Irani
Anaheim, California

As the title implies, this is a spiritual eye opener for us Zarathushti brothers and sisters – a stiff and bitter dose for our hyperactive minds to attain tranquility.

Our Prophet Zarathushtra, during his time, had a one to one union of deep meditation with Ahura Mazda and in that heightened state of enlightenment received revelation of the Zarathushti deen. The silence of meditation dissolves the senses and the soul transcends to a higher level of consciousness. There emerges immense energy and compassion – the moment of creativity when you become one with nature.

Somehow, down the line from Yazd to Bombay, and thence to Houston and Chicago, we have overlooked this important aspect – meditation – the arduous task of self-realization, which is the real and relentless pursuit of absolute truth.

We would memorize our prayer books verbatim, but will not bother to still our minds and travel inside for spiritual liberation. We do not bother to dig for the treasure beyond measure, which is hiding in our inside. We are too busy, amassing fame and fortune on the outside.

The main purpose of our life is to go within ourselves, meditate deeply and get tuned with the central *audible life*

stream, which is flowing like a common sound current, vibrating perpetually in each and every human being. Like a cheesecloth attached to a thorny cactus plant, our pure soul is attached to the thorny mind from birth. Till death, we have this golden opportunity in the human temple of the body, to meditate and remove the soul from the evil clutches of the mind and its blind pursuit of earthly possessions.

Just as the pure and pristine rain drops from the clouds come down to earth, get polluted by the dirt and become muddy water, our soul mixed with the mind in this life, becomes like muddy water and suffers in silence, losing its identity. Only meditation would, like a scorching sun, evaporate this dirty water (the lost soul) away from the dirt (the ever-manipulative mind) and send it back to its vaporous and pure form to the skies, to be in its rightful place.

This is the sole aim and purpose of our life – all else is trivial. Without achieving this, we are like radios turned on but not tuned in to the music.

The glory of God is in a human being fully alive and aware to its fellow human being's needs. Immeasurable kindness is the only path for all human beings to attain happiness. In this material world, a focus on the 'soft' issues yields 'hard' benefits.

Intellectual capital is scarcer and more valuable than financial capital.

Just like Mobed Zarir Bhandara, who has started a monthly group meditation practice in southern California, giving out small but sure doses of perpetual bliss, like the opening of a strong perfume bottle – we can all follow this age-old concept of diving inside for the real, cultured pearls which is our birthright and not wander in vain outside for the artificial, colored glass beads, and lose it all at our grave site. ■

Interfaith

[Continued from page 35]

interfaith interaction as based on recognition and acceptance that all faiths are results of the various manifestations of the Almighty, that we call by various titles, but is rooted in our belief that there is unity in divinity. He urged that we should go beyond interfaith or inter-religious dialogue; we would rather see results in our society, which can be measured by peace, security, compassion, and decrease in racism.

Er. Jehan Bagli, president of the North American Mobeds Council, believes that individual spirituality is the key building block for a harmonious world community, while still preserving traditional differences. It is on the *Golden Rule* [Ys. 46.8] which is embedded in various forms in the texts of all faith traditions, that we can construct the edifice of interfaith activity directed to a peaceful human race.

Maneck Bhujwala, a member of the Interfaith Chapel at the Presidio in San Francisco, and very active in interfaith activities in the San Jose area, presented three major aspects that make interfaith work an imperative for Zarathushtis, based on their fundamental doctrines, their ethics and practical benefits. He offered some practical suggestions for "building bridges", such as joining local interfaith groups and participating in their activities. ■

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ffice charges us many dollars for every journal returned because of address. *So please send all address changes* promptly to ons Manager Kershaw Khumbatta [see front cover] or use the n/Donation form at the back of every Journal.



آیا فرزندانمان بعنوان یک فرد زرتشتی با دستورات دین بهی آشنائی دارند؟

اگر بعنوان یک زرتشتی از میراث کهن و دستورات آموزشی دین بهی آگاهی داشته باشیم به خود خواهیم بالید و با افتخار اعلام مینمائیم که یک فرد زرتشتی هستیم. تا زمانی که نتوانیم دستورات زرتشت را در کتابهای آموزشی بهتر و بیشتر بگنجانیم وظیفه پدران و مادران است که نقش آموزگار خوب را بعهده گرفته و دستورات دین زرتشتی را به فرزندان خود بیاموزند. آموزش دینی برای فرزندان باید از سنین کودکی شروع گردیده و ابتدا با نیایش به درگاه اهورامزدا آغاز گردد.

وقتی فرزند شما همه روزه به نیایش کردن عادت نمود سپس کم کم درسهای اوستائی را باهمان زبان اوستا به آنها یاد بدهید ترجمه نمودن اوستا به زبانهای دیگر از لطف و روح مطلب میکاهد. وظیفه پدران و مادران است که فرزندان خود را به کلاسهای دینی زرتشتی برده و اصول دینی را به آنها بیاموزند. از گفتن کلماتی چون مذهب دیگر یک مسئله قدیمی است و یا مذهب مال آدم های امل است خودداری فرمائید. در آینده بسیار نزدیک همین کلمات برای خود شما ایجاد مشکلاتی خواهد نمود. وقتی فرزندان شما به سن بلوغ رسیده و اطلاعاتی از دین خود نداشته باشند طغیان خواهند نمود و جوابگوی شما و رفتار شما خواهند بود. پس از هم اکنون که فرزندان شما در سنین کودکی هستند اصول دین زرتشتی را به آنها بیاموزید. از نام نویسی آنها در کلاسهای اوستا کوتاهی نکید آنها را با ایمان و اعتقاد پرورش دهید. سعی ننمائید که سرمشق خوبی برای آنها باشید. به زرتشتی بودن خود ببالید و افتخار کنید. از داستانها و مثل های دینی برای آنها تعریف نموده و آنها را با آداب و رسوم دین زرتشتی آشنا نمائید. وظیفه والدین می باشد که با دانش و



فضیلت خود از اصول مذهب زرتشتی حفاظت نمایند. دستورات دین زرتشتی را جزء قسمتی از زندگی روزمره خود قرار داده و سعی نمائید که مراسم نیایش روزانه خود را با فرزندان انجام دهید. همیشه از مراسم مذهبی که در درمهر انجام میشود استقبال نمائید و به فرزندان خود نشان دهید که رفتن به درمهر و شرکت در مراسم دینی قسمتی از زندگی شما می باشد. فرزندانان وقتی سرمشق های خوبی در زندگی داشته باشند در آینده راه و روش شما را ادامه خواهند داد و آرامش خاصی در زندگی خواهند داشت. هزاران سال است که دین بهی همیشه در حالت دفاعی قرار داشته است و هیچوقت تلاشی نشده است که زیبایی های دین زرتشتی را به دیگران نشان دهیم. از هم اکنون باید این سکوت را بشکنیم و حداقل زیبایی های دین بهی را به فرزندان و عزیزان خود بشناسانیم. از کتابها و جزوه های ساده که بصورت علمی و تحقیقی در سالهای اخیر به چاپ رسیده استفاده نمائید. وقتی فرزندان ما از روی خرد پیام اشوزرتشت را پذیرفتند آموزشهای اشوزرتشت را به کار خواهند بست و به خانواده بزرگ زرتشتی خواهند پیوست و احساس تعلق گروهبی آنها برآورده خواهد شد. به امید پیروزی و موفقیت روز افروزون برای تمام سی زرتشتیان

مرکز زرتشتیان کالیفرنیا انتخابات هیئت امناء جدید خود را برگزار نمودند و از میان کاندیدها اشخاص زیر

برای مدت ۵ سال سمت هیئت امناء مرکز را بعهده خواهند داشت. تبریکات صمیمانه ما را بپذیرید : ۱-

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Welcome to Youthfully Speaking



'the mouthpiece for the next generation'

8th Zarathushti Games

By: Nikan Khatibi

Nikan2@aol.com

The 8th Zarathushti Games took place at the California State University, Northridge Campus from July 3rd to July 7th. From day one, the tone was set for this extraordinary event. An astonishing total of 550 participants came from all over North America with a diverse age range between 15-35 years.

During the daytime, it was all about sports! Game after game was played back-to-back from early morning. The competitions included basketball, volleyball, table tennis, swimming, and track and field. The intensity level was not even a question at this year's sports. One advice many participants had informed me of was to bring a bottle of water. Why, you may ask? To water down your throat after all the yelling and screaming during a team competition! Now you thought yelling, screaming, and holding signs up in the air to distract the opponent was out of the ordinary; wait until I tell you about the musical instruments I saw in the crowd to really get the other side's attention! Like I said, the intensity was definitely there! Just when you thought it couldn't get any more intense, the nights were filled with social events galore. [Continued on pg.2]





8th Zarathushti Games [continued]...

From pool and disco parties to live concerts, the Olympics was the place to be if you were a youth ready to socialize with your Zarathushti brothers and sisters! Banquet night included a tasteful dinner topped off with one of Iran's top male musical artists, Pyruz. He stole the night with his words while the youth were showing off their moves on the dance floor.

All in all, the Z-Games was a great event. It was especially heartwarming to many Zarathushtis because it was time for our youth to come together on a 'team' level and really get to know one another. I am sure these events will in the future grow brighter and more prosperous than ever.

In spite of the success of the Zarathushti Games in Los Angeles, and its ability to attract so many youth to this event, I was saddened by the fact that the rest of my brothers and sisters were attending another event whose goal was also to promote the unity of future generations. I am sure that the congress was a great event like its predecessors and that it was a success. I hope in the future all organizers, whether for the congress or the games, look at these two separate events and realize that holding them at the same time does not help to unite Zarathushtis. We are a small community and cannot afford further divisions!



Post-Congress Impressions

By: Ushtavaity Davar

Ushta@aol.com

The 12th North American Zoroastrian Congress was held over the 4th of July weekend in the "windy city" Chicago. After each congress, we depart for our hometowns and the impact of what we've learnt, and the friends we've met are fresh in our minds. However, as time passes, this impact becomes a memory for most of us, thus it is essential that we capture our thoughts while fresh. I've asked a handful of the youth to respond to the following questions pertaining to the Chicago congress, and congresses to come:

1. What aspects of the Chicago 2002 congress impressed you, and how did these impressions differ from prior congresses?
2. If you feel that this congress wasn't the epitome of congresses, what could have made it better?
3. What do you feel is the driving force for youth attendance at congresses?
4. What do you aspire to gain from upcoming congresses?

Kaizad Cama:

- 1.) If I had to pick one thing, I'd have to say it's the vibrancy of our community, and especially the youth. I know that sounds like a horrible cliché, but it really is true. If you doubt our ability to think or our commitment to Zoroastrianism, then you probably haven't been to a youth session at one of the last few congresses. If you don't think we have talented musicians, dancers, artists or entertainers, then you obviously weren't at banquet night. The Chicago congress was nothing new in that respect, but I don't think that cheapens it.
- 2.) As often seems to be the case with these congresses, I got the feeling we were preaching to the choir, it's usually the more passionate or curious Zoroastrians who attend the congresses, and it's usually the one's who think they know it all who attend the sessions, instead of the ones with open ears and minds. To that end, I think congresses need to be much less expensive so that people will attend even if they're not sure they'd like it. Also, it is one thing to discuss these topics at congresses every two years, and another to act on them in the mean time. I hope the ideas that were discussed have inspired us enough to take them back to our home associations and make things happen.
- 3.) It was social, and I don't think that's a bad thing at all. For the most part, I think we showed our interest in the sessions, but I also think it's fair to say most of us came to see old friends and make new ones.
- 4.) A discussion of religious education during one of the youth sessions reminded me of the importance of instilling curiosity about Zoroastrianism in our youth. So far, no one seems to know how to do it, but it really is necessary that we do a better job of it if we want to improve the effectiveness our teaching and survival of our community. I'd really like to see the next congress focus on inspiring people to be better Zoroastrians (both by understanding the religion more, and by using those ideas in everyday life), I really can't think of a better mission for a Zoroastrian congress.

Usheen Davar:

1. I liked the active participation the Youth took at this Congress. They chaired several of the sessions and built up interest and involvement. I enjoyed the sessions that were integrated with the adults to stimulate discussion. This has not been actively done during the past congresses.
2. I would have liked to see more time for discussions and less time on the presentations. I felt that once the discussions were going strong, we were out of time and had to move on to a new session.
3. Youth attendance rides on several factors...Knowing that your friends from past congresses will be there and that you will automatically build new friendships by attending a congress is exciting. Having specific youth events, activities and sessions builds a sense of community and interest within our group. And finally, seeing the youth take an active role is encouragement to attend future congresses.
4. I aspire to gain a better sense of our culture, customs, and involvement in our community from future congresses. I would like to see more integration among all Zarathushtis, regardless of if they are from North America, Iran, Pakistan, or India. We are one community and need to work and build as one.

Kaivan Jesung:

1. I was impressed that the discussion topics were more relevant than those from previous congresses. Bridge building between generations and community building seem far more important in today's context than discussing conversion for example. While not to down play the controversial topics, the ones chosen at the Chicago congress at least provided for a definite plan of action or something tangible that we can build upon. Prior congresses attempted to determine or 'set policy' on issues that are hopelessly out of the scope of the congress, resulting in no resolution!
2. It wasn't the best congress I've been to as I felt the seminars and workshops were a little too rushed. I wanted to attend all the functions and see the city and there didn't seem adequate time for both.
3. I enjoy seeing my friends from around the country. Congresses provide one of the few opportunities for all of us to see each other.
4. Visit a different city, see my old friends, and make new friends.

Cyrus Rivetna:

1. I think this congress was a bit different from other congresses in that it was held in the heart of downtown as opposed to a suburban location. However, I don't think that this was necessarily advantageous. Most people rarely leave the hotel, so the location doesn't really matter.
2. In general, I think it was a successful congress. The sessions were interesting, the entertainment was adequate, and the food was adequate. To improve, I think there should be 3 or 4 concurrent sessions so that attendees have more choices. Also, I think the food should be either Parsi or Iranian.
3. Seeing friends and meeting new people. Secondly is to attend the sessions.
4. In the future I suggest that there be more dialogue between the adults and youth instead of having separate sessions. In fact, many adults attended the youth sessions. Maybe small group discussions with adults and youth would be interesting.

~~~~~  
As you can tell, many of our youth have similar views about this congress, and about what they would like to see in future congresses. I hope that we continue to learn, question, and strive for improvement whether it is in regards to congresses, or in our own lives as Zarathushti youth.



## Framroze Patel's Report

[Continued from page 10]

**Dorab Mistry** and **Rusi Dalal**, for championing the cause of WCZF and investing many hours for bringing about convergence.

**Kaikhosrov Irani**, for undertaking the delicate task of bringing about convergence between the proponents of WZO and WCZF.

### The World Body Working Group.

As in any endeavor I found that there were many disparate and different views that were held and promoted by strong people. I tried to get these people to find an amicable solution. Much progress was made but sadly there was no consensus.

In May 2001 therefore, I decided on taking another tack, namely to appoint a **World Body Working Group** (WG) that would take a look at all the information before us and advise/educate both the North American community and me about the pros and cons of various competing advocacies. Once I appointed the WG and gave them the charge I did not interfere with their work. I very much appreciate their dedicated effort and most importantly the dispassionate and fair manner in which they have gone about their work and the reports that they have issued. I wish to state with firm conviction and with full assurance that the WG have worked within both the mandates that were given to them and I applaud them for it. I have no doubt about that. I stand behind this team fully. I am proud to state that FEZANA never had such a dedicated group of Zarathushtis.

The WG in its Phase I, reported that all four models are workable albeit at different levels of efficacy. In their Phase II report they have clarified the issues raised by people. They have recommended that in Phase III all four models be developed further with a decision to be made as to the selection of a model in one of the later phases. This sounds eminently sensible to me and I endorse their recommendations for the next president

to act upon. I expect that the final decision will be made by elected representatives when the time is right.

I wish to clarify one point: It had been suggested that the FEZANA membership vote to join the WZO. I wish to categorically state that no such vote was taken during my watch including the meeting in April 2001 in New York.

**Achievement and failures.** Let the historians record what were the achievements of Framroze K. Patel. Frankly, my dear, I do not care. As my good friend Richard Millhouse Nixon used to say: "1.2 billion Chinese do not know what you do and 1.2 billion Chinese do not care what you think."

Let me be my own judge of my actions. Here is my assessment of what I should have done but did not. Here is a list of failures from my point of view.

- I failed to grasp the intensity of grass-roots movement relative to the issue of inclusion and exclusion.

- I did not fully understand that I did not have a mandate from membership when I signed the document in Mumbai.

- I did not do enough to stay current with interfaith and NGO.

- I did not, at all times, uphold the interest of FEZANA relative to WZC2000. I should have been more aggressive.

These are my failures and I ask for your forgiveness.

As I conclude, I want to express my deep sense of gratitude for certain individuals. One person particularly has gone unappreciated and unrecognized for any award, because, he is himself chairperson of the Awards Committee, **Ervad Dinshaw Joshi**, needs to be recognized for what he has done for so many years. I am not ashamed to admit that Dinshawji was my trusted advisor. Ladies and gentlemen, our respected and 'nar asho Zarathushti', Ervad Dinshaw Joshi.

I would be ungrateful if I do not thank my esteemed friends **Khorshed**

**Jungalwala** and **Farrokh Mistree**. I cannot recall a single issue during the last two years, on which I have not sought their advice. They care for only one thing: "what is good for the community". From the bottom of my heart I thank you both.

I am not known to be ladies' man, my family will laugh at that notion. Four years ago when I started the campaign, I made a call to two Zarathushti ladies whom I had not met, and I am glad I did. They along with **Homi Davier** and **Sarosh Collector** remain my good friends. I worked very well with **Yasmin Pavri** and **Roshan Sethna**. They are the spokespersons of moderate Zarathushtis.

Let me thank one more Zarathushti, **Shahrokh Mehta**. He plays a very important role in awakening the consciousness of the Zarathushti community. His sharp intellectual mind brings to fore the issues/points of view we elected administrators may miss. My advice to leaders of our community is this: Get Shahrokh on your side, he is a valuable friend and good mind to get advice from.

My fellow Zarathushtis, I thank you immensely for this opportunity. **Armaity, Arnavaz, Pashang** and you all, thank you for your support.

Keep the hope alive, the words of the prophet alive, the deen-e-Mazdayasni alive. May Ahura Mazda bless us all. *Hamazor!* ■

## Jashan

[Continued from page 34]

their neighbor. At the end of the *afrin* they also recited a part of "*Dahman kepa een mayazd*" prayer. It ended with *humbandagi* of *Tandorosti*.

All the prayers were suitably curtailed, to fit the constraints of time allowed. A handout indicating the devotional selections with their translation. The demonstration was very well received as indicated in the evaluation forms. I think this is something that can be discussed and disseminated as standard practice across North America. ■

## ZARATHUSHTI ENTERPRISE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



## WZCC Business Digest

The Chicago chapter of WZCC organized the **WZCC 2002**

**Business Conference and Breakfast** preceding Congress 2002 [see page 49].

**Board of Directors Meeting** was held on July 3, 2002, at the Hyatt Regency in Chicago. The charter and by-laws were formally accepted. The next step is IRS Tax Exempt filing.

Two new regional directors: **Sam Motashaw** [photo right] of Germany [quercia@gmx.de] for Europe and **Khodayar Attai** [khodayarattaie@hotmail.com] of Tehran for Iran, were elected by members by mail previously. The first 250 members remaining active for 3 continuous years will be considered Founding Members.

**WZCC Annual General Meeting 2002**, was held on July 4 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Chicago. A 40-page "**Annual Report**" was distributed and may be requested from the secretary. It includes reports from the president, VP, treasurer, secre-

tary, chapter chairs, recognitions committee, and activities including (a) proposed Economic Cultural delegation to Iran/Tajikistan; (b) business opportunity proposals; (c) global business directory; and (d) membership certificates. A newsletter has been distributed.

**WZCC Recognitions** procedure has been defined; a call for nominations has been announced [see page 51].

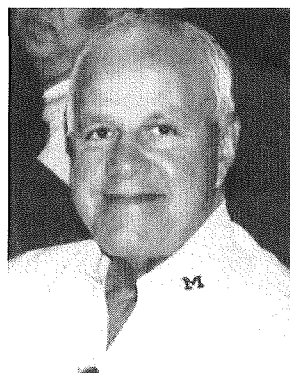
**A new e-group** [zchamber@yahoogroups.com] has been set up by Zareen Karani Araoz, who will serve as its coordinator.

**Delegation to Iran.** WZCC is contemplating an economic/cultural delegation to Iran, for those who wish to experience Iran and explore economic opportunities.

**Membership invited.** All business persons and professionals are invited to become members of WZCC.

Visit [www.wzcc.net](http://www.wzcc.net), or contact Secretary Edul Daver at 17 Geiger Lane, Warren, NJ 07059, daver@acupowder.com, tel: (732) 469-1866.

**Rohinton Rivetna, President, WZCC**  
Rivetna@aol.com, (630) 325-5383.



### New Businesses

*FEZANA Journal will be happy to announce any new Zarathushti business in this column. Contact [journal.editor@fezana.org](mailto:journal.editor@fezana.org).*

#### CREATIVE CREATIONS, INC.

**Creative Creations, Inc.** specializes in handmade custom decorations – wreaths (Christmas and seasonal), potpourri jars, topiaries, party gifts for the house, baby showers, wedding showers, birthday parties, centerpieces for banquets, weddings, navjotes, and more. Owner **Roxana Daboo** (of Aurora, IL) can assist in designing products to match your décor. Contact: roxccinc@hotmail.com, tel: (630) 851-3628. Website is under development.

**Parcel & Post Plus.** Ken Bhappu of Houston, TX has started his own business to provide postal facilities, FedEx and UPS. He also does printing of NCR forms, letterheads, envelopes, business cards, invitations, and more. Special discount for Zarathushtis. Contact: (281) 859-6248.

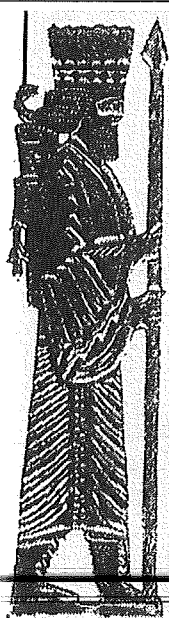
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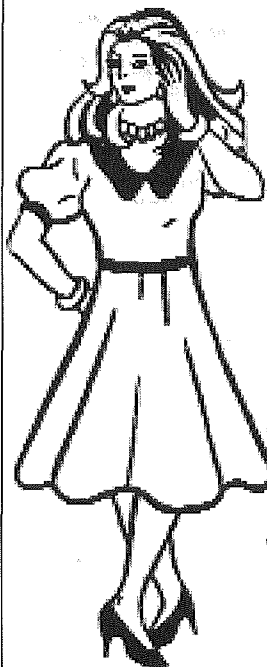




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# Parviz Shahriari acclaimed as national hero

The great hall of the Cultural Heritage Ministry in Tehran was filled to capacity on August 17, with dignitaries, government officials, university professors, and Zarathushtis to honor **Parviz Shahriari** for his contributions to mathematics and literature.



Mr. Shahriari has published over 200 books on mathematics, history and arts, authored thousands of articles in professional journals, and has been publishing several journals for many decades. His books are standard texts in many universities in Iran. He has also founded schools in Tehran.

At 77, he is still very active and a symbol of hard work, dedication and patience. Mr. Mahajerani, heading the government's initiative on dialogue amongst cultures, called him a "national hero and a role model for every Iranian". His biography, published by the government, was distributed at the meeting.

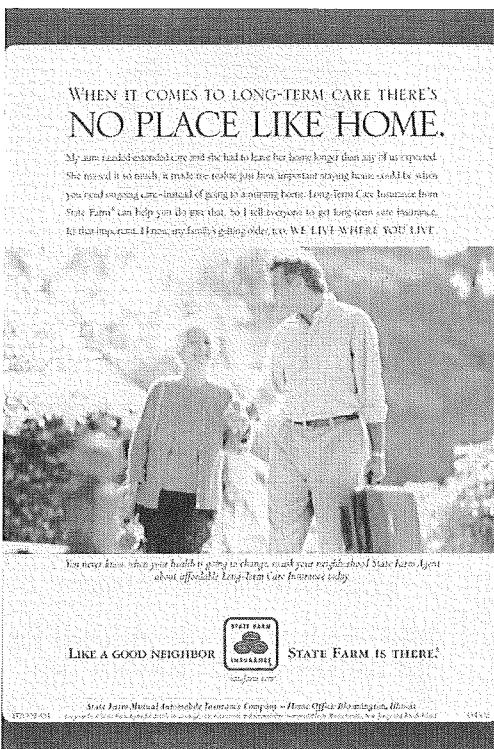
Born in a poor family in Kerman, Parviz lost his father at an early age and had to work to support his mother and sisters. Jailed many times for his political views, he never gave up his studies and his nationalistic views. In July, he was given an honorary doctoral degree from Kerman University.

May Ahura Mazda continue to bless Parviz Shahriari, and many he have many more years to serve the cause of humanity, his nation and the Zarathushti community.

Mehran Sepelri  
Tehran, Iran

# How Perry Unwalla and 80-year-old "Dhun Aunty" came to be in the State Farm ads

If you watch TV at all, by now you've seen Perry Unwalla, featured, by name in State Farm's Long Term Care (LTC) commercials. The ads, which started in April and will go on for six months, are being aired, throughout the day on all four major networks, CNN and cable. There are also the print ads [at left] featuring Perry and his 80-year-old aunt, Dhun Unwalla, that are scheduled to appear in *Parade*, *Women's Day*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Newsweek*, and other national magazines.



"I can't tell you how proud I am to be in an ad campaign for my company with my Dhun Aunty!" says Perry Unwalla, erstwhile president of the Zoroastrian Association of Florida, who has a State Farm insurance agency in St. Augustine, Florida.

"Dhun Aunty is the whole reason this came about," he explains, "In 1998, Dhun aunty, who lives with my family in Boca Raton, suffered a stroke and needed assistance with bathing, dressing, etc., Her insurance, through Medicare, only covered the first few days and we were faced with long term care costs of over \$100 a day. With God's grace, Dhun aunty recovered soon. We were lucky – this time; but that was a wake-up call for me and my family."

Perry began to tell Dhun Aunty's story to his customers. Soon he was doing well in LTC sales and State Farm began to take notice. They asked him to go and speak to other groups of agents regarding how they were marketing LTC protection. The LTC talks spread throughout the state and then over to other states as well. This spiraled and soon, in 2002, State Farm was looking to create a number of ads around LTC insurance. After interviewing Perry, the ad company, out of Chicago, decided to use his story with Dhun Aunty in a TV and print ad campaign. Originally the entire Unwalla family was in the TV ad, but they later ended up editing out that scene.

"I am so honored that State Farm, the largest insurance company in America, felt I was worthy to be their LTC ad spokesperson," says Perry, "I am so fortunate." Ultimately, the hope is that these ads raise awareness of LTC for all policyholders and lead to people getting the protection through their agent. [Perry may be contacted at (904) 347-9599, email: unperry@aol.com].

"It's been an amazing ride!" says Perry, "I have received calls from people who I thought I'd never hear from again; it has really been incredible."

- Roshan Rivetna

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## POSITIONS WANTED

● **MS in Mechanical Engineering**, 2002, from University of Missouri, Rolla, interested in full-time mechanical engineering position in USA. Contact kaizad@hotmail.com, or call (636) 527-2524.

● Young Zarathushti, **completed medical studies in India and US**, has permission from INS for practical training, needs assistance in finding suitable opening. BS in biology/pre-medicine, Baylor Univ; Dean's List. DHMS from Yerala Medical College, Mumbai; ranked among top 5 students, 1993-98. Experience in: Asiatic Clinic, Mumbai as assistant physician; volunteer student physician at YMT Medical College, Mumbai; worked with Department of Public Health, Mumbai; volunteer physician for impoverished families; Baylor Forensic Society (2001); worked with local law enforcement assisting in processing of human remains, and crime scenes; Red Cross Emergency Responder (2001); certified in professional CPR; experience in biological, chemical and forensic studies. Contact Kaivan Gamadia at (212) 995-2326, email: kevgamadia@aol.com. ■

## IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR NON-US CITIZENS IN THE US

Since the attacks of 9/11, the INS has stepped up enforcement of a previously-little-enforced rule that "Each alien ... shall notify the Attorney General of each change of address and new address within ten days of such change." In recent months, several non-US citizens (temporary visa holders and Green Card holders) have been arrested, detained and even deported, in part, because of failure to report their address change.

It is advisable that all foreign nationals in the US complete Form AR-11. Download the form from the INS website at [www.ins.usdoj.gov](http://www.ins.usdoj.gov). For information visit [www.cyrusmehta.com](http://www.cyrusmehta.com). ■

## FINANCIAL CORNER

# FEZANA Financial Progress Report



*Jerry M. Kheradi, MD, chair,  
FEZANA Funds and Finance*

For those of us who attended the "Introduction to FEZANA" session on July 4, 2002, at Congress 2002 in Chicago, we had a good discussion on the "Thousand Points of Light" campaign. I am pleased to see that many of the associations have started spreading the word to their individual members and the Funds and Finance committee sincerely appreciates all the help.

At the end of this session, a few people approached us and suggested that more Zarathushtis will be willing to donate towards the Thousand Points of Light if their donations go to particular places like an agiary and Parsee General Hospital. By sending your contribution to FEZANA's Welfare Fund or Critical Assistance Fund, your money goes to helping those in need throughout the community here in North America and all regions of the world where Zarathushtis are in need. Of course, the option of giving a donation of \$100 or more to the General, Welfare, Religious Education, Scholarship, Critical Assistance and the Journal

Fund will still entitle you to 1 point (and a lapel pin shown below) towards the "Thousand Points of Light" campaign".

"Thousand Points of Light" campaign is directed at the future of FEZANA and the future of our youth. The ideas and concepts generated during the sessions at Congress 2002 prove that the community is very vibrant. FEZANA needs the continued financial support of everyone to see fruition of all the wonderful work being done. Each \$100 donated to FEZANA Funds qualifies as 1 "Point of Light" and the donor will receive a beautifully designed antique gold lapel pin [shown at left] along with an award certificate. Please send your donations, payable to FEZANA, specifying any of the FEZANA



**"Thousand  
Points of Light"**

Funds (General, Scholarship, Welfare, Critical Assistance, Religious Education and Journal Fund) and mail to: **Rashid Mehin, FEZANA Treasurer, 583 Beverly Place, San Marcos, CA 92069**. Thank you for your continued support, in the name of Ahura Mazda,

**Jerry Kheradi, MD**, Chairperson,  
Funds and Finance Committee

**Committee: Rustom Kevala, PhD,  
Mitra Rashidi, Esq., Rita Engineer,  
Celeste Kheradi.**

(100% of your donation goes to the fund of your choice. The cost of the lapel pins, award certificates and mailing has all been donated.) ■

**"Thousand Points of Light"** donors are shown on the next page. Names and points will be added as more donors join this elite group, until our goal of a "thousand points" is reached. Donations received after publication of the Summer 2002 Journal, and upto July 30, 2002 are shown in bold.

# FINANCIAL CORNER

|                                          | 2001      | 2002         | Total    |                                                        |            |            |            |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Anonymous, FL                            |           | Med 5        | 5        | Delara Kheradi, NY                                     | Sch        | 1          | 1          |
| A Wellwisher, MI                         |           | Sch 1        | 1        | Celeste Kheradi, RI                                    | Sch        | 15         | 15         |
| Dr Babak Abadi, PA                       | Sch 1     |              | 1        | Dr Jerry Kheradi, RI                                   | Sch        | 15         | 15         |
| Parviz & Simin Ardeshirpour, NC          |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Kershaw & Nazneen Khumbatta, TX                        |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Dr. Cyrus F Austin, AZ                   | Wel 9     | Wel 3        | 12       | Jasmin & Maneck Kotwal, NJ                             | Wel        | 1          | Wel 1 2    |
| Porus Austin, CA                         |           | Gen 2        | 2        | Borzoo Kushesh & Mahindokht                            | Gen**      | 1          | 1          |
| Thritee, Soozan & Trista Baxter, NY      |           | Sch++ 1      | 1        | Zenobia & Shahrookh Lala, MI                           | Gen        | 1          | 1          |
| Zazu & Tinaaz Bhandara, CA               |           | RE 1         | 1        | Dolly Malva, CA                                        | Gen        | 1          | 1          |
| Firdaus & Jasmin Bhathena, MA            | Gen 1     |              | 1        | <b>Mehran &amp; Dr. Mitra Mazdyasni, CA</b>            |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Rustom & Sheroo Bhathena, OH             |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Noshir & Yasmin Medhora, TX                            |            | Sch 2      | 2          |
| Homi & Ellen Byramji, NJ                 | RE 1      |              | 1        | <b>Farahnaz Mehdiabadi, TX</b>                         |            | Crit 1     | 1          |
| <b>Dr. Lovji D. Cama, NJ</b>             |           | <b>RE 5</b>  | <b>5</b> | Hosi & Kim Mehta, IL                                   |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| <b>Dr. Nadir Camay, CA</b>               |           | <b>Gen 1</b> | <b>1</b> | Noshir & Yasmin Medhora, TX                            |            | Sch 2      | 2          |
| Homiyar Choksi, VA                       |           | Crt 1        | 1        | Merwan and Rukshana Mehta, MO                          |            | Sch 1      | 1          |
| Cyra & Lyla Contractor, PA               | Gen 1     |              | 1        | Shahrokh & Gool Mehta, NY                              |            | Wel 2      | 2          |
| Hutoxi & Dr Farhad Contractor, PA        | Gen 1     |              | 1        | Hoshi & Nawaz Merchant, NJ                             |            | Gen 2      | 2          |
| Katy & Farrokh Cooper, CA                | Wel 1     | RE 1         | 2        | Pesi Mistry, NY                                        |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Tommy and Nairika Cornett, GA            |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Tehmton & Aloo Mistry, MO                              | Crt 1      |            | 1          |
| Tammy & Behram Dalal, NC                 |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Jehangir and Olive Mobed, IL                           |            | Sch 1      | 1          |
| Dr Ardeshir & Parvin Damania, CA         | Crt 1     | Crt 1        | 2        | Rumy Mohta, VA                                         |            | Crt 1      | 1          |
| Diana Damkevala, CA                      | Wel/Crt 1 |              | 1        | Minoo Netervala, CA                                    |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Maneck Daroowalla, NY                    |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Percy K Nikorawalla, NJ                                | RE 1       |            | 1          |
| Adil Daruwala, CA                        |           | Wel 1        | 1        | Jamshed & Farzana Palsetia, MA                         | Gen 1      |            | 1          |
| Farrokh N Dastur, CA                     |           | RE 1         | 1        | Farhad & Firoza Panthaki, MA                           | Sch/Wel 11 |            | 11         |
| Meher N. Dastur, CA                      |           | Wel/Crt 2    | 2        | Drs. Khushru & Roda Patel, IL                          |            | Wel 1      | 1          |
| Nari & Dinoo Dastur, CT                  |           | RE 1         | 1        | Mr & Mrs Randolph Paulling, GA                         |            | Sch + 1    | 1          |
| Erv Soli & JoAnn Dastur, FL              | Gen 2     |              | 2        | <b>Yasmin &amp; Shapur Pavri, TX</b>                   |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Edul & Niloufer Daver, NJ                |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Dr Parvez Pohowalla, OR                                | RE 1       |            | 1          |
| Homi & Nargish Davier, TX                | Gen 1     |              | 1        | Dr. Minocher Reporter, OR                              |            | RE 1       | 1          |
| Jimmy & Freney Deboo family, MI          |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Jamshed and Tamara Rivetna, TX                         |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Yezdi N Dordi, CA                        |           | Gen 5        | 5        | Dinaz & Dan Rogers, OR                                 |            | RE 2       | 2          |
| Jimmy Dubash, VA                         |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Villoo & Solee Rudina, TX                              |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Manek R. Dustoor, MI                     |           | Wel/RE 2     | 2        | Purvez & Aban Rustomji, TX                             | Sch + 2    |            | 2          |
| A.D. & G.A. Dutia, AL                    | Sch 2     | Crt 1        | 3        | Nargesh & Aspi Sethna, TX                              |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Tony & Swati Elavia, MA                  |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Prochy Sethna, CA                                      |            | Wel/Cr 10  | 10         |
| Freddy Engineer, CA                      |           | Cr/Sch 1     | 1        | Dr Burjis & Hovi Shroff, FL                            |            | RE 5       | 5          |
| Adil Feroz, GA                           |           | Med 1        | 1        | Dr Nariman & Parrin Shroff, FL                         |            | Sch 2      | 2          |
| Rusi D Gandhi, NJ                        |           | Med 1        | 1        | Zubeen Shroff, NY                                      |            | Gen 1      | 1          |
| Sorab Gandhi, CA                         | Wel 2     | Wel 3        | 5        | <b>Nazneen &amp; Ehler Spliedt, CA</b>                 |            | Sch 1      | 1          |
| Eugene Gauger, MI                        |           | Gen 1        | 1        | <b>Bella Tata, BC</b>                                  |            | Sch 1      | 1          |
| <b>Jamshed &amp; Yasmin Ghadiali, NJ</b> |           | Crt 2        | 2        | Khurshed M Tengra, ID                                  | Gen 1      |            | 1          |
| Rashna Ghadialy, IL                      | Gen 1     |              | 1        | Jamshed Udvadia, MI                                    | Crt 5      |            | 5          |
| Soonu & Jal Godiwalla, TX                |           | RE 1         | 1        | Perry Unwalla, FL                                      |            | Sch 1      | 1          |
| Noshir L Hansoti, MO                     | Gen 1     |              | 1        | Rayomand J Unwalla, PA                                 | Wel 1      |            | 1          |
| Behram K & Farieda Irani, TX             | Cr/RE 3   | Wel 1        | 4        | Dick & Sheroo Vazir, FL                                | Wel 1      | Wel 1      | 2          |
| Hormuz & Shahdookht Irani, GA            | Gen 1     | Gen 5        | 6        | Jer Vijan, AZ                                          | Wel 1      |            | 1          |
| Mervan and Katayoun Irani, MD            |           | Wel 1        | 1        | Parviz & Parvin Yeganegi, BC                           | Sch/Jour 1 | RE 3       | 4          |
| Rustam H. Irani, MA                      |           | Sch 1        | 1        | ZAPANJ, DE, PA & NJ                                    | Gen 1      | Gen 1      | 2          |
| Jim & Homai Jagus, PA                    | RE 5      |              | 5        | Farangis Zardoshty & family, AZ                        | RE*** 10   |            | 10         |
| <b>Iraj Jahanian, MD, MO</b>             |           | <b>Gen 1</b> | <b>1</b> | Mehraban Zartoshty, B.C                                |            | Gen 25     | 25         |
| Khurshid & J.J. Jamadar, TX              | Crt 1     | Wel/Cr 1     | 2        | Z Assoc of Alberta, Canada                             | Crt 3      |            | 3          |
| Rumi & Kashmira Jamsetjee, IL            |           | Wel 1        | 1        | Atlanta Z Anjuman, GA                                  | Wel/Sch 1  |            | 1          |
| Dinshaw & Goolcher Joshi, MD             |           | Gen 1        | 1        | Z Assoc of N Calif, CA                                 | Gen 1      | Gen 1      | 2          |
| Khurshed & Dr Firoze Jungalwala, MA      | Sch + 1   |              | 1        | Z Assoc of N Texas                                     |            | Gen 2      | 2          |
| Jamshed & Rita Kapadia, MA               | RE 1      |              | 1        | <b>Total Points</b>                                    | <b>124</b> | <b>152</b> | <b>276</b> |
| Homi & Shireen Kapadia, PA               |           | Gen 5        | 5        | * in memory of Dr. Keikhosrow and Morvarid Harvesf     |            |            |            |
| Dr Natasha Karanjia, PA                  |           | Gen 1        | 1        | ** in memory of Irandokht Ezzati                       |            |            |            |
| Dolly Kerawalla, CA                      |           | RE 1         | 1        | *** in memory of Mobed Faridoon Zartoshty              |            |            |            |
| Mr & Mrs K.S. Kermani, NY                | Med * 5   |              | 5        | + in memory of Nargesh Mistree                         |            |            |            |
| Dr Rustom & Yasmin Kevala, MD            | Wel 1     |              | 1        | ++ in honor of the 70th birthday of Dr Jehangir Kotwal |            |            |            |

## Fund Raising: a Need, a Challenge

By Rita Engineer  
Boca Raton, Florida

**The challenge.** I was asked by an important figure, why I felt the need to walk 60 miles to raise money for breast cancer, when just setting up a desk would do. I pondered on that, and concluded that many of us do not really give for the giving sake, but expect something in return. In my case it was the physical challenge.

It was on my way to work one day, when I heard on the radio about the *Avon Breast Cancer 3-day Walk*, and made an instant decision to register. I never dreamed for a moment that this would open up a world of experiences, unleash a flood of emotions, lead to a healing process and above all bring me face to face with the daunting task of raising funds.

**Fundraising.** So where does one begin? I realized that I had first to believe in the cause myself before convincing those I approached. Pal-lotta Teamworks conducted workshops giving ideas for successful fund-raising, which I thirstily absorbed. If I succeeded in meeting my goal, it was due to the combination of: the generosity of the people I approached; and the tips I learned at the workshops. Now, would I have been able to go beyond my goal? Would I have continued on further with the intent of raising funds and not just meeting the goal? When does one stop asking? What amount should one have in mind and should we draw that line?

The challenge of raising \$1,900 became an urgent task that had to be accomplished. I had to reach within the hearts of people, and to my surprise, I found many willing to part for a cause and more so willing to support my physical challenge. They applauded my dare, and that is what brought about the funds. But at every turn I pointed out where the

money was going and that it was the *cure* that drove the walkers.

**Imagine this!** The weekend of April 19-21 was an experience of a lifetime. *Imagine* – walking 60 miles in 3 days from Boca Raton to Miami, down streets with 2000 others; the love of others helping you walk one more mile when you think you can't take another step because your muscles hurt and your feet have blisters; buckets of water to soak hats and shirts to cool off from the incredible Florida sun; using Port-a-Potties for 3 days; taking a shower in a shower truck; putting up your tent after walking 20 miles; waking up at night to pee and then trying to find your tent in a sea of 1000 blue tents ...

*Imagine* – those last 3 miles; feeling you cannot go one more step; people around you saying "You can do it!"; those last steps, crying from exhaustion and disbelief that you *did* walk 60 miles; the human endurance and strength at that crossing line. "Impossible" not, "I'm Possible" yes!

**Thousand Points of Light.** Now imagine the 1000 points of *light*. Imagine – raising millions by just one *light*; dispelling dark corners of illiteracy, poverty and backwardness, as collectively, we *light*; our community's *enlightenment* as we reach for higher achievement; your just one *light* spanning the globe; the powerful rays of just one *light*, and the power of cumulative *lights*. Imagine this and now feel the *light* within. Let these thoughts glow from within *you*.

Raising funds is an arduous task, but a task that needs to be taken up seriously. We need to reach the minds and hearts of people, before they will reach into their pockets to give. We appeal to one and all, please pause for a moment, read about the "Thousand Points of Light" and you will see the far-reaching effects of this project.

Lets not stop at just a thousand. Let's go beyond, to a brighter future. I believe in this and hope you will too. ■

## Deducting Stock Losses: a Refresher Course

**W**ith stock prices down sharply this year, several readers have asked for a refresher course on the rules for deducting losses, and advice on the best way to use losses. Here's a sample question from a reader:

**Question:** I've always ended the year in positive ground in my online trading activities. I've got a few losers I'd like to dump to end the year at a loss. Does a loss taken in the stock market offset income from employment, or only lessen capital gains? Also, any suggestions on where I can learn more on this subject?

**Answer:** Figuring out the smartest way to use your losses can be tricky. Here are the basics:

First, offset your gains and losses on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Suppose you sold a stock earlier this year at a \$10,000 profit. Now you sell another for a \$10,000 loss. Your gain neatly offsets your loss, leaving you with a net gain of zero, and a tax of zero.

Now to the heart of your questions. Suppose your stock market losses this year exceed your gains, or you have no gains at all. In that case, you may deduct as much as \$3,000 a year (\$1,500 if married, filing a separate return) of your net losses against your salary, commissions and other "ordinary" income.

For example, suppose you sold a stock earlier this year for a \$20,000 profit. Now, you sell another stock for a \$23,000 loss. That leaves you with a \$3,000 net loss. You could subtract that entire loss from your income, on a dollar for dollar basis. If your losses exceed \$3,000, you can carry over any unused losses indefinitely into future years.

Please consult a tax attorney for details on this subject. ■

[From The Wall Street Journal]

## Acknowledgements

FEZANA gratefully acknowledges donations (\$10 or more) received since May 1 through July 30. Donations to 1000 Points of Light are listed on page 107.

**General Fund.** Dr. Kamal Campbell, GA (\$60); Hector Dumasia, CA (\$21); Iranian Zoroastrian Association, NY (\$28); Firdaus Pathaki, IL (\$15); Dr. Hooman Sotoodeh, CA (\$60); Bapsi Sidhwa, TX (\$10); ZAH/WZC2000 (\$15,000); Sunrise Apartments & Motel, FL (\$25); Rustom A. Vania, NY (\$51); Armaity Watchha, CA (\$20).

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**FEZANA Journal ("Legacy").** Keki & Perin Amaria, CA (\$25); Anonymous, ON (\$48); Anonymous, NY (\$10); Poras Balsara, TX (\$10); Rohinton Balsara, PA (\$11); Perin & Roshan Bhappu, AZ (\$19); Jimmy Bharucha, PA (\$15); Aspy J. Canteenwalla, FL (\$30); Jaloo Captain, FL (\$61); Burjore Choksey, CO (\$15); Porus Cooper, NJ (\$10); Alayar Dabestani, WA (\$60); Behroze Daruwalla, TX (\$15); Naju S. Daruwala, CA (\$10); Sarosh & Noshir Dastoor, ON (\$15); Dr. Khurshed Dastur, PA (\$17); Farrokh & Goly Forooghi, CA (\$70); Aspie & Dhun Gowadia, GA (\$10); Bejan Irani, IL (\$15); K. Jamshidi, CA (\$50); Dinshaw Joshi, MD (\$23+\$12); Rustom Kanga, TX (\$10); Dolly Kerawalla, CA (\$14); Cyrus & Yasmin Kotval, CA (\$50); Kersi N. Mehta, OH (\$25); Mehli & Tehmina Mehta, CA (\$25); Houtoxi Minochehrhomjee, IL (\$15); Yazdi Mistry, NZ (\$10); Sorab K. Modi, DC (\$51); Yezdi Muncherji, NJ (\$20); Manoucher Namvar, CA (\$50); Dr. Khushroo & Roda K. Patel, IL (\$50); Parvez Pothowalla, OR (\$18); Rusti & Piroja Press, NJ (\$15); Anoo E. Randelia,

## FEZANA DONATIONS AND APPEALS

**Donations.** Unless specified otherwise, all donations for community welfare, medical, social and critical assistance should be sent to: **Rashid Mehini, FEZANA Treasurer**, 583 Beverly Place, San Marcos, California 92069, tel: (760) 891-0699, Email: rmehini@yahoo.com.

Please make donation checks payable to "FEZANA", specifying the fund name (General, Welfare, Critical Assistance, Religious Education, Scholarship and Fezana Journal). For specific earmarked donations, please also include the recipient's name, e.g. "Nazneen Kolah", on the check. All charitable donations to FEZANA are tax deductible in USA. Donors of \$250 or more will receive a confirmation letter for their tax records.

**Appeals.** All appeals for community welfare, medical, social and critical assistance should be sent to the FEZANA Welfare Committee: chair – **Houtoxi F. Contractor**, 2301 Colony Court, Pittsburgh, PA 15237, tel: (412) 367-2948; HFMC31@aol.com; or co-chair – **Hosi Mehta**, 200 Bonnie Brae, Elmhurst, IL 60616, tel: (630) 833-6923; HosiMehta@aol.com. **For more information, visit the FEZANA website: [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org)**

### Fundraising for Bone Marrow Donor Drive

At Congress 2002, it was decided to raise funds for bone marrow drives in the Zarathushti colonies of Mumbai. In India, the cost of each test is Rs. 600 (i.e. about \$12).

#### Donate generously to give someone the gift of life!

Send checks, payable to ZAGNY Critical Assistance Fund; mail to Yasmin Ghadiali, 2686 Belcher Street, Baldwin, NY 11510, tel: (516) 378-4516.

### Nariman for Congress

A Zarathushti, **Ayesha Nariman** is running for a seat in the US Congress from New York [see page 117]. Please support Ayesha with your vote (if you live in New York) and give generously for her campaign. Mail checks, payable to "Nariman for Congress" to Nariman for Congress, PO Box 1956, Williamsville, NY 14231-1956.

CA (\$10); Dinaz Kutar Rogers, OR (\$55); Zarir & Roshan Sethna, TX (\$10); Fali Sidhwa, OR (\$11); Feroze Sidhwa, TX (\$11); Aderbad & Sanobar Tamboli, TX (\$15); Rusi & Viloo Tavadia, MI (\$25); Khurshed M. Tengra, ID (\$35); Jer Udvadia, NJ (\$20); Adi & Sherry Unwala, GA (\$11); Dr. M. B. Wadia, TN (\$10); Mehraban Zartoshty, CA (\$900).

### ■ MATRIMONIALS ■

*FEZANA will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties; we do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna.*

**Gentleman, 34**, marketing trade promoter, journalist, e-commerce; in Iran. Looking for suitable marriage with Zarathushti girl overseas. khwesta2001@aol.com [M02-15]

**Good looking, charming, educated lady, 29**, professional position in Bombay, invites correspondence from educated, well situated, cultured Parsi gentlemen, 30-35, 5'10" or taller. Call Dr. Khory at (847) 480-3066, gims223@email.mot.com. [F02-16]

**Vibrant, generous, well-educated professional Parsi woman, 36**, in USA, seeks tall, active man. Should be open-minded, willing to try new experiences. Contact the Daruwalas at mhrz1@yahoo.com. [F02-17]

### School in Rural Pakistan

The family of Mrs. Gool Minwalla [see p. 113] are sponsoring construction of a girls' school in her memory and name, near Karachi. Donations for this project or for general education of women in Pakistan/Afghanistan, may be sent to Central Asia Institute at [www.ikat.org](http://www.ikat.org), tel: 1-877-585-7841 (specify Gool Minwalla account).



**Male 31, 6' 1", mechanical engineer,** manages research department, studying for his PhD. Interested in music, bikes, travel and socializing. Owns house. (240) 432-0006. [M02-18]

**Parsi girl from Baroda, 24, BS in English,** enjoys music, long drives and surfing the net. Looking for educated man settled in US. Contact kainazkavina@yahoo.com. [M02-19]

**Young lady, 28, professional,** born in USA, fun-loving, enjoys outdoors, well-established family. Interested in meeting professional gentleman up to 34. Call (512) 255-7985. [M02-20]

**Male, 35, B.Com from Bombay, in USA** for 5 years, store supervisor. Call (770) 761-3846. [M02-21]

**Lady, 26, doing residency in internal medicine** at east coast university. Call (860) 348-9898 or fpdarbari@yahoo.com. [F02-22]

**Lady, 24, M.Com from Mumbai,** hotel management and IT diploma, enjoys swimming, cycling, painting, music. Contact Mrs. Collie in Illinois, at (404) 992-1318. [F02-23]

**Lady, 62, good health, outgoing,** call (404) 992-1318. [F02-24]

**Young lady, 20, B.Com,** working in a store, came to USA from India 6 months ago. [F02-25]

**Lady, 30, Master's in French,** professor at Alliance Francaise, Mumbai. Outgoing, enjoys nature, willing to settle abroad. Call sister in New Jersey at (201) 798-4832. [F02-26]

**Smart, goodlooking Parsi businessman, 32,** seeks matrimonial alliance with good-natured, pretty, well-educated girl, living in USA. (301) 978-9816. ■ [M02-27]

## ■ MILESTONES ■

### Births

**Delna Balsara,** a girl, to Rashna and Dinshaw Balsara, of Urbana, IL, sister to Daraius, grandson to Sheroo and Boman Modi and Khorshed and Sarosh Balsara, on July 30, in Urbana, IL.

**Darius Cyrus Banker,** a boy, to Persis and Cyrus Banker, brother to Alisha, grandson to Mani S. Banker and great grandson to Coomi K. Patel, in Mississauga, Ontario, on April 1.

**Yohan Birje,** a boy, to Paroozad (Daruvala) and Anand, on April 15 (ZANC).



**A traditional Navjote in Florida.** The auspicious Roz Hormazd and Mah Daye, 1371, YZ, Saturday May 18, dawned with the bright Florida sunshine harbingering the greatest day in the lives of the Tamboli children **Cyrus** [at left in photo] **Sarosh** and **Sanaya Tamboli** children of Dr. Hoshedar and Anahita Tamboli, grandchildren of Sheroo and the Late Pheroze Tamboli, of Poona, India and Dolly and Dr. Behman Irani of Middlesex, UK.

On this day all three were to be initiated into the world's oldest monotheistic religion, of Prophet Zarathushtra, by a single priest, Ervad Soli P. Dastur [photo above] of Sarasota, Florida. In the morning, Er. Dastur performed a jashan to bless the magnificent new Tamboli home. The navjote ceremony started with a *nahn* (ceremonial bath) at the house, where the children recited their prayers forthrightly with confidence. Draped in beautiful shawls brought from Mumbai, the children and the entourage drove to the Hilton hotel. The stage was decorated in traditional Parsi style, with chalk designs, flowers and lights, and a backdrop of a beautiful Iranian tapestry of Prophet Zarathushtra and Lohrasp Shah praying in front of the Atash Padshah.

As the procession, with ladies carrying 3 silver 'ses' trays filled with new clothes arrived at the stage, the two grandmothers did the 'achoo michoo' welcome, blessing the children. The children sat on 3 'patlas', handmade by a carpenter, in the old, traditional style – without any metal nails or screws.

Er. Dastur first gave a brief explanation of the whole ceremony and its significance. The ceremony started with Er. Dastur reciting the prayer of repentance, *Patet Pashemani*. Then one after another, he performed the investiture of each child donning the sudreh, after reciting *Din no Kalmo*, (affirmation of the faith). Then the ceremony of tying the sacred *kushti* was performed one after another, repeating the prayer three times. The parents took part in reciting the prayers along with the children. Ervad Dastur then did the traditional 'sagan', with 'tili' and rice, presenting each with a garland, flower bouquet and a coconut; and recited the *Tandarosti* blessings, while showering rice and flower petals on the new initiates.

This was indeed a historical and memorable event in the lives of all Zarathustis of the Tampa area, the whole Tamboli family and the three navjotees. This auspicious day will be etched in their memories for ever. Er. Dastur dedicated the three navjotes to the traditional Zarathushti principle of *humata, hukhta and huvarashtra* – good thoughts, good words and good deeds. ■

[Based on article by Er. Soli P. Dastur]



*Parizad Patel, daughter of Nozer and Mehroo Patel of San Francisco, was married to Clifford Pascuicco, at the Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr in San Jose, on May 18. Er. Jimmy Makujina (since deceased, see next page) and Kobad Jamshed officiated. The couple now reside in Arizona.*



**Group Sedreh Pushi in Toronto.** With the fire blazing at the darbe mehr of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, Toronto, on July 21, the *sedreh pushi* (navjote) ceremony was performed of nine Zarathushti children: *Niyosha Freydooni, Tina Behdinan, Asha Behdinan, Pedram Parsi, Kamran Parsi, Niki Fereidooni, Shawdi Fereidooni, Chissta Farahmand* and *Nadia Irani*. Nine priests, most of whom are members of NAMC (North American Mobed Council), performed the ceremony: Er. Yezdi Antia, Er. Dr. Jehan Bagli, Er. Mehsad Dastur, Er. Novzar Dastur, Er. Kerman Katrak, Er. Novzar Kotwal, Er. Jal Panthaky, Er. Hoshang Udvadia and Er. Kobad Zarolia.

Group Navjotes originated in Tehran, Iran, around 1981 and since then have become popular in various parts of the world. The navjotees were presented with the two emblems of the Zarathushti faith: (a) a white shirt, the *sedreh*, which means the “advantageous or the right path” and (b) the sacred girdle, the *kushti*, which implies “the proper direction”. Of the prayers recited during the ceremony, the most important one, recited by the navjotees is called the *Declaration of Faith* [Ys 12.8, 9]. It starts with the words “*Jasa me avanghe Mazda!*” which mean: “*Oh, God Almighty! Come to my help!*”

The new initiates were presented with gifts by friends and relatives and the congregation of over 375 people had refreshments. Thanks to the Iranian Zoroastrian Cultural Kanoun who were the sole organizers of this event.

- by Er. Dr. Jehan Bagli

**Yasna Dhabhar**, a girl, to Arnavaz and Jamshed Dhabhar, sister to Humin and Sanaya, niece to Farrokh, granddaughter to Khorshed and Behramji Sukhadia and late Jalelar and Dinamai Dhabhar, in Mississauga, Ontario, on April 30.

**Zal Dholoo**, a boy, to Kaynaaz and Neville Dholoo, in Vancouver, BC, on April 11.

**Behram Rustom Hathi**, a boy, to Zenia and Rustom Keki Hathi, grandson to Pilloo and Dara Jal Mistri; late Nergesh and Keki Rustomji Hathi, in Windsor, Ontario, on April 16.

**Karl Kapadia**, a boy, to Phiroza and Darius Kapadia; brother to Delna, on February 13 (ZANC).

**Aisha Ladha**, a girl, to Kainaz and Junaid Ladha, sister to Vahaab and granddaughter to Meher and Dara Suntok, in Toronto on May 2.

**Soroush Shahriari**, a boy, to Mahboobeh and Shahriar Shahriari, of California, on July 14.

**Sanaea Suntok**, a girl, to Armene and Kaiwan Suntok, sister to Ava, in Toronto, on February 21.

Navjote, Sedreh Pushi

**Saachi**, daughter of Gitty Godrej and Satyen Dhingra, in San Jose (ZANC).

**Meher Rusi Taleyarkhan**, daughter of Navaz and Rusi Taleyarkhan, of Knoxville, TN, in Mumbai, on July 26.

**Zara Paris**, daughter of Anaita and Flavian Paris, on May 4 (ZSO).

**Iyannah Zack**, daughter of Jerbanu and Pervez Zack, in San Jose (ZANC).

Weddings

**Feroze Dhunjisha**, son of Freya and Farrokh Dhunjisha of Chicago, to **Bethany Panepinto**, daughter of Russ and Tracy Panepinto, at the Bird haven Greenhouse at Pilcher Park, in Chicago, on May 18.

**Arshia Arvandi to John Fisk**, in California, on May 25. Mobed Jamshid Kaikobad officiated [ZAMWI].

**Neville Kanga**, son of Viraf and Shirin Kanga, nephew of Rustom Kevala of Maryland and Boman Damkevala of Chicago area, grandson of Mrs. Banoo Damkevala, to **Tricia Thomsen**, at the Viceroy of India, in Chicago area, on June 29.

**Mojgan Partovi to Kourosh Kianpour** in Maryland, on May 11. Mobed Keikhosrow Mobed officiated (ZAMWI).

**Mojgan-Poulad-Noshiravan to Sean Purcell**, in Mexico, on May 22.

**Arezoo Khorsandi to Daryoush Sabet-Peyman**, in Virginia, on June 15. Mobed Keikhosrow Mobed officiated (ZAMWI).

**Zenobia Mehta**, daughter of Kayomars and Nergish Mehta, granddaughter of late Mrs. Frey Mehta and Rustomji Bilimoria, to **Ethan Garrett Sribnick**, son of Howard and Sandra Sribnick, at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr in Chicago, on June 15.

## Deaths

**Nuserwanji Anklesaria**, husband of late Banoo Anklesaria, father of Bejan (Ruby) Anklesaria, Maneck and Soonu Dotiwala, in Toronto, on August 3.

**Bapsie Bhappu**, mother of Ken Bhappu of Houston, in Karachi, on June 29.

**Noshirwan Cowasjee**, husband of late Villie Cowasjee, father of Hutoxy (Cyrus) Cowasjee of Karachi and Khurshed (Eddie) Bamboat of London, in London on May 23 [see obituary].

**Adi Daruwalla**, husband of Soona, father of Kaikhushroo, Zal (all of Calgary) and Jehangir (wife Catherine, sons Mark and Jordan-Adi) of Las Vegas, in Calgary, on August 1.

**Ardeshir Edalat**, 46, after a long struggle with bone marrow cancer, in Berkeley, CA, on July 8. He leaves behind a wife and child, mother and sister.

**Parviz Foroutan**, husband of Banu, father of Shirin, in Vancouver, on May 7.

**Roni Khan**, author and lecturer on the Zarathushti religion, in Mumbai.

**Cyrus Eruchshaw Lalkaka**, husband of Shirin, father of Shiraz and Cyrene, father-in-law of Ruby and Rajah, grandfather of Zahan, Shanaya and Cyra], in Mumbai, on May 4.

## Ervad Jimmy Makujina (1937 - 2002)

A LIFE DEVOTED TO SERVICE AND LIFE'S NOBLE VALUES

Once in a long, long while, a person touches our lives or the community with words or deeds so special that our lives are changed forever. These are people who expand our vision and inspire us to higher levels of community service.

Jimmy Ardeshir Makujina, senior priest of the Zarathushti community in Northern California, was one such person committed to life's noble values.

To quote FEZANA president Firdosh Mehta "Jimmy served his community all his life in the capacity of a religious leader and a compassionate human being. Zarathushtis around the world have lost a star in their galaxy."

NAMC president, Er. Jehan Bagli said: "The services he rendered to humanity in general and to the Zarathushti community in particular resonated across North America."

Jimmy was ordained as priest at the Udvada fire temple at the age of 13. In 1978 Jimmy and his wife migrated to the USA. In 1980 or so, Jimmy and Darius Captain (who was also from Nagpur, like Jimmy) formed a partnership in a small computer venture. Simultaneously the seeds of ZANC (Zoroastrian Association of Northern California) were sown as their friendship and partnership flourished. They had a vision and they were instrumental in getting together Zarathushtis into forming a

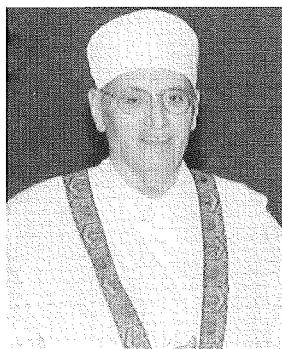
religious and social assembly to keep our old faith alive. That was the foundation stone on which some six or seven hundred strong-member ZANC now stands.

It was his wisdom, foresight and tenaciousness that made it possible for the community to have a living, working dar-e-mehr, which became a reality through the hard work and generous contributions of many, inspired by Jimmy.

Jimmy was the secretary of ZANC, then the president, with wife Amy as the secretary. The couple's desire to help and serve the community did not end there. All his life he tried to raise funds for the dar-e-mehr and on enlightening the community in religious matters. Though in a very fragile state of health and a man of limited resources, he donated all the gifts he received to the dar-e-mehr or ZANC.

The extra-ordinary dedicated, voluntary social services rendered by Jimmy and Amy for several decades, deserve special mention. During the last five years, Jimmy's heart condition was deteriorating. Unknown to the community and friends, he lived in the shadow of death, yet he was ever willing to perform religious services at short notice whenever and wherever requested.

He was always there to teach our children their prayers, to perform their



**Ervad Jimmy Makujina**, 65, husband of Amy, brother of Abaan Abu Shumays, in San Jose, on June 13 [see obituary].

**Freny Pervez Mehta**, 81, mother of Kayomars (Nergish) Mehta and Hosi (Kim) Mehta, grandmother of Roxana, Zenobia, Farhad, Rashni, Shawn, Sheroy and Shazad, all of Chicago, sister of Ratan Mehta and Sam Mehta of Mumbai, in Chicago, on June 23 [see obituary].

**Gool Minwalla**, 89, wife of late Khurshed, mother of Minoo (Baki) of Dubai,

Zarine (Fali) Balsara of Houston, Dr. Framroze (Carol) of England, Farhad (Ayesha) of Cincinnati, and late Jamshed (wife Homai) of Karachi, grandmother of ten, great grandmother of eight, in Karachi, on May 20 [see obituary].

**Keykhosrow Monfared**, 52, husband of Mahnaz, father of Kaveh, Shirin, and Yasmin in West Vancouver, on March 22.

**Pestonji Burjorji Patell**, 71, husband of Perin, father of Adil and Jasmine, brother of Bahadur Patell of Toronto, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, on May 26.

navjotes and weddings and to comfort us in times of sorrow. He was always there as a friend, and a counselor, come rain or shine, extending hope, courage and help in finding a way out through difficult situations.

How in the world did he ever find time to attend to his entire flock that was spread across the USA, Canada and India?

He left us his voice to remember him by, when he released the two CDs of Zarathushti prayers to raise funds for ZANC and the fire temple. His voice will be heard by posterity 50 years from now, when the time capsule buried in Houston during Congress 2000, is opened.

His zeal for voluntary work knew no bounds. The community to him was like his extended family, a big family, a family as big as California, and he had a heart as big as America.

- By Rusi Sorabji

**Dr. Dara Randeria**, ophthalmic surgeon, patriarch of the small Zarathushti community in Durban, South Africa, husband of late Dr. Jer Randeria, father of Parveez, brother of Adi and Maneck, uncle of Naval, all of Durban, on August 10. Their family-owned "United Shipping", founded by grandfather Randeria in 1931, was the first Indian-owned shipping agency in the country [see *FEZANA Journal*, Fall 2000].

**Khorshed (Katy) Rustomjee**, mother of Neville (Arlington, VA) and Tina (Mumbai), sister of Nergiz Birdy (Toronto), Freny Naterwalla (Dover, England), Mehru Birdy (Mumbai) and Mehli Birdy (Mumbai), in Mumbai, on March 22.

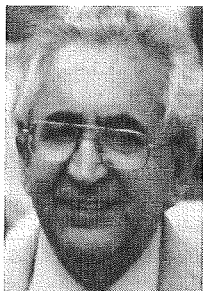
**Gool Dara Todiwala**, mother of Farrokh (Freya) Dhunjishaw of Chicago, grandmother of Feroze and Tinaz, in Mumbai, on April 17.

**William Weil**, father of Richard (Zarine) Weil of Chicago area, grandfather of Darius and Delna, in Denver, on May 24.

**Jamshid Bahram Zartoshty**, husband of Paridokht, father of Shirin, Katayoon, Parinaz and Esfandiar, brother of Rostam and Mehraban Zartoshty and Morvarid Yeganegi (Zartoshty) of West Vancouver, in Boston, on May 7 [see *obituary*].

## Jamshid Bahram Zartoshty (1926 - 2002)

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN DEVOTED  
TO CHARITY AND PHILANTHROPY



Jamshid Bahram Zartoshty had his early education at Diniari School and Keykhosravi High School in Yazd. He then moved to Tehran where he completed his high

school at Alborz College and was determined to be the #1 ranked student in all of Iran and thus received a medal from the Shah for his superior accomplishments.

A pioneer in Zoroastrian youth activities, he started the Zoroastrian Youth Organization in Tehran and published a journal *Andisheye Ma* (Our Thoughts).

Mr. Zartoshty left for the USA via India by boat in 1946 for higher education at Syracuse University. After completing his studies with a major in business and economics, he returned to Tehran, where he incorporated Zereh Company with his brothers. He was extremely successful in his business and was also constantly lending a helping hand by donating to numerous charities and needy families.

He married Paridokht Goshtash Kaikhosrowpour on June 4, 1959. They had three daughters (Shirin, Katayoon and Parinaz) and one son, Esfandiar. In December 1978, he and his family emigrated to the USA, to Boston. He always provided his family with the best quality of life and education.

Jamshid B. Zartoshty passed away on May 7, 2002, in Boston. He had suffered from heart disease for many years and it was the main cause of his unfortunate death. May his soul rest in peace!

Send **Milestones announcements** to: Mahrukh Motafram, 2390 Chanticleer, Brookfield, WI 53045; (262) 821-5296, mahrukh@aol.com.

## Freny Pervez Mehta (1921 - 2002)

A LIFE OF KINDNESS AND  
SELFLESS LOVE FOR ALL



Freny Mehta ("Freny Aunty") was a kind and loving mother to all at ZAC (Chicago). She had a gentle and positive attitude about life, and was never

known to express anger or say an unkind word about anyone.

She participated actively in all community events, giving of herself willingly for any worthy cause. Freny aunty's "Dar-ni-Pori bake-a-thon" on *Avan Ardisur nu Parab*, has become a legendary annual tradition at ZAC, bringing the entire community together to make hundreds of dar-ni-pori, and raise funds for ZAC. She started the tradition and looked forward to it year after year, even with her failing health and frail condition last April.

Born in Navsari, Freny had a natural gift for painting, arts and music. When her husband Pervez, passed away with typhoid while she was still in her thirties, she moved with her two young sons, to Ahmedabad to live in the joint family (of eleven) of Pervez's parents and brother. Determined to support herself, Freny went to school for a diploma in teaching stitching, embroidery and fancy work. She worked for 18 years at the Zoroastrian Industrial teaching crafts and instilling self-reliance and independence in her students. In 1973, she came to Chicago to help with the delivery of her first grandchild. Since then, she led a devoted life to help raise all her grandchildren.

By her exemplary life, Freny infused and instilled the virtues of patience, contentment and kindness in everyone who came in contact with her. All at ZAC will cherish the memory of her beautiful smile and her genuine selfless love. Thank you, Ahura Mazda, for sharing your angel with us.



## Gool Minwalla (1913 - 2002)

MOTHER, EDUCATOR, THEOSOPHIST AND FRIEND OF HUMANITY

A pioneer in social work, a women's rights activist and educationist, Gool Minwalla's passing is a deep loss to all those that she touched. To quote the Sindh Education Minister Ghulam Ali: "... Pakistan would mourn the passing away of a renowned scholar, a popular teacher and a model guide."

A key quality of Gool can be discerned from this memory by a son: Mum could not turn her back on any beggar, always giving generously. One such, was a man with advanced leprosy. He would come daily to the gate of the house and await mum, who always gave him something and pass some time talking to him. When I asked her what they talked about, she replied: "I just can't bear to see the pain of his loneliness ... and money is not always all that is needed".

In 1939, she took a teachers' training course, given by the famed Maria Montessori herself, and gained an international diploma for children's education. She established the first Montessori school in Karachi, which is still operational, and the Pakistan Montessori Association. Over 3,500 Montessori teachers have obtained training from her organization.

Gool was a leader among women social workers in Pakistan, having worked with Begum Liaquat Ali Khan to establish the All-Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) for the welfare of women. She became APWA's first education secretary in 1949. Under Gool's guidance, APWA set up numerous schools; 17 were nationalized during the 1970s.

Gool also introduced informal education for women through APWA, adult training centers were set up throughout the country and women were specially encouraged to attend. She and her colleagues faced fierce opposition from men but continued their efforts.



Gool helped establish many organizations like Social Services Coordinating Council; the Pakistan Council of Social Work; Karachi Social Services Group; the Karachi Tuberculosis Association; the National Federation of Welfare of the Blind; the Pakistan United Nations Association and others. She served numerous social welfare organizations such as the Poor Patients' Welfare Society; Poor Families Welfare Society; Karachi Children's Welfare Society; the Leprosy Association, the Ida Rieu Poor Welfare Association and others. She also served as chair of the National Council of Social Welfare and served on the Karachi Development Authority, Radio Pakistan and the Remand Home.

Inspired by Jamshed Mehta, Gool joined the Theosophical Society and became their presidential agent. She also formed the Theosophical Order of Service and almost single-handedly established Jamshed Memorial Hall, where civic activities are held.

Gool represented Pakistan at various forums, including the UN International Congress at Geneva on the Prevention of Crime, and the International Women's Conference at Tashkent. She initiated the American Field Service program in Pakistan.

The Pakistan government awarded her *Tamgha-i-Quaid-i-Azam*. She was also recognized for lifetime contributions to education (1992). The Pakistan Ladies' Forum selected her as Pakistan's Woman of the Year twice (1992 and 1998). At the World Zoroastrian Congress in 2000, Gool was inducted into the Daughters of Mashyani "Hall of Fame".

All those who received words of wisdom and encouragement from Gool, pray for eternal peace of her soul. ■

[Notes contributed by Minoo Minwalla, Zarine Balsara, Framz Minwalla and Farhad Minwalla]

## EVENTS AND HONORS

**Cavus Batki**, an undergraduate at Bristol University, England, son of Khorshed and Dinshah Batki of Cheltenham, was presented the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award at Buckingham Palace in July 2001, for services to the community.

**Shenaz Bhujwala**, daughter of Maneck and Mahrukh Bhujwala of San Jose, CA, graduated from University of Southern California Law School with the Juris Doctor degree.

**Nozer Buchia** of Chicago area was featured as a top executive in the National Who's Who in Executives and Professionals, 2002. Nozer is vice president of Strategic Offshore Operations at Ciber, Inc. He is also a trustee on the Foundation Board of Davenport University, and a recipient of its 2001 Alumni of the Year Award.

## Noshirwan Cowasjee

A LIFE OF SERVICE

AND QUIET PHILANTHROPY

Noshirwan Cowasjee will be remembered for the ultimate generosity of spirit that he exemplified, working selflessly for the Zarathushti cause, for decades. The WZO Medical Fund is testimonial to his spirit and dedication.

One time I remember him meeting me at London airport, carrying a huge suitcase full of books for me to take back to Chicago for free distribution. This was a passion with him, and he succeeded well in spreading knowledge and awareness of the religion to many of us.

We will miss his regular Navroze greetings that always came like clockwork, with very appropriate wordings, many of which I have treasured. We still use his beautiful gold farohar envelope stickers that he had made and distributed. Truly a life spent in service and accomplishment.

- Rohinton M. Rivetna ■

**Peggy Daruwalla** of New Jersey received the "Parent of the Year Award" presented by the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children and was featured in two local newspapers. Peggy, who is mother of Mathew, a very gifted and able 13 year old, is founder of REACH (Raising Exceptionally Able Children), an organization that lobbies for more appropriate educational challenges for gifted and talented children. Peggy may be contacted at [prose47@comcast.net](mailto:prose47@comcast.net).



**Shiraz Dalal** [above] son of Behram and Tehmi Dalal of Raleigh, NC, graduated from the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, with a B.Sc. degree. Shiraz has started pilot training and will be based in the Texas area over the next two years.

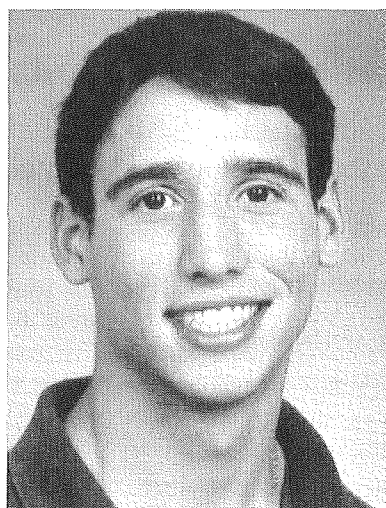
**Dilshad Marolia** graduated with a Bachelor of Law with distinction from McGill University in May. She was nominated for the Montreal Young Women of Distinction Award by the McGill Dean of Students. Dilshad will continue her education for a Masters in Law at Oxford University, England.

**Hoshie E. Kanga** of UK was awarded the MBE (Member of the British Empire) for working as an administrative officer in central government for over 36 years, and being the longest serving member of the



**Bringing performing arts to the deaf.** Two internationally known Zarathushti choreographers **Zarin Chaudhuri** of Calcutta, an expert in mime, and **Astad Deboo** of Mumbai (who has been called the "Father of Modern Dance" in India), took part in "Deaf Way II International Arts Festival", in Washington DC. An inspiring presentation by "Action Players" a group of hearing impaired dancers from Calcutta, on July 13 at the Smithsonian's Meyer Auditorium, was graced by the Indian Ambassador to the US.

A workshop was held at the World Bank in Washington, DC on July 16, followed by a solo performance by Deboo and a dance by the "Action Players". Unable to hear the music, the dancers synchronize their movements by taking visual cues, and vibratory cues from foot thumping. The event was sponsored by the State Bank of India and the Embassy of India. Support from FEZANA was also acknowledged in the brochure. The above photo shows participants of an international summer camp for the hearing impaired, held in 1999, by Galludet University, Washington, DC, with **Astad Deboo** [seated fourth from left], at the home of Darius and Ruksana Mehta, in Maryland.



**Behram Mistree**, 17, son of Farrokh and Yashfara Mistree of Atlanta, GA, was awarded the Lakeside High School Viking Award for Varsity Boys Soccer 2002, for being "truly representative of the highest quality of a Varsity athlete and student."

Behram received the "Harvard Prize Book" awarded to an outstanding student in the junior class of 400; was a Governor's Honors State finalist in Communicative Arts; was on the Outstanding Academic Achievement High Honor Roll with Distinction; and was selected as a Furman Scholar. He is a senior Boy Scout patrol leader, plays the violin, is on the Varsity math team and

the academic bowl team, and is member of several honor societies.

With five AP classes, Behram has still managed straight A's this year. When he graduates, he would love to attend Harvard or MIT and major in Math ("I love to help people with problem-solving") or English. Behram's brother Dinshah is a freshman at MIT majoring in management and economics.

Treasury's European Co-ordination Team for over 18 years. Hoshie was presented with the insignia of a MBE by the Prince of Wales, at an investiture ceremony held at Buckingham Palace in April.

**Susan Karani**, daughter of Hoshang and Bonnie Karani of Chicago area was in Mumbai, as a recipient of the University of Chicago Human Rights Program grant. She conducted legal research for the book *Child Sexual Abuse and the Law* [by Mahrukh Adenwala, published by the India Centre for Human Rights and the Law]. Susan graduated from University of Chicago with an BA (honors) and is headed to Columbia University for a master's in human rights studies.

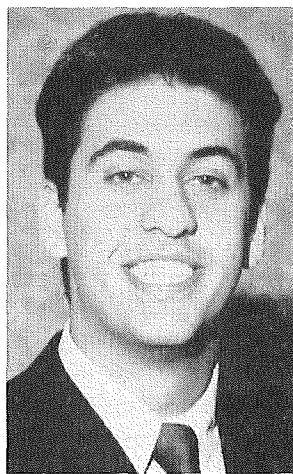


Twins **Natasha** and **Ninoshka Singh**, 15, [above] completed their Good Life Emblem Award, and were recognized by Arnavaz Sukhia [above on right], president of ZAPANJ. They are girl scouts and have achieved their Silver Award recently. Natasha and Ninoshka are also proficient in basketball and soccer, and play the violin and piano. ■

**\$150,000 Justice Prize-winner**  
Noted jurist **Fali S. Nariman** has won the 2002 Justice Prize for contributions to justice and its delivery through the legal system. He will receive \$150,000 and a gold medal on September 22, in Richmond, VA. The award is presented by the Grueber Foundation.

## FEZANA Journal youth editor Nikan Khatibi in City Council race

"I'm running for this office because I love politics and would like to start my career early in hopes of becoming a future senator."



**Nikan Khatibi**, editor of the *Youthfully Speaking* section of FEZANA Journal, took his first major steps towards his dream of becoming US senator, with his announcement in August, to run for the position of Councilman of Laguna Niguel, California. "I have been raised to consider the welfare of others, to contribute to my community, and to do my best to improve the quality of life for all," says Nikan in his press release, "My personal philosophy is to not only do the right thing, but to do things right."

Nikan, who is juggling his time campaigning and pre-med studies at University of California, Irvine is running on a 'zero dollar' campaign. "I am going to walk neighborhoods, knock on doors, and learn about what issues are important for you," he says, "I pledge that the cornerstone of our local government will be integrity, accountability and openness" "I would like to make Laguna Niguel a better place for all," says Nikan, from their beautiful family home atop a mountain overlooking the city.

Nikan, who was born in Houston, is the son of Fereshteh (who stood for the position of FEZANA vice president earlier this year) a high school teacher, and Houshang, a university professor of sociology, who was a naval commander in Iran, before the family fled to the US during the 1979 revolution. Sisters Artimis and Parnis are both pharmacy students.

Nikan has been busy these days, giving interviews to the press [see excerpt below]; watch for him on TV as the election approaches, on November 5. ■

### Political ambition pits youth against experience

D.C. dreams drive Nikan Khatibi, 20, into the Laguna Niguel council race.

AUGUST 14, 2002  
BY CATRINE JOHANSSON  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

#### LAGUNA NIGUEL

He's not old enough to have a drink, but Nikan Khatibi is running for office.

The 20-year-old Laguna Niguel resident, who pulled candidacy papers last week, is the youngest resident ever to run for the City Council. He'll face two incumbents:

Mayor Joe Brown and Councilwoman Cathryn DeYoung.

His mother, Fereshteh, wasn't surprised when her son said he was running for City Council. "He was 14 when he told me he wanted to be a senator," she said.

For six months, Nikan Khatibi has juggled his campaign, medical studies, volunteer work for Irvine Mayor Larry Agran's re-election campaign and other activities.

Running against Brown and DeYoung will

be an uphill battle. Both incumbents have many years experience and are well-known in the community.

"It is a cornerstone in our democracy that anybody can run for public office," said DeYoung "I will look at this campaign as I would any other and take nothing for granted."

Agran thinks Khatibi's candidacy could create momentum, "Even if he doesn't win, he may (yet) become part of the governing family." ■

# Ayesha F. Nariman in courageous run for US Congress

For possibly the first time in United States history, a Zarathushti is running for a seat in the US House of Representatives

Billed as "The Unexpected Candidate", **Ayesha F. Nariman** [photo right, with President Clinton, in April 2002] of Williamsville (Buffalo) is the Democratic challenger for a seat in the US House of Representatives, currently held by a Republican, Thomas Reynolds, in the 26th Congressional District of New York.

Ayesha is carrying on in the tradition of her illustrious forefathers. Her father, Fali K. F. Nariman, was chairman and managing director of the Union Bank of India; maternal grandfather Pheroz Kothavala was the diwan (prime-minister) of the Indian state of Rajpipla; and grand-uncle, Khurshed F. Nariman, or Vir Nariman was the legendary leader of the Congress party in the Bombay Legislative Council and the Bombay Municipal Corporation; and a Mayor of Bombay, active alongside Mahatma Gandhi, in the civil disobedience movement prior to India's Independence in 1947. "Nariman Point" at the end of the famed Marine Drive in Mumbai is named after him.

Ayesha came to the USA in 1974, as her husband (now ex) Homi Patel, was doing his MBA, at Columbia University at the time. She has two sons, Neville H. Patel, 27, a graduate of Northwestern University, currently pursuing his MBA at Wharton, and Cyrus H. Patel, 25, a graduate of Cornell, who is doing his MBA at the Kellogg School. "They are both very good and serious young men," says Ayesha proudly, "they are the joy of my life."

A financial advisor with American Express Financial Advisors, Ayesha has an MBA from the University of Buffalo (SUNY at Buffalo) with dual



majors in Financial Institutions and Markets and Health Care Systems, and has lived in Buffalo since 1982.

"I have been interested in political issues at the national level for over a decade," says Ayesha, as she lists her major issues (excerpted below):

(1) *To get back to a fiscally sound federal budget:* to stop using the sleight of hand accounting practices of the federal government, whereby, under the hocus-pocus of the "unified" budget the government hides the true deficit and debt of our federal budget.

(2) *To secure the trust funds of Social Security and Medicare.* My first Bill would be to rename FICA taxes as FICA Savings (words matter!) to ensure that trust fund surpluses are not misused to hide operating budget deficits. Further, a separation of FICA savings from

operating budget revenues will ensure two sources of funds cannot be intermingled by usury.

(3) *Medicare Reform:* Medicare needs to be overhauled and the prescription drug benefit added as one of its intrinsic benefits. In order to use Medicare dollars more efficiently my recommendation is to revamp Medicare so that the federal government will purchase group insurance for seniors, to include prescription drugs, dental and vision. My plan would cost taxpayers zero additional dollars.

(4) *Corporate Responsibility:* The compensation structure of top executives should be tied to the lowest paid employee.

The full text of Nariman's platform can be viewed at her interactive website at [www.narimanforcongress.org](http://www.narimanforcongress.org). Contact Ayesha at (716) 631-8490, email: [ayesha@localnet.com](mailto:ayesha@localnet.com).

- By Roshan Rivetna



## Appeal from Ayesha

I am in a very difficult race with a well-funded republican in a heavily republican district. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) has informed me that until I can show that I can raise some serious money myself, they will not be likely to fund my campaign. Hence, I am looking for support from the Zarathushti and Indian community with small contributions in the amount of: \$5, \$10, \$15, \$20, \$25, \$50, \$100, or Other ...

Checks should be made out to "Nariman for Congress" and mailed to: Nariman for Congress, PO Box 1956, Williamsville, NY 14231-1956. (Contributions are non-tax deductible. Only US citizens and green card holders can contribute by law to political campaigns).



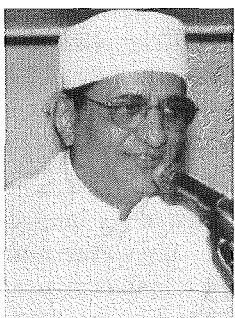
# Frohar Films teleserial Humata, Hukhta, Hvarshta

*Designed and devised by Er. Cyrus P. Dastoor*

*Teleserial of 52 episodes. An index is available upon request. For ordering information, please see below.*

**By Er. Soli P. Dastur**  
University Park, Florida

Considering the fact that television today is a popular form of mass media, **Frohar Films** have pioneered and initiated a teleserial celebrating Zarathushti history, culture and heritage, and the spirit of philanthropy and way of life in Mumbai.



Since August 1999, Indian TV channels have been telecasting the serial *Humata Hukhta Hvarshta* (Good thoughts, good words, good deeds) by Er.

Cyrus P. Dastoor [above] every Sunday afternoon at 12:30 pm IST. High priests, scholars, professionals and even little children have showcased the community's rich and varied culture, traditions, life styles and ethics. There have been general presentations, interviews, quiz and cultural programs, etc. Though this is a program about Parsis, there is wide viewership among members of all communities in India. This can be gauged from the very positive feedback we continue to receive.

Fifty-two episodes have already been telecast and we have also received an extension for further 26 episodes. However, the Channels are not pay-

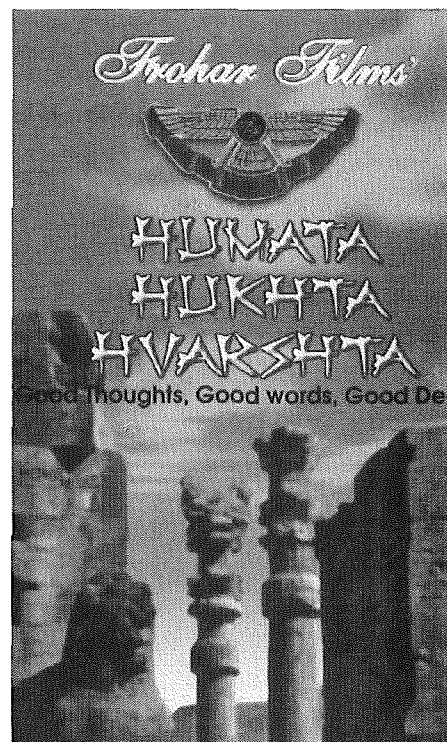
ing the production costs of the program. Producing the episodes of the serial so far have been possible only due to personal contributions made by the promoters of this serial and donations from philanthropic individuals and institutions. The cost per episode is Rs. 40,000 (about \$850).

The production of further episodes will only be possible, provided we get funds from philanthropic individuals, well-wishers and organizations.

The serial has been made in Gujarati with many parts in English. A major effort is underway to dub the entire serial in English so that all Zarathushtis worldwide are able to view these episodes. [Also see p. 43]

## Humata Hukhta Hvarshta

*Frohar Films is also creating CDs and video cassettes of all 52 episodes of the teleserial **Humata Hukhta Hvarshta** at a cost of \$10 per episode. Please send your tax deductible contribution marked "Frohar Films" to ZAC (Chicago), 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521. For further information on the availability of CDs and video cassettes, as well as on sending donation to ZAC, contact Er. Soli P. Dastur, 6322 Thorndon Circle, University Park, FL 34201-2306, Tel: 941-351-2240, email: dastur@comcast.net.*



It was by luck that I happened to hear about *Humata Hukhta Hvarshta* while I was visiting India last year. I now watch the tapes every morning; it starts with the fire, a dasturji praying and then educational lectures, interviews, children's quiz and much more.

I felt like I have found GOLD! I felt I had my agiary right here in my own home. I have found peace at last! I am happy that I can pass this treasure on to my children, and would urge all families to watch it too.

Tanaz Bamboat  
Munster, Indiana

## Discourses on Zoroastrianism

**By Er. Godrej D. Sidhwa**

US \$5 (in US) , US\$6 (in Canada) including postage. To order contact Farhad Godrej Sidhwa at: Sidhwa@yahoo.com.

The book is based on lectures by Er. Sidhwa of Karachi to audiences around the world. Er. Sidhwa has been teaching Zarathushti theology at BVS Parsi High School and Mama Parsi School in Karachi for 45 years.

## Ordering Books from India

Parsiana and Giara Publications have teamed up to provide the latest books of interest to Zarathushti around the world. Now you can purchase books at Parsiana, 300 Perin Nariman Street, Behind RBI, Fort, Mumbai 400 001, Tel: 2665661. To order by email, contact: Parsiana@vsnl.net or giara@bom5.vsnl.net.in. Payment by credit card is available.

# Is the Zarathushtrian Religion Universal?

By Roni K. Khan

Publisher Marzban Giara, 85 pages, with a detailed index, 2001, Rs. 100 plus S&H. Contact [giara@bom5.vsnl.net.in](mailto:giara@bom5.vsnl.net.in) or [Parsiana@vsnl.net](mailto:Parsiana@vsnl.net).

## Review by Nadir A. Modi Mumbai, India

Roni Khan's book is appropriately "dedicated to the sacred memory of the countless generations of our righteous forbears whose faith and fortitude made it possible for us, the Parsi/Irani Zarathushtrians of today, to exist as a living race with a living religion."

The book is obviously a labor of love; the kind of book that one opens with expectations and closes with profit. Faithful to Milton's description of a good book as "the precious life blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured on purpose to a life beyond life." Deep feeling and sound thinking expressed in felicitous language make this book persuasive and also pleasant to read.

The tenets of orthodoxy are expounded from a fresh viewpoint. The preface starts by emphasizing

that the word 'orthodoxy' has no sinister connotations but really means "straight or right doctrine." The author rightly stresses that "our business should be only with issues and not with personalities." Rightly he also insists that "it is the Zarathushtrian religion alone which has been able to sustain the Parsi people," and that we are "the faithful carrier of a unique and tolerant culture."

The community today faces two major problems – one of quantity, the other of quality. In the first place, the number of Zarathushtrians (particularly in India) is getting less and less. In the second place, this diminishing number is regrettably (with notable exceptions) becoming less and less 'Zoroastrian'. The label remains, the substance is wearing thin.

According to Khan, it is now truly a question of survival. The message of the book is simple, and the author summarizes it thus: "There are quar-

ters in the world today where the Parsi race and the Zarathushtrian religion are simultaneously becoming unrecognizable. What both Alexander and the Arabs tried but failed to do, we may yet accomplish by our own hand – God forbid!

"We are talking about survival. The message is already writ in large letters on the wall. A few more calculated shoves by heterodox hands and we will go over the brink. This is the ultimate message of this book, albeit between the lines."

The approach of the book is the approach of the new millennium. Witness some of the headings: Proof of the Pudding, Diversity in Nature, The Ace Turns into a Joker.

If one wants to understand certain aspects of our religion and to see a paladin of orthodoxy strive with fervor and felicity to explain and expound in simple language its eternal truths, one has only to buy the book, and spend an hour or two reading it.

Well written and well produced, *Is the Zarathushtrian Religion Universal?* deserves to be read by as many Zarathushtrians as are really concerned for their faith today.

[Ervad Nadir A. Modi is chair of the Athornan Mandal, in Mumbai]

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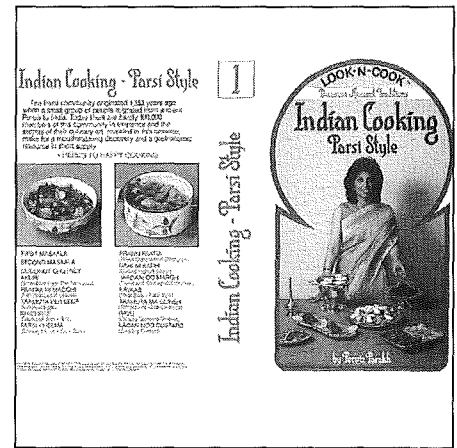
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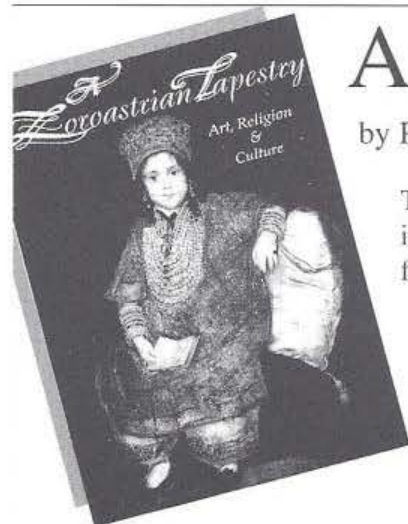
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