



# JOURNAL

Mah Fravardin-Ardebehest-khordad 1377 AY (Fasl) • Mah Avan-Adar Dae 1377 AY (Shenshal) • Mah Adar-Dae-Bahman 1377 AY (Kadmi)

## RELIGION AND MEDICINE

### How Faith Impacts Healing



### Also Inside:



**Spirituality:  
A Medical Approach**



**Bringing Religion  
Into Medicine**



**NAMC Welcomes  
Two New Martabs**



**Society of Scholars  
of Zoroastrianism**

**NauRooz Pirooz-Baad ➔ Naurooz Mubarak**

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**SUMMER 2008** Living with Challenges

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**FALL 2008**

PARSIS OF PAKISTAN

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of  
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Mah Fravardin-Ardebehest-khordad 1377 AY (Fasli)

Mah Avan-Adar Dae 1377 AY (Shenshai)

Mah Adar-Dae-Bahman 1377 AY (Kadmi)

*Opinions expressed in the FEZANA Journal do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA or members of this publication's editorial board.*

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## A word from the Editor

**T**he cover story for the Spring issue “Bringing Religion into Medicine”, championed by a doctor in training, Nikan Khatibi, is both inspirational and thought provoking. It is heartening to read about young Zarathushti doctors excelling in different subspecialties. In the last 100 years knowledge of the intricacies of human body has grown exponentially and so is our hope to stretch the limits of life and the quality of life as we know it.

Anthropology affirms that medicine which dealt with diseases and relief from pain originated in magic and flourished as a priestly art. Suffering and pain were either understood as punishment for being “bad” or “wicked”, the work of invisible demons unleashed by evil forces and the good things in life were explained by the work of good divinities who protected you.. Thus came the concept of good and evil. Each group had to be either thanked so that they would continue to shower their bounty or they needed to be placated through rituals and sacrifice so that they would stop hurling disasters and pain.

We have come a long way from this “magical way of thinking, of self healing”. As man and his thinking evolved so did the art and science of alleviating pain and discomfort. In ancient civilizations the practice of medicine was the prerogative of the priests, influenced by the philosophy and the religion practiced. And even though vast progress is made, body parts being replaced by both human and artificial ones, intricate surgeries being successfully performed, human life started in a petrie dish, but we humans, have not lost the essential ingredient of the healing process FAITH.

And there are other medico-socio-religious issues we Zarathushtis have to deal with to bring compatibility between religious beliefs and medicine. We need to ask the question, where does our religion stand on abortion, on organ donation, blood transfusion (from a non-Zarathushti), on autopsy, on end of life issues of euthanasia, do not resuscitate (DNR), on artificial insemination, on invitro fertilization, sperm donation, and on genetic engineering. These all need to be discussed in open forums, to help Zarathushti doctors in their practice and for Zarathushti patients to make informed decisions.

The foundational prayer of the Zarathushti religion Ashem Vohu, teaches us to be righteous for the sake of being righteous. And the Gathas enjoin us to make the right choices and then to live by the consequences of our choices. They teach us to live the right life, not only in the spiritual realm but also in the physical realm, respecting the body. Much of the ill health today is a consequence of the life style, the eating habits, we have chosen, which lead to stress and the weakening of the immune system and all the complications which come with it.

We need to return to the simple way of living, practicing good thinking [promoted by wise priests of yore] which was indeed “magical” in promoting health.

We come back full circle to the common underlying message and meaning of the gathas, and the Ashem Vohu prayer-- which ultimately leads one to say that good thinking is its own reward which is translated in this context to good health.

As we start a new Zarathushti year, let me wish each and everyone of you a very happy, successful and most of all a peaceful year. Looking around the world with all that is happening in Iraq and Afghanistan, in Palestine, in Pakistan, in Kenya, in Somalia, random and deliberate shootings in North America, in schools and in universities, in shopping centres, “freshokereti” is becoming a very elusive and alien concept. May we, as Zarathushtis, redouble our efforts at “freshokereti” so that we can all live in peace and harmony with each other.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Nikan Khatibi". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

**Read and Send a gift subscription to family and friends**

# A Message from FEZANA President

## NAUROOZ, OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

Our religion enjoins us to protect the environment, revere nature, and enjoy the bounty of the seasons. We celebrate each change of season with communal prayers and a gahanbar for partaking of food together. We find great satisfaction in preserving and improving our environment and being in harmony with natural cycles. This attachment with the natural cycles and the environment identifies our unique spiritual heritage.

Zarathushti rulers were crowned at the exact time of the spring equinox, which marked the official beginning of their regimes. Every year, this first day of Spring, NauRooz, was celebrated with great pomp and ceremony. And because they used the solar calendar with proper intercalation, the festivals, gahanbars, and religious celebrations always occurred in the correct season: spring, summer, harvest, and winter.

Fellow Zarathushtis, the time has come for us in North America to take the lead in celebrating our major festivals like NauRooz, Tirgan, and Mehragan, and all our gahanbars with fervor and reverence, and in the proper seasons. FEZANA should adopt the seasonal or fasli calendar as its official secular calendar.

The purpose of the secular calendar is to highlight our connectedness with Nature – and with each other. It is not meant to break any of our linkages with our mother countries -- our Kadimi, Shahenshahi, Fasli or Khorshidi religious calendars, or our consecrated temples and implements, alat, in India, Pakistan and Iran. Athornans and behdins can continue to use their traditional calendar preferences as they wish. FEZANA has no authority to change that.

Furthermore, FEZANA's adoption of the seasonal calendar does not in any way reduce the autonomy of the Associations. In fact, all North American Associations are encouraged to celebrate Naurooz, Parsi New Year, Muktaad and other observances of our faith as a mark of solidarity with our co-religionists in other parts of the world.

Of course, FEZANA seeks the guidance and blessings of the North American Mobeds Council (NAMC). My initial inquiries with several NAMC executives have been well received. A full discussion of this FEZANA initiative is planned by them at their next Annual General Meeting in May 2008. I am also requesting NAMC to advise us on the correct calendar year to be used in North America.

To show our solidarity and resolve, let us welcome NauRooz 2008 all across North America in a spirit of



hamazori, togetherness, during the week-end of March 21-23, 2008. By celebrating NauRooz together, we are showing our pride in our enlightened heritage and common spirituality. And as we go forward and resolve to observe all our gahanbars and festivals in the correct seasons, we will be declaring to the whole world our commitment to the stewardship of the Beneficent Creation of Ahura Mazda.

*NauRooz PirRooz – shaad baad!*

*NauRooz, Blessed day – fill us with cheer!*

*Rustom Kevala, FEZANA President*

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**FEZANA JOURNAL**

**and**

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family and friends**



### NauRooz Pirooz-Baad! NauRooz Mubarak!



We wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year. Now that the spring is here, let us hope for a bright and prosperous financial year. At the time of writing this article, 2007 is coming to an end and it was a good financial year for FEZANA. The Zarathushti community has been very generous in donating to the various FEZANA Funds, especially the Welfare/Critical Assistance fund. We thank you for that and we hope for your continuing support in 2008.

2007 will be remembered for taking a big step forward by establishing the 20th Anniversary Fund for Infrastructure. FEZANA can be proud in saying we now have an office in Chicago. Kindly remember to support this special fund for the infrastructure.

Since this issue is all about good health we would like to add in this financial section a very important subject of "walking," which could add years to your life. After all with a healthy body and a healthy mind, one can accomplish almost anything, including a healthy financial portfolio.

### Walking - A Prescription for Fun and Health

Just 30 minutes of walking everyday at 3-4 miles per hour (3 miles per hour is equal to walking 1 mile in 20 minutes) can help you:

1. Prevent heart attacks: walking everyday lowers blood pressure, reduces triglycerides, raises HDL (the good cholesterol) and improves the body's blood clotting mechanism. This all adds up to as much as 50% reduction in the risk of suffering a heart attack.
2. Decrease the risk of strokes: Harvard University researchers found that those who walk daily decrease their risk of suffering strokes caused by clots by 40%
3. Build bones, reducing the risk of osteoporosis: several studies found that any sort of weight bearing activity, from walking to weight lifting, builds bone density. And because exercise improves muscle strength and balance, it greatly diminishes the likelihood that you will fall.
4. Prevent Type II Diabetes (adult onset of diabetes): National Institutes of Diabetes, Digestive, and Kidney Diseases, found that exercise was nearly twice as effective as prescription drugs in the prevention of diabetes; 30 minutes of walking everyday can postpone and even prevent the development of type II diabetes.
5. Relieves depression: New research has found that 30-45 minutes of walking everyday may be as effective as medication in relieving clinical depression.

Why not take advantage and walk for your health as well as raise funds for your community. Try arranging your own community Zarathushti Walk-a-thon. You could help your community raise funds, promote Zarathushti awareness in your community and improve your health. Have fun!

Kindly make your check payable to FEZANA and mail to: Katayun Kapadia, FEZANA Treasurer, 33 Preamble Drive, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

**Jerry Kheradi,, MD, FACC, Chairperson, FEZANA Funds and Finance**

**Committee: Katayun Kapadia, Treasurer, Rashid Mehini, Behram Irani, Celeste Kheradi**





# FINANCIAL

DONATIONS RECEIVED OCTOBER 1, 2007 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2007

	Amount in US\$
<b>FEZANA 20th. Anniversary Infrastructure Fund</b>	
Farangis, Homayoun, & Iran Zardoshty in memory of their parents Mehrbanoo & Faridoon	
Zardoshty and their sister Paridokht Zardoshty, Scottsdale, AZ	\$ 20,000.00
Anonymous	\$ 10,000.00
Gulestan & Farrokh Deboo, New Canaan, CT	\$ 1,001.00
Gool & Shahrokh Mehta, Dewitt, NY	\$ 501.00
Aban & Purvez Rustomji, Houston, TX	\$ 500.00
Shazneen & Hanoz Gandhi, Santa Monica, CA	\$ 488.75
Keshvar & Kali Buhariwalla, Flower Mound, TX	\$ 251.00
Cyrus Austin, Chandler, AZ	\$ 201.00
Banoo Karanjia, Mount Laurel, NJ	\$ 101.00
Janet Allen & Farrokh Mistree, Atlanta, GA	\$ 101.00
Anahaita Kotval & Zubeen Shroff, Tarrytown, NY	\$ 101.00
Ruby & Minoo Italia, Houston, TX	\$ 100.00
Perviz Patel, Schaumburg, IL	\$ 61.00
Villoo & Rusi Tavadia, Novi, MI	\$ 50.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 33,456.75</b>
<b>FEZANA GENERAL FUND</b>	
Dinyar Karai, Mumbai, India	\$ 5,000.00
Sanobar & Aderbad Tamboli, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 1,000.00
Shirin & Parvez Modi, Ornagevale, CA	\$ 250.00
Jijibhoy Patel, Livermore, CA	\$ 100.00
Nancy & Sarosh Sukhia, Hopewell, VA	\$ 70.00
K. Aidun, Potsdam, NY	\$ 50.00
Shazad Contractor, San Jose, CA	\$ 50.00
Percis Mistry, Queens Village, NY	\$ 50.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,570.00</b>
<b>FEZANA WELFARE FUND</b>	
Beach Cigar Group Inc., Miami, FL	\$ 20,800.00
Zoroastrian Assoc. of SE Asia, Singapore (several donors)	\$ 7,525.00
Gulestan Deboo, Gool & Dinyar Wadia, New Canaan, CT	\$ 5,000.00
Sanobar & Aderbad Tamboli, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 1,500.00
H. F. & F. M. Contractor, Pittsburgh, PA	\$ 1,450.00
Zoroastrian Association of California (several donors)	\$ 1,278.00
Zoroastrian Assoc. of New Zealand (several donors)	\$ 1,118.50
Porus Austin, Stockton, CA	\$ 1,000.00
Prochy Sethna, San Jose, CA	\$ 1,000.00
Farieda & Behram Irani, Plano, TX	\$ 500.00
Rusi Gandhi, Montville, NJ	\$ 301.00
Sadri, Patel & Ghyara Families, Hayward, CA	\$ 301.00
7 Zarathusti Families from Flushing, NY	\$ 264.00
Feroza & Godrej Mehta, Bayville, NY	\$ 201.00
Hosi Presswalla, P.E. Inc., Tampa, FL	\$ 200.00
Noshir Nani Desai, Singapore	\$ 101.00
Purviz & Daraius Batliwala, Fullerton, CA	\$ 100.00
Khodabakhsh Irani, Akron, OH	\$ 100.00
Katy & Babu Surendran, Houston, TX	\$ 100.00
Shireen & Jehangir Shroff, Plantation, FL	\$ 100.00
Nazneen & Meheli Warden, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 100.00
Ferzin & Zubin Chichgar, Brea, CA	\$ 51.00
Roshni & Homiyar Choksi, Chesterfield, VA	\$ 50.00
R.M. & S.R. Irani, La Mirada, CA	\$ 50.00
Mina-Salamati & Sohrab Aidun, Oak Hill, VA	\$ 33.00
Ruby & Cawas Cooper, Macungie, PA	\$ 25.00
Phiroza & Bruce Stoneback, Penndel, PA	\$ 25.00
N. Isadvastar & K. Pourdhmobed, San Jose, CA	\$ 20.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 43,293.50</b>



# FINANCIAL

**DONATIONS RECEIVED OCTOBER 1, 2007 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2007**

## **FEZANA CRITICAL ASSISTANCE FUND**

**Amount in US\$**

Beach Cigar Group Inc., Miami, FL	\$ 1,800.00
Sanobar & Aderbad Tamboli, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 1,500.00
Farieda & Behram Irani, Plano, TX	\$ 500.00
Homiyar Choksi, Chesterfield, VA	\$ 100.00
Arnavaz & Jamshed Antia, Bolingbrook, IL	\$ 51.00
Tehmi Mukadam, Australia	\$ 50.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 4,001.00</b>

## **FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Ardeshtir Mistry, Arlington, TX	\$ 1,000.00
Aban & Purvez Rustomji, Houston, TX	\$ 1,000.00
Sanobar & Aderbad Tamboli, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 500.00
Trust of Dr. Firoze M. Ichhaporia, Montreal, Canada	\$ 500.00
Rashna & Neville Doodha, Calgary, Alberta, Canada	\$ 300.00
Rashna & Firdosh Mehta, Weatherford, TX	\$ 101.00
Adi, Pervin, Binaifer, Rashne & Tamina Davar, Falls Church, VA	\$ 100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 3,501.00</b>

## **FEZANA RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FUND**

Farangis, Homayoun, & Iran Zardoshty in memory of their sister Paridokht Zardoshty, Scottsdale, AZ	\$ 10,000.00
Sanobar & Aderbad Tamboli, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 500.00
Yasmin & Noshir Medhora, Houston, TX	\$ 200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 10,700.00</b>

## **FEZANA JOURNAL FUND**

Katy Cooper, Fair Oaks, CA	\$ 100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 100.00</b>

## **JUNGALWALA LECTURE SERIES**

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY)	\$ 1,001.00
Nina & Adil Mistree, New York, NY	\$ 21.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,022.00</b>

## **MOBEDS HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE**

Meher & Khurshed Dastur, Pittsburgh, PA	\$ 500.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 500.00</b>

**TOTAL DONATION RECEIVED October to December 2007**

**\$ 103,144.25**

## **ZOROASTRIANISM IS A WISDOM BASED RELIGION NOT JUST A CUSTOM BASED RELIGION**

### **Dr. Rostam Kaikhosrow Vahidi Moobed --- California Zoroastrian Center (CZC)**

Mobed Rostam Vahidi, who holds a doctorate in Avesta and Pahalavi, is a full-time priest at the CZC. He has started the program of weekly Sunday lectures and prayer open to all. and will be working with the community in all activities.

In his lecture he talked about our reverence to the Sun, Fire, Water, etc. pointing out the greatness of these creations of Ahura Mazda - without the Sun there would be no life as we know it, the Purity of the Fire which cannot be polluted by anything, etc.

He called on several young people volunteers to come up to the stage and give their opinion about various concepts, such as Truth, Zarathushti religion, etc. Dr. Vahidi spoke eloquently of the Mantras in Gathas and its application through Asha, Ushta and Vohuman in our daily lives. California Zoroastrian Center need to be congratulated in starting these Sunday Community religious classes i spoke eloquently of the Mantras in Gathas and its application through Asha, Ushta and Vohuman in our daily lives.

**TWENTYFIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) OF FEZANA****A G E N D A****FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2008**

Workshops :

6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Workshop (Details to be advised)

Refreshments (to be advised)

**AGM AGENDA** (Preliminary)**SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2008**

Annual General Meeting

Election Results, Reports by officers, Committee Chairs, Working Groups, member associations

Special resolutions for discussion and voting

Terms of Reference for Lifetime Achievement Award

Terms of Reference for North American Congresses

Approval of FEZANA Office Budget

**Special Lunch and Dinner Program****SUNDAY, May 11, 2008**

Reports by North American Mobeds Council, Review of XIV North American Zoroastrian Congress-IMPACT – Toronto - 2007

Review of 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Ballarat, Australia -- 2007

Review of Next Generation Now Congress in Chicago – 2007

Review of Society of Scholars Conference in Chicago - - 2007

Meeting of the Minds Forum

Chair Rustom Kevala.

Review of "Coming Together" meeting in Mumbai -- Rohinton Rivetna

Review of World Zoroastrian Congress in Dubai 2009 Firdosh Mehta

Selection of next AGM venue and dates

Summary of Future Plans /Open Forum

Community Needs /Q&amp;A Comments

Elections will be held for the offices of President, Treasurer and Asst Secretary. President Rustom Kevala, Treasurer Katayun Kapadia and Assistant Secretary Anahita Daryushnejad are all eligible to run for a second term.

**Firuzi Poonevalla, FEZANA Secretary****Location : California Zoroastrian Center****9025 Hazard Avenue, Westminister, CA 92683, U.S.A.****IN THE SPIRIT OF HAMAZORI****THE 21st FEZANA AGM - IS HOSTED BY CALIFORNIA ZOROASTRIAN CENTER AND CO-HOSTED BY THE ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA****HOTEL INFORMATION**

Arrivals :

(a) John Wayne Airport, Irvine (11.5 miles from hotel) or

(b) Los Angeles International Airport (32 miles from hotel).

*Bomi Patel will organize airport transport upon e-mail request with complete flight details, latest by March 31, 2008, to bomip@yahoo.com.**CZC will provide transport between the hotel and CZC for the meetings.***RESERVATIONS :**

Comfort Suites, 16301 Beach Blvd., Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Tel : (714) 841.1812 or 1-800 714.4040

E-mail : mike.cshb@yahoo.com

Reservations Code : CZC code #100899

Special rates valid until **April 9, 2008**Cancellations to be informed latest by **May 6, 2008.**

All rooms are suites and can occupy up to 4 persons

King size Bed (occupation 1 or 2 persons) @ US \$ 89 + tax per night

King size Bed + 1 pull out sofa (occupation 4 persons) US \$ 109 + Tax per night

**Complimentary Breakfast**



# FEZANA UPDATE

It has been decided, by a vote from the majority of our member associations, that the *FEZANA* office be located in Chicago and an administrator be appointed. Attached is a job description. Please forward applications from screened and acceptable candidates for our perusal and consideration.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

"Zoroastrian Association of Chicago is proud to host the first *FEZANA* office, currently under development, in the south section of the Rivetna Hall. We look forward to supporting *FEZANA* in this endeavor to establish a "brick and mortar" location after many years of operating virtually. This is a great achievement for *FEZANA* and for the Chicago community. The decision to host the *FEZANA* office in Chicago was approved by a majority of associations in North America, and we thank all associations in North America for supporting us" January 2008 Newsletter, ZAMC

## OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR (part-time position)

for an office to be established at 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527.

You will be a graduate of a recognized university with 3 to 5 years of administrative experience, proficient in English with good writing and computer skills (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, in particular), be a good and effective communicator, and demonstrate a strong commitment to teamwork. You will receive and answer inquiries from individuals and organizations throughout the world

You will facilitate the work of elected officials and committee chairpersons, helping to build strong relationships with stakeholders. You will be proficient in record keeping and have a track record of exceeding expectations and delivering service excellence. Book-keeping knowledge, Gujarati and Persian language skills will be helpful.

Starting stipend: \$800 to \$1000 per month at 80 hours per month.

E-mail your application to: Firuzi Poonevalla at [firuzi.poonevalla@rogers.com](mailto:firuzi.poonevalla@rogers.com).

**Firuzi Poonevalla** *FEZANA - Secretary*



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# Calendar of Festivals

## Calendar of Festivals

March 2008 to September 2008

Fravardegan/Panjeh/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar <i>Five gatha days</i>	Sunday, March 16-Thurs, March 20	(F)
Char-Shanbe-Soori (Heralding New Year) <i>Tuesday before NauRooz</i>	Tuesday, March 18	(F)
NauRooz or Jamshedi NauRooz (New Year) <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd</i>	Friday, March 21	(F)
Khordad Sal (Birthday of Asho Zarathushtra) <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Khordad</i>	Wednesday, March 26	(F)
Pir e Herisht Festival <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Amerdad-Khorshed</i>	Thurs, March 27- Monday, March 31	(F)
Ava Ardisoor nu Parab <i>Mah Avan, Roz Avan</i>	Saturday, February 23 Wednesday, March 26	(k) (S)
Fravardegan (All Souls Day) <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin</i>	Tuesday, April 8	(F)
Jashan Ardibeshrgan <i>Mah Ardibeshgt, Roz Ardibehesht</i>	Tuesday, April 22	(F)
Atash-nu-Parab <i>Mah Adar, Roz Adar</i>	Thursday, April 24	(S)
Maidyozarem Gahambar <i>Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher</i>	Wednesday, April 30-Sunday, May 4	(F)
Zarathusht-no-Diso, (Death Anniversary) <i>Mah Daye, Roz Khorshed</i>	Monday, May 26	(S)
Daye Mah nu Jashan <i>Mah Date, Roz Fravardin</i>	Tuesday, June 3	(S)
Maidhyarem Gahambar <i>Mah Daye, Roz Meher-Behram</i>	Saturday, May 31-Wed, June 4	(S)
Por-e-Sabz Festival <i>Mah Khordad, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>	Saturday, June 14-Wed, June 18	(F)
Pir-e-Banu Festival <i>Mah Tir, Roz Meher-Behram</i>	Friday, July 4-Tuesday, July 8	(F)
Maidyoshem Gahambar <i>Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher</i>	Sunday, June 29-Thursday, July 3	(F)
Jashne Tirgan <i>Mah Tir, Roz Tir</i>	Tuesday, July 1	(F)
Fravardegan/ Muktd/Hamaspathmedayem Gham <i>Five Gatha days</i>	Tuesday, July 15- Saturday, July 19 Thursday, August 14-August 18	(K) (S)
NauRooz <i>Mah Fravadin, Roz Hormazd</i>	Saturday, July 19 Tuesday, August 19	(K) (S)
Khordad Sal (Birth Ann. of Asho Zarathushtra) <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Khordad</i>	Friday, July 25 Sunday, August 24	(K) (S)
Fravardian Jashan	Thursday, August 7 Saturday, September 6	(K) (S)

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

## EARTH, TEACH ME an Ute prayer

Earth teach me quiet -- as the  
grasses are still with new light.

Earth teach me suffering -- as  
old stones suffer with memory.

Earth teach me humility -- as  
blossoms are humble with  
beginning.

Earth teach me caring -- as  
mothers nurture their young.

Earth teach me courage -- as the  
tree that stands alone.

Earth teach me limitation -- as  
the ant that crawls on the  
ground.

Earth teach me freedom -- as  
the eagle that soars in the sky.

Earth teach me acceptance -- as  
the leaves that die each fall.

Earth teach me renewal -- as the  
seed that rises in the spring.

Earth teach me to forget myself -  
- as melted snow forgets its life.

Earth teach me to remember  
kindness -- as dry fields weep  
with rain.

**What lies behind us and what lies before us  
are small matters compared to what lies within us. ---Ralph Waldo Emerson**

**Vision without action is daydreaming  
Action without vision is a nightmare.**

**ANON**



## COMING EVENTS

**APRIL 2008 The 9th Annual Global Youth Service Days** April 25-27, 2008  
Visit: [www.gysd.net](http://www.gysd.net)

### APRIL 2008

Zoroastrian Association of Houston and Zoroastrian Association of North Texas will sponsor with FEZANA a joint religious seminar April 12 (Houston) and April 13 (Dallas) Speakers Almut Hintze; Dr Jennifer Rose and Dr Mathew Stopler Contact Firdosh Mehta e.mail [fdjmehta@charter.net](mailto:fdjmehta@charter.net)

### MAY 2008 FEZANA AGM, California {CZC}

The Annual General Meeting of FEZANA will be held May 9-11, 2008 in Los Angeles, hosted by the California Zoroastrian Centre (CZC) and the Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC) Information contact Firuzi Poonevalla, secretary FEZANA, [firuzi.poonevalla@rogers.com](mailto:firuzi.poonevalla@rogers.com)

**MAY 2008 NAMC** Annual Meeting The annual meeting of the North American Mobeds' Council will be held May 24 and 25 at the Zoroastrian Religious and Cultural Centre, Oakville, Ontario.

### MAY 2008 RELIGIONS FOR PEACE, EUROPE

Major International Symposium Encounter 2008, will bring together 200 religious representatives to address challenges such as cultural and national identity, economic disparity, and lack of community cohesion. Contact: [wcrp@btconnect.com](mailto:wcrp@btconnect.com) Leadership provided by Mr. Jehangir Sarosh, President of Religions for Peace-Europe.

**MAY 2008, Philadelphia,** PeaceWalk Scheduled for Sunday, May 18 - 2008. "We invite people of all faiths to join us on a spiritual journey..."  
<http://www.interfaithpeacewalk.org/wordpress/index.php>

### JULY 2008, ELEVENTH ZARATHUSHTI GAMES, San Diego, CA.

The eleventh Zarathushti games will be held July 2 -July 6, 2008 in San Diego. See more at <http://www.zathletics.com>

### SUMMER 2008, FEZANA YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE.

University of Missouri, Kansas City, Details to follow. Contact [Nikan2@aol.com](mailto:Nikan2@aol.com)

### SEPTEMBER 2008

60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be celebrated September 3-5 2008 at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France. For the first time the 61st DPI/NGO conference will be held outside New York.

**OCTOBER 2008,** World Day of Prayer for Peace, Montreal

**OCTOBER 2008 MAMA SCHOOL** Preliminary Announcement for the first ever re-union in North America October 10, 11, 12 2008 in Houston of the 90th anniversary of Mama School of Karachi

**ALL MAMA SCHOOL ALMUNI ARE REQUESTED TO CONTACT**  
[MSALUMNI\\_NA@SBCGLOBAL.NET](mailto:MSALUMNI_NA@SBCGLOBAL.NET)

### DECEMBER 2009, WORLD CONGRESS, DUBAI.

9th World Zoroastrian Congress "Unity Through the Sands of Time" to be held in Dubai, December 28-31, 2009. Contact [meher\\_bhesania@hotmail.com](mailto:meher_bhesania@hotmail.com)



### DECEMBER 2009 PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

The 2009 Parliament Embracing Difference, Transforming the world. will be an international inter religious gathering spanning seven nights and six days – from December 3rd to 9th - bringing together an estimated 8,000 to 12,000 persons. Visit: <http://www.cpwr.org/index.html>



## A NEW ASSOCIATION IS BORN

## ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

[www.zaom.org](http://www.zaom.org)





## ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH SCHOLARS OF 2007

### Dolly Dastoor Ph.D, Chair, FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program

*What advances a community is not so much to prop up its weakest and most helpless members, but to lift up the best and most gifted, so as to make them of greatest service to the community*

*Scholarship*

Jamshedji N. Tata

When FEZANA started the academic scholarship program in 1999, only two scholarships of \$1000 were awarded for a total of \$2000. In the last eight years the program has grown exponentially and in 2007 we have awarded nine scholarships of \$5000, \$3000, \$2000 (six) and \$1000 with a total \$21,000 and three endowed scholarships. In addition the program has inspired other organizations and associations in North America, to develop their own scholarship programs, all of which undergo a strict selection process.

It is heartening to note that organizations and individuals are beginning to recognize that education is a personal achievement of an individual's desire to succeed requiring the right opportunity.. It is also recognized that the investment in our youth is the investment in the future of the Zarathushti community.

Rustom Kevala, President FEZANA, writes "these scholarships are but a token of our support to these young and enthusiastic Zarathushtis who are pursuing higher education to further their careers. They are at the same time furthering the stature of our community as an erudite and well-placed community worthy of respect"

Your continued financial support and encouragement remains of utmost importance to maintain this program.



### MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

#### THE FEZANA SCHOLAR 2007-2008

***The Kheradi Endowment Scholarship for graduate students based on ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND OVERALL CONTRIBUTION TO THE ZARATHUSHTI AND NON-ZARATHUSHTI COMMUNITY***



#### **FIONA PETIGARA, Medical Student, University of British Columbia**

I am honored to be the recipient of the 2007 Kheradi Endowment Scholarship. I am deeply touched by the support our community has shown in my pursuit of medicine and I look forward to giving back to my fellow Zarathushtis when I finish my medical training.

My vision for the Zarathushti community in the next decade is that we retain a sense of unity. As we continue to spread all over the world, our already sparse population faces the sad reality of decreasing community participation, especially from the youth. We face many obstacles that prevent us from being involved in our community- distance from other Zarathushtis, the lure of a fast-paced, egocentric lifestyle- neither of which necessarily mandate religious devotion.

Having taught Avesta Classes in Vancouver, I have learnt the value of actively partaking in the community. We taught our students the basic foundations of our religion, what it means to be a good Zarathushti, and how we fit into today's society. While our community's young children learned about this unique and influential religion, they also developed friendships that have kept them solidly rooted within our community.

My vision for the Zarathushti community in the next decade is of a connected community. It is this very vision that I intend to take forth in my goal of becoming a family doctor and serving my fellow Zarathushtis.



## ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH SCHOLARS OF 2007

### FEZANA 20th ANNIVERSARY ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

*This new scholarship endowed in 2007 on the 20th anniversary of FEZANA is for a graduate student who excels in academic work and overall contribution to the community.*

*Scholarship*

**KATAYOUN SALAMATI**, Industrial Engineering, University of Southern California, Los Angeles

Katayoun Salamati is currently pursuing her master's degree in Industrial Engineering at University of Southern California, Los Angeles, where she is also working as a teaching assistant and research assistant.

Prior to coming to US, Katayoun completed her B.S. degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering from Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, Iran.

Katayoun, an active member of several Zarathushti organizations, was involved in Tehran Zoroastrian Association as a board member of Youth committee, where she held several events for the improvement of youth conditions in Zarathushti communities in Iran. She was an active member of Zarathushti Student Organization (ZSO) for 4 years where she was on the organizing committees of events held by ZSO.

Katayoun's goal is to improve the situation of women in Iran and in Zarathushti community and to find ways to provide better education for people, especially Zarathushti youth. She believes education in any specialty – engineering, science, medicine, and religious education – provides people a better quality of life.



### BANOOBAI AND MANECKSHAW KAPADIA ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

*This scholarship is based on academic standing and need*



**FARHAD JAMSHIDI**, Civil Engineering, University of California, Berkeley

My name is Farhad Jamshidi. I was born in Tehran, Iran to a Zarathushti couple Khodadad and Parvin. I am currently studying Civil Engineering at University of California Berkeley. One of my objectives for the future is to get my degree and be a proud Zarathushti on whom society counts and relies on. I see myself becoming a successful individual in educational path while a lot of my success depends directly on the financial aid from FEZANA. This aid, inspired me even more to continue on my educational path, and see, one more time that Zarathushtis are cooperative and can lend hand to each other to build and improve the future. This scholarship was not only a financial aid to be more focused on my education, but I see it more of a relation and connection. I wish for FEZANA's stability and for the Zarathushti pride.

### Republic Day 2008 Civilian Awards

**3 PARSIS in the list of Awardees**

**RATAN NAVAL TATA - Padma Vibhushan ( Trade and Industry ).**

**KEKOO M. GANDHY - Padma Shri ( Art )**

**Dr KEKI R. MEHTA Padma Shri ( Medicine ).**

**LET US CONGRATULATE THEM ON ACHIEVING THIS GREAT HONOUR FOR THE COMMUNITY.**



## FEZANA SCHOLARS

*The FEZANA scholarships are awarded to graduate and undergraduate students judged with their peers based on a combination of merit, need, extracurricular activities and community service*

# Scholarship

**TARAONISH IRANI**, *Clinical Psychology, Wright State University School of Professional Psychology.*



I am currently pursuing my Doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from Wright State University's School of Professional Psychology (SOPP). This is a

5 year program, which is the Psy.D. model and tends to emphasize the practitioner-scholar model. This program will give me an opportunity to gain more hands on practice in the area of clinical psychology and will prepare me to work in a variety of clinical settings, ranging from family therapy to working with severely disturbed individuals.

My three main goals have always been to grow as a human being, to help others grow through their difficult times and challenges, and to ensure that my knowledge can in some way be helpful to my community, society, and country. Therefore, being in the field of psychology has always been motivating for me because I am able to continually achieve these goals.

As a member of the Zarathushti community, I acknowledge that I have a collective responsibility in that I am responsible for the promotion and maintenance of a just and progressive social order, in our communities as well as the world. Therefore, this scholarship will help me continue to pursue my studies further and achieve my goals in the field of psychology, and ultimately, be of service to my community as well as the country in general.



**Nazneen Noshir Irani**,  
*Computer Science and Engineering, The Pennsylvania State University, State College*



What this scholarship means to me: Earning a Master's degree from a prestigious university had been my aspiration for long and the Computer Science and Engineering program at Penn State was a perfect fit for my interests. However, coming from a poor financial background and losing my father at an early age, I was aware achieving my dream would be a struggle. With hard work, belief in myself and assistance from benevolent scholarships from FEZANA, I have successfully reached this far and the FEZANA scholarship has led to the fulfillment of my dream as I graduate next semester. This scholarship has been more than just an award for my achievements and has reinstated my belief that our community has good people who continue to help and encourage the youth to succeed and achieve.

Vision for the Community: History has been witness to the fact that our community has remained a closely knit community with successful and philanthropic people. Our community today has a vibrant and creative population. I believe that an educated youth can achieve notable successes and in turn can provide the less fortunate with opportunities to realize their potential. United, we can make every effort to be, not only a prosperous community, but also one where we thrive as one unit, overcoming all challenges. If we can achieve this as well as retain the core values of the faith from which we all came, we can serve as a proud example to the rest of the world of a successful community in which we grow and flourish together.





## FEZANA SCHOLARS

**BAHAREH ABADIAN,**  
*Biology, Orange Coast  
College, Costa Mesa*

At the outset, I would like to thank the FEZANA committee members for giving me such a great support and facilitation to carry on my education.

My name is Bahareh Abadian. I was born to a Zarathushti family in Tehran, Iran. My strong interest in Biology is inspiring me to pursue a career in medicine. Having this scholarship would certainly remove the burden off my shoulders, and it would help me achieve my goals by partially paying for my educational expenses. Having such a great supportive organization in the Zarathushti community motivates me to eagerly take steps that are beneficial to the society especially the Zarathushti community in the future. I was given great opportunities in the California Zoroastrian Center to work as a volunteer for several events from which I became extremely experienced. Furthermore, the Zarathushti youth community is getting larger everyday which is helping to build and maintain a cooperative group toward a much brighter and stronger Zarathushti society



swimming, and playing tennis. After graduation, Parisa hopes to pursue a career in medicine.

She feels this FEZANA scholarship is a reminder to contribute back to society because it is only through the hard work of every member that a community can thrive. In the future, Parisa hopes to see the continued strengthening and growth of the Zarathushti community.

*Scholarship*

**YEZAD ANKLESARIA , Aerospace Engineering,**  
*Missouri University of Science and Technology  
(Missouri S&T)*

I am Yezad Anklesaria from Missouri University of Science and Technology. I am pursuing my bachelors in aerospace engineering, basically an engineering student for many, but what people do not realize is the field of study is so unique and interesting. After completion I will get to design and build future spacecrafts and aircrafts that would probably take any one reading this article some where in the world or to a new planet. I am aerospace geek as



lot of my friends call me "Alien" simply showing my passion for the field of aerospace engineering,

The FEZANA scholarship that I received this year means a lot to my future and has created an opportunity for me to pursue higher degree in Aerospace engineering. I consider myself lucky to have achieved this, for which I shall ever remain grateful to FEZANA.

There are many opportunities in our community, if one knows how to use them for the right purpose then there is no reason for anyone not to succeed in life. I would like to do all possible things for my community right now and in future to take it to the height it deserves. I am willing to help anyone who intends to pursue studies in aerospace as it is my field of interest and not a lot about it is known in the community.

**PARISA JAVEDANI, Human Physiology, University of Oregon in Eugene.**



Parisa Javedani is a senior pursuing her B.S. in Human Physiology at University of Oregon in Eugene, OR. She is a member of several honor societies that recognize academic achievement, leadership, and service. Parisa has received several prestigious awards, including the Presidential Scholar and Bowerman awards from the University of Oregon. She is also

on the Dean's List. Parisa has undertaken leadership positions in student organizations on campus, including a vice-president position in Alpha Chi Omega. Aside from her academic achievements, she is also an active member of both the Portland and Eugene communities, and has volunteered for over 5 years with several non-profit organizations. In her free time, she enjoys skiing,



## FEZANA SCHOLARS

**FREYA MOTAFRAM, Business Marketing and Strategy, University of Michigan**

Freya Motafram (Milwaukee, WI), 21, just finished her third year at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She is concentrating in both Marketing and Strategy in the University's Stephen M. Ross School of Business, one of the top business institutions in the country. In 2007, Freya served as Vice-President of Membership Education for her sorority and also spent her summer studying abroad in London, England. She currently serves as Vice-President of Programming for the University of Michigan's Panhellenic Association, an organization that regulates fourteen sororities on campus and over 2,000 women.



Although managing her demanding business curriculum is difficult, Freya made time to take a course on Zarathushtrian religion with Professor Gernot Windfuhr, who has published various articles for the FEZANA Journal in the past. Her many interactions with students made her realize how important it is for non-Zarathushtis to learn about our religion: "Many of my classmates in my course followed different faiths—

Christianity, Islam, and even Judaism. I was humbled that they were impelled to learn more about the first monotheistic religion. I enjoyed discussing my encounters with Zoroastrianism with them, and they relished learning more about the faith. Because of this course, the teachings and philosophy of Zarathushtra were passed on to thirty students. These individuals have no intentions of conversion; they simply gained awareness and respect for our faith. We cannot expect our religion to survive if we do not allow others to simply gain knowledge or awareness of its existence. It is our duty as the upcoming generation of Zarathushtis to relay awareness of our belief to others, not to convert, but for others to respect it."

This is Freya's second time receiving the FEZANA Academic Scholarship, and she thanks the organization for giving her this tremendous honor.

*Scholarship*

## **P**ERFORMING & CREATIVE ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

### 2007 WINNERS

- 1. NAVAZ JASVALA:** Attends The Conservatory at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, working towards her Bachelor of Music in Performance as double bass major. Her expected cost for the next academic year for tuition, living, items for her studies, etc is approximately \$40,000. She states that she will utilize her FEZANA P&CAS scholarship to help pay for some of this.
- 2. DANNY SETNA:** Attends the Sheridan College School of Animation, Arts & Design in Oakville, Ontario, working towards receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Animation.. His expected cost for the next academic year for tuition and supplies is approximately \$13,000. He states that he will utilize his FEZANA P&CAS scholarship to help pay for his tuition and supplies.
- 3. KHUSHNUM SADRY:** Attends Orange Coast Community College in Costa Mesa, California pursuing an Associate Degree in Arts, in the field of Theatre and Singing. She is also a fashion model. Her expected cost for the next academic year for tuition, living and supplies is approximately \$44,000. She states she will use her FEZANA P&CAS scholarship to help pay for her tuition.
- 4. ZARINA KOTWAL:** Completed her Bachelor of Music from the Boston Conservatory with a major as a double bassist. Zarina plans to continue her studies by applying for graduate school. Zarina's expected cost for living, supplies and grad school applications for next year is around \$40,000. She plans to use her FEZANA P&CAS scholarship to help pay for her grad school application fees.
- 5. MEHER PAVRI:** Attends the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, pursuing her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance. Her expected cost for tuition and supplies for next year is approximately \$13,000. She plans to use her FEZANA P&CAS scholarship to help pay for the "Intensive Summer Voice Program", where she will receive special training from voice artists.



## FALI CHOTHIA TRUST SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



The **Fali Chothia Charitable Trust** was established in 1988 to help provide scholarships and interest-free loans to needy Zarathushti students. Awards are based on financial need, educational achievement, and community service. The trust is established under *the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (ZAMWI)*, and in the past 19 years has awarded scholarships and loans to students from all parts of the US and Canada.

To demonstrate solidarity and trust between organizations while serving community causes, the US Chapter of the World Zoroastrian Organization is once again joining the Fali Chothia Trust's Scholarship Program by adding up to fifty percent to every scholarship we give from our Trust's resources. "This partnership enables us to significantly increase the amount of our scholarships. I am grateful to the WZO US Chapter, and thrilled that its support is resulting in a significant increase in the help we are giving to our young scholars".

**Feroza Chothia Fitch**

**Nazneen Bahrassa** is pursuing a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from the University of Minnesota. She is currently involved in researching a variety of topics, and upon graduation hopes to provide mental health care to underserved communities.

**Dilber Bulsara** has obtained a Bachelors degree in Dental Surgery, and currently is pursuing a Masters in Public Health at East Carolina University. She intends to blend dental practice with community health, and one day hopes to establish a health care center for children.

**Armin Buzorg** is pursuing a diploma in Dental Hygiene and hopes to be able to teach it in the future. She has been an active volunteer and member of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia.

**Khudavand Daruwala** is pursuing an MBA in Finance from the University of Pennsylvania. He hopes to obtain a Ph.D. and work in investment banking.

**Shezaad Dastoor**, a second year Masters student of the International Peace and Conflict Resolution program at American University, is specializing in post-conflict reconstruction with an emphasis on Iran, Afghanistan and neighboring countries and hopes to eventually work in the United Nations.

**Parinaz Ichhaporia** is pursuing a Masters in Professional Accounting at the University of W. Georgia. With an MBA already under her belt, she feels that upon graduation she will be very well qualified to pursue her career in the corporate world.

**Teenaz Javat**, a student of the Ontario College Graduate Certification in Journalism program, has achieved a 4.0 GPA. She has previously worked as a career journalist in Pakistan and India and is an active volunteer in her community in Ontario.

**Parisa Javedani**, a pre-med student at the University of Oregon, is a presidential scholar and outstanding student. She pioneered the establishment of the Persian Club at her University, and is an active participant in cultural and volunteer programs. (Parisa also received the 2007-08 FEZANA Scholarship)

**Delna Sepoy** is studying Economics and Management with a focus in African studies. She speaks five languages and hopes to work in community and small business development. Delna is also involved in numerous extracurricular activities.

**Tushna Soonawalla** is working toward a Master of Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary. She has a background in engineering and hopes to use her skills in working in energy security and counterterrorism. (Tushna was 2006-07 FEZANA scholar)

**Parvez Tehrani** is pursuing an MBA, Finance, at the Rotman School of Management. He hopes to combine his background in IT and engineering with his current field of study to make his mark in the world of finance.

Your continued financial support remains of utmost importance. Your help is essential in assisting our deserving youth to attain the level of education they are capable of achieving. We rely on your donations. Please send your check payable to *ZAMWI/Fali Chothia Charitable Trust* to 10300 Farnham Drive, Bethesda, MD 20814, USA





**Council on Persian Culture of California Zoroastrian Center**  
**Scholarships sponsored by Massiah Foundation of US, Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation of UK thru Good Offices of World Zoroastrian Organization**

Four winners were awarded academic scholarships on December 15th 2007, the traditional night of Yalda festival at California Zoroastrian Center in Southern California. Each winner received \$5000.

**Ms. Shireen Farhad Cama; Massiah Foundation Scholar**

Harvard University Medical school, Yale University; BA with honors. Federation of Zoroastrian Association of North America scholar. Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York scholar. Paul Dudley White Traveling Fellowship and seminar in Global Health Equity, Share and Care Foundation Fellowship, Richter Fellowship, Heinz Family Scholarship, Yale Club of Pittsburgh Scholarship.

Ms Cama was the 2006 FEZANA SCHOLAR

**Ms. Natasha Irani Demehri; Massiah Foundation Scholar**

University of Florida, Biological Sciences, Director of Health policy for American Medical Student Association, Work of Heart award; UF collegiate organization of the year, Golden key international honors society, 1st place; Orange county regional science & engineering fair.

**Ms. Venus Vakhshoori; Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation Scholar**

El Camino Real High School, 1st place US Academic Decathlon Division 1. National highest scoring student. Honors; overall US Academic scholarship winner. Honors; overall Hilton scholarship.

**Mr. Neekaan Oshidary; Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation Scholar**

Stanford psychophysiology and clinical immunology, the Stephen Gerry memorial science award winner for outstanding performance in Chemistry. Honors; Saint Francis academic achievement. Elks national foundation, most valuable student scholarship award.

*The 4 winners were selected from the list of last 8 finalists who were amongst many qualified applicants who had applied from various academic institutions.*

*The Council of Persian Culture under the auspices of California Zoroastrian Center would like to thank all applicants and congratulate the winners*

*The Council would like to extend their sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to Massiah Foundation of US for their vision and foresight and to Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation of UK through good offices of World Zoroastrian Organization for their support and matching funds*

**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOLARSHIPS COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*1. Professor Nasrin Rahimieh*

Maseeh Chair and Director of Dr. Samuel M. Jordan Center for Persian Studies and Culture & Professor of Comparative Literature, University of California, Irvine

*2. Professor Soroosh Sorooshian*

Distinguished Professor Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Dept. of Earth System Science Director, Center for Hydrometeorology and Remote Sensing (CHRS) The Henry Samuel School of Engineering, University of California, Irvine

*3. Dr. Sohrab Salamatipour*

Chair; Council on Persian Culture, Member of Board of Trustees, California Zoroastrian Center

*4. Dr. Khosrow E. Mehrfar*

Member of Council on Persian Culture, Overall coordinator

**Council on Persian Culture**  
**California Zoroastrian Center**



## AHURA scholarship mission:

"To promote leadership among local Zarathushti youth in academic, social, and political fields."

### AHURA scholarship recipients 2007-2008:

#### AHURA scholar:

**Ms. Shireen Farhad Cama** \$3000

#### AHURA striver:

**Mr. Kamran Afshari** \$1000

**Ms. Parisa Javedan** \$1000

**Ms. Katayoun Salamati** \$1000

**Ms. Venus Vakhshori** \$1000

visit [www.pzo.info](http://www.pzo.info) to read their biography as well as to view short video clips that some of the recipients have provided detailing their views and life experiences, the full URL is:

<http://pzo.info/content/view/9/21/lang,english>

*Koorosh Vakhshoori*

## MOOBED FARIDON ZARDOSHTY RELIGION EDUCATION SCHOLATSHIP

**FEZANA has established a Religious Education Scholarship fund in memory of late Moobed Faridon Zardoshty. We are grateful for the munificence of the Zardoshty sisters, Pari, Homayoun, Iran and late Farangis and their families for their generous donation to FEZANA in memory of their beloved father to set up this scholarship fund.**

The Moobed Faridon Zardoshty Scholarship(s) is to be awarded to selected Zarathushti individual(s) for higher studies and research in Zarathushti religion at a recognized institution of higher learning anywhere in the world. These scholarships are awarded for a period of five years. An amount has been budgeted for each academic year and may be divided amongst one or more selected individuals. The Religion Education Committee of FEZANA will manage the eligibility of selection of awards. Awardees will be required to allow FEZANA and/or Zarathushti community to receive the tangible benefit from their study and /or research.

All interested Zarathushti individuals can request an application for scholarship from

*Lovji Cama Ph.D Chair, FEZANA Education, Scholarship and Conference Committee  
58 Leroy St, Tenafly, NJ 07670. e.mail: [ldcama@verizon.net](mailto:ldcama@verizon.net) 201-569-7359*

### 2007-2008 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO

**RASTIN MEHRI** of Burnaby, British Columbia, who will be working towards his Ph.D at SOAS, London, England under the guidance of Prof Almut Hintze.

He will receive the scholarship for three years.



## **FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS (2008-2009)**

Applications are invited for the

### **FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS**

**MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI (MMK) ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP  
FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE - THE FEZANA SCHOLAR.**

**FEZANA 20th ANNIVERSARY ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP**

**BANOOBAI AND MANECKSHAW KAPADIA (BMK) ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP**

All scholarships are open to Zarathushti applicants who have obtained admission for attendance at institutions of higher learning (accredited degree-granting colleges or universities) in USA or Canada.

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Scholarships for the academic year 2008-2009 will be awarded in September 2008.

**The FEZANA SCHOLARSHIPS**

**The MMK SCHOLARSHIP for \$5000**

**The FEZANA 20th ANNIVERSARY SCHOLARSHIP \$3000**

**The BMK SCHOLARSHIP for \$1000**

**ELIGIBILITY:** Applicants must complete the application form and provide documentation for:

- (1) proof of USA or Canada citizenship. (For non citizens a minimum of one year or two semesters residency in USA or Canada academic institution is required)
- (2) past academic records and accomplishments (attach documentation of the past four years only)
- (3) program of study
- (4) annual financial need including assistance already pledged by other funds, charitable institutions or the institution of choice;
- (5) other financial assistance available from family and friends
- (6) community service including contributions to Zarathushti functions and organizations
- (7) three reference letters

**AWARD CRITERIA:** Applicants will be rated on Scholastic Achievement (40%), Financial Need (40%), Extra-curricular Activities (10%) and Community Service (10%).

**The Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Scholarship of \$5000 and the 20th anniversary FEZANA Scholarship of \$3000 will be awarded to post graduate students for scholastic excellence**

**The Banoobai and Maneckshaw Kapadia Endowment Scholarship of \$1000 will be awarded for undergraduate studies to a student with good academic standing who demonstrates financial need.**

**APPLICATION** Application forms are available from the FEZANA website at [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org) or from Dr Dolly Dastoor ([dollydastoor@sympatico.ca](mailto:dollydastoor@sympatico.ca))

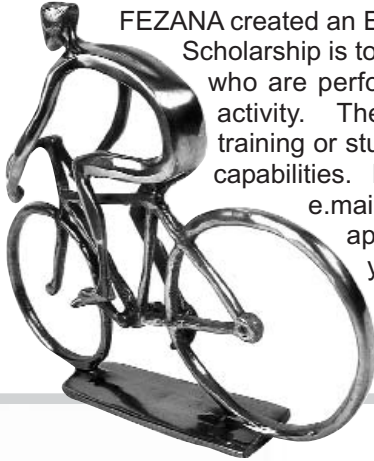
**Completed application forms should be post-marked August 1, 2008 to**  
*DOLLY DASTOOR Ph.D, Chair, FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program,*  
*3765, Malo, Brossard, Quebec Canada J4Y 1B4*





## FEZANA SPORTS SCHOLARSHIP

(EXISS)



FEZANA created an Excellence In Sports Scholarship (EXISS) Fund in 2006. The objectives of the Scholarship is to provide financial support to young Zarathushtis (between the ages of 10-30) who are performing exceptionally and at highly recognized levels in all areas of sports activity. The purpose of the scholarship is to enable the recipients to get world-class training or study with experts in their field and thus fine tune and enhance their talent and capabilities. If you feel you would qualify for this scholarship, or need more information, e.mail us at [exissfund@yahoo.com](mailto:exissfund@yahoo.com). To apply you will have to complete a formal application which we will send you by e.mail once you have contacted us as to your intent to apply. Also check [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org). The deadline for all applicants is March 31, 2008. For any further questions or information contact *Khushchehr Italia, Co-Chair*, [exissfund@yahoo.com](mailto:exissfund@yahoo.com)

The FEZANA Performing and Creative Arts Scholarship (P&CAS) provides financial support to Zarathushtis who are performing artists in music, drama, etc. or practice other creative art forms like literature, poetry, fine arts, sculpture, painting, etc. The scholarship is to enable the recipients to study with experts in their field and fine tune and enhance their talent and capabilities, IT IS NOT FOR BASIC EDUCATION IN THE ABOVE FIELDS.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:** Applicants must (1) profess and practice the Zarathushti faith (2) be high school graduates (3) be legal residents or citizens of USA or Canada. Foreign students holding legal status in USA or Canada may also apply provided they have been in North America for at least one year. Applicants will be eligible to receive a maximum of two awards, which may or may not be in consecutive years.

**SELECTION CRITERIA :** Applicants will be judged on their academic preparation, and past record in their program of study, their commitment to pursue the chosen art form, their annual financial need, the assistance pledged by other sources, extra curricular activities and services performed for the Zarathushti community.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE :** Application forms available on [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org)  
Submit five copies of the form with all attachments (including portfolio items) by March 31 2008 to

**SHERAZADE F. MEHTA, 5400 Preston Oaks Rd, #3048 Dallas TX 75354 (U.S.A.)**

**Tel: (972) 385-4847 e-mail: [sherazadem@yahoo.com](mailto:sherazadem@yahoo.com)**





## ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH SCHOLARS OF 2007

### MEHRABAN & PARIDOKHT ZARTOSHTY EDUCATION FUND SCHOLARSHIPS

**FIONA PETIGARA, North Vancouver, B.C.** first year of Medical School at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. \$2,000

**NARIUS DASTUR, New Westminster, B.C.** – Bachelor of Applied Science in Computing Science at the Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. . \$1,500



### Ahura Scholarship

#### AHURA SCHOLARSHIP MISSION:

***"To promote leadership among young Zoroastrians in the academic, social, and political spheres"***

Ahura Scholarship invites young Zarathushtis to apply for leadership scholarship for academic year of 2008-2009. Five scholarships were awarded last year, this year we are looking forward to receiving your applications.

#### ABOUT AHURA SCHOLARSHIP:

Ahura scholarship is a one time grant for the amount of \$3000 which may be used for undergraduate or graduate program for year of 2008-2009. **Ahura Fellows receive \$3,000; Ahura Strivers receive \$1,000.** Applicants must be talented Zarathushtis who have been accepted or are currently enrolled in an accredited institution of higher learning. Candidates of diverse nationalities are welcome to apply. Payment of the scholarship is dependent on receipt of a tuition statement and confirmed enrollment for the fall semester of 2008. All completed applications must be postmarked by July 15, 2008. For a copy of the application, please see <http://www.pzo.info>. For specific questions please contact *Koorosh Vakhshoori* at [vak1232003@yahoo.com](mailto:vak1232003@yahoo.com).

ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION  
OF HOUSTON



### THE CONGRESS 2000 LEGACY AWARD

Each year, the award will recognize young Zarathushti students studying at the University level and who have achieved excellence in their scholastic studies, in extra-curricular activities and who have made substantial contribution to Zarathushti community affairs. The award, eligibility and judging criteria available at [www.zah.org](http://www.zah.org)



## Leadership by inspiration

By Parisa Javedani

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines leadership as: "the act or instance of leading." The definition seems so simple, and yet the task itself is daunting and complex. Bookstores have entire sections dedicated to this genre. But what exactly does it mean to be a leader? While the definition may not be clear, most successful leaders share one characteristic in common. A true leader must inspire the heart.

Inspiration is central to any form of leadership. You cannot hope to achieve anything substantial entirely on your own. It is imperative to receive the support of others who will take up your cause, and motivating followers becomes essential to inspiring the support of others. You must be able to show those around you tangible reasons for why they should uphold your cause. From personal experience, it is important to include everyone in this process.

For example, as part of my vice-president position in a campus student group, I meet each term with members who are struggling academically. These students often feel left out because they rarely receive any recognition. My first term in this position, I simply continued old programs, but found that none of these pushed students to work harder. In fact, many of the traditional recognition programs did not even recognize those who had made improvement. In order to inspire struggling students to overcome challenges in their education, I needed to provide support and recognize their achievements. I started several programs designed specifically to recognize improving students. It has been amazing to see the difference these programs have made over the past four terms. The key to success was providing recognition that would inspire the students to commit themselves to working hard and raising their standards for achievement.

The programs I have instituted have been extremely successful thus far. I created a weekly recognition program in which peers nominate those who make significant improvement. At scholarship dinner each term, I make a point to recognize those who achieved top grades. However, I also pioneered several recognition programs for students who improved considerably during the term. Overall, I have seen tremendous success from the programs I have started. This is because every idea I implement in one way or another seeks to inspire the heart. I do not want to simply provide incentives, but would much rather work to build a lasting sense of motivation.

Thus, while every leadership situation is different and encompasses a different target group, there is a common thread. It is much easier and more effective to inspire a group to take up your cause than to force your cause upon them. And it is through such inspiration that you can build a supportive network of followers who will strive to promote your cause to others.

**Parisa Javedani** is the winner of the 2007 FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP and the AHURA SCHOLARSHIP.



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# SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

A list of miscellaneous scholarships is given below:

● **FEZANA Scholarships** and **Mehraban & Morvord Kheradi Endowment Scholarship – FEZANA Scholar, and Bannobai and Maneckshaw Kapadia Edowment Scholarship** for students at institutions of higher learning in USA/Canada. Dr. Dolly Dastoor, dollydastoor@sympatico.ca, tel: 450-656-2036, www.fezana.org.

● **Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty Religion Education Scholarships** for higher studies/research in Zarathushti religion at an institution of higher education anywhere in the world. Kayomars P. Mehta, kayomehta@aol.com, tel: 630-654-8828, www.fezana.org.

● **Fali Chothia Charitable Trust** scholarships for students in NA universities. ferozafitch@lexicongraphics.net, tel: 301-564-3726, www.zamwi.org/about/2001FCCT.pdf

● **ZAC (Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago) loans/scholarships** for study in USA & Canada. ZACscholarships@yahoo.com, www.zac-chicago.org.

● **ZSBC (Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia)** awards scholarships to its members seeking admission to a university. Homi Italia, (604) 438-2076, www.zsbc.org.

● **Performing & Creative Arts Scholarship** offered by FEZANA/ZYNA. Application form is on www.fezana.org. Anahita Sidhwa, afsidhwa@dccc.edu.

● **Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships** support graduate education for immigrants and children of immigrants. www.pdsoros.org.

● **Houtan Scholarship Foundation** offers a scholarship of \$2,500 per semester for studies in Iranian language and culture. Visit www.houtan.org.

● **Indo American Community Foundation** offers scholarships of \$3,000 per year to Indian Americans. Visit www.upakar.org.

● **Individual Advanced Research Opportunities (IARO)** scholarships, for research in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Tajikistan). www.irex.org/programs/iaro. Also visit www.irex.org/programs/roberts for study grants in Iran.

● **Institute of International Education's** Scholar Rescue Fund offers fellowships to scholars from any country and in any discipline, whose life, security or work is threatened in their home regions. Visit www.iie.org/SRF. Email: SRF@iie.org.

● **Harvard's Pluralism Project** offers research grants. staff@pluralism.org; www.pluralism.org/research/student\_grant.php. For summer internships, visit www.pluralism.org/resources/calendar/summer\_internships.php

● **National Science Foundation** offers grants for documenting endangered languages. Visit v/Applicants/NSF/OIRM/HQ/04-605/Grant.html.

● **Gates Millenium Scholars Program** offers awards for science studies. Visit www.gatesfoundation.org/Education/Scholarships/Announcements/Announce-040607.htm.

● Global Environment Facility of the **World Bank** and **YES**, offers fellowships for entrepreneurs in field of renewable energy. Visit <http://www.projects.takingitglobal.org/>

● Scholarships for **Commonwealth citizens**. www.csfponline.org/hostcountries/uk/

● **Royal Society scholarships** in science. www.royalsoc.ac.uk/funding/

● **Marshall scholarships** for Americans in UK. www.marshallscholarship.org.

● **Fulbright exchange programs**. Visit www.fulbrightexchanges.org/base/grant.asp.

● **UNESCO** 'Information for All,' an international information society initiative offers funding for information literacy projects. www.portal.unesco.org/ci/en/

● **Indicorps fellowships** for a one-year public service program in India. www.indicorps.org. Email: info@indicorps.org, or contact 2004 Indicorps scholar roshnikasad@yahoo.com.

● **Canadian Subsidy Directory** contains 3100 listings of government grants and loans, including foundations and associations. \$69.95. Call 450-224-9275.

● **Boren Scholarships** and **Graduate Fellowships**. <http://nsep.aed.org>.

● **Jacob E. Javits Fellowships**. Undergrads or first year of graduate study. Includes social sciences, arts, humanities. www.ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits/index.html.

● **Gates Cambridge Scholarship**. All countries (except UK) eligible. www.gates.scholarships.cam.ac.uk.

● **Harry S. Truman Scholarship** Foundation. Graduate funding for career in government or public service. www.truman.gov.

**Keyannejad-Kapadia Zoroastrian Scholarship Fund** (endowed by Homi Kapadia and Mahkrokh Keyannejad) for a member of Triangle Fraternity. www.Triangle.org/TEF. [See ad in this section].

● **Rotary Scholarships**, to citizens of all countries where there are Rotary Clubs. Rotary ambassadorial Scholarships are at: www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb\_scho/rotarian/award/avail.htm

● **Goldwater Scholarships** for sophomores and juniors, for mathematics, natural science, engineering. www.act.org/goldwater.

● A list of **trusts/organizations in India**, which support postgraduate studies abroad is given in Parsiana, December 2001. Contact Parsiana@vsnl.net.

● Scholarships **mainly for students in India**. <http://educationsupport.nic.in/allscholarship.asp?allsch=Yes>.

● **Engineering Scholarship by Northrop Grumman** of \$10,000 to student in Maryland, Baltimore and Illinois. www.es.northropgrumman.com

<http://www.karmayog.com/lists/parsitrusts.htm> ■



## NextGenNow Issues ‘Call-for-Leaders’



***“Be the change you want to see in the world.”***

**– Mahatma Gandhi**

In January, an official ‘**Call-for-Leaders**’ was issued by the organizers of the first-ever *NextGenNow* conference to take on project ideas generated at the conference last October. The conference united more than 100 Zarathushti leaders from 12 states and provinces throughout North America.

*NextGenNow* leaders, ranging from folks in their late teens to mid 50s, will be responsible for creating the change they desire, and seek to improve their community’s long-term ability to meet the needs of their membership base.

If you feel passionately about any of the following ideas or wish to propose your own, then get involved, and learn how you can be an agent of change.

Note: The ideas and recommendations mentioned below were cultivated through small group and panel discussions at the *NextGenNow* conference.

### I. EDUCATION, AWARENESS

- § Create the first-ever online school modeled after a University of Phoenix online format and blended with a communal feel of portals like iVillage so that it has strong cross-over appeal. Such a portal will not only serve as a one-stop source for Zarathushti education, curriculum, teaching center (teachers teaching teachers) but will also serve as a coalition of sorts for Zarathushti education, awareness and knowledge development.
- § Standardize translations of prayers and Gathas – obviously easier said than done, but build on Naurooz prayer translation model established by FEZANA in 2007.
- § Create more socially interactive events for future next generation groups throughout the country – anywhere from K-12, so that there is a natural perpetuation of leadership, learning and cultural growth.
- § Create a *NextGenNow* entry on Wikipedia.

- § Examine the way Zoroastrianism is portrayed on Wikipedia, review for accuracy and build it up wherever possible for 100 percent accuracy.
- § Community Calendars – Every community should consider doing one as a local fundraiser and bonding exercise leveraging ZAGBA calendar example in the Boston community.

### II. ACHIEVING HARMONY THROUGH DIVERSITY

*NextGen* Bill of Rights – Manifesto and Website/Portal Development

*Launch the official NextGenNow web site.*

The web site can provide access to topical discussion groups, post profiles, and share photos. Visitors can qualify themselves by agreeing to abide always by our core principles of equal respect, equal representation, and a good faith policy of inclusion over exclusion.

*Speed Networking for Unity*

Speed Networking for Unity is just one example of how we can help improve our understanding for one another, bridge cultural divides, and the speed networking concept forces interaction, dialogue and one-on-one conversation – a good thing at the end of the day.

Interested communities throughout North America can have their *NextGenNow* community members set up speed networking for unity events during the first half of 2008.

Commitments from interested communities will be measured on an ongoing basis.

### III. COMMUNITY BUILDING

Have equal representation of Iranian and Parsi board members proportionate to the Zarathushti population of the community.

Incorporate Speed Networking-type events, as listed above into the program to stimulate initial dialogue and show good faith in an attempt to better understand both Iranian and Parsi cultures, and to identify our commonalities over our differences.

Make conscientious efforts to incorporate a policy of inclusion and balance, with respect for all backgrounds, races.

Larger associations should consider an Adopt-a-Small-Community program to strengthen our regional ties and build more substance to the fabric of our communities.

Launch a wristband fundraiser to generate awareness for the Zarathushti religion, Good Words, Good Thoughts, Good Deeds.



As a community fundraiser, consider rolling out programs designed to spur contributions made directly as a percentage of salary – probably more of a discussion item at this point but a helpful long-term option.

On the *NextGenNow* portal/web site, establish a database of learning and standard operating procedures that showcase the innovative ways we have learned and succeeded on various initiatives and projects as we build our North American communities.

Recommended Reading: “The Odyssey Generation” (Google it for the full read).

*NextGenNow* is a movement monopolized by no one and fueled by the passion and energy of its volunteer base. The need for volunteers, leaders and champions from a multitude of generations is always open and encouraged.

Let’s resolve in 2008 to be the change we wish to see, and to build a brighter community for future generations of Zarathushtis in North America.

Visit us online at the *NextGenNow* Facebook group and add yourself to our rapidly growing list of next generation leaders throughout the world. Simply visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search ‘NextGenerationNow’ to join.

For more information or to learn more about a *NextGenNow* group in your area, please contact Jim Engineer at [jim.engineer@e-rainmaker.com](mailto:jim.engineer@e-rainmaker.com), Nikan Khatibi at [nikan2@aol.com](mailto:nikan2@aol.com), or Armaity Homavazir at [spendarmad@yahoo.ca](mailto:spendarmad@yahoo.ca).



# SSZ

## Society of Scholars of ZOROASTRIANISM

**“Practicing Zarathushti Customs and Traditions in North America” A one-day educational seminar, November 17, 2007**

**Conference of the Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism (SSZ), November 18, 2007, at Arbab Guiv Darbe Mehr, Chicago**

### REPORT AND PHOTOS BY ROSHAN RIVETNA

Co-chairs of the Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism **Dr. Pallan Ichaporia** and **Rohinton Rivetna**, welcomed 75 persons to the educational seminar (day 1) and 50 persons to the scholarly presentation of the academicians (day 2). Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC) provided warm hospitality and hosting arrangements, and *FEZANA* sponsored the event and provided financial support towards conference and publication costs.

### OPENING REMARKS

The Conference opened with a benediction by Chicago’s second-generation **Mobed Neville Vazifdar**. ZAC president **Hosi Mehta** welcomed delegates, and thanked all for coming to “participate, share and grow from this event.” In his opening remarks, *FEZANA*

president **Rustom Kevala** stressed the importance of such a conference: “We are the proud inheritors of a unique tradition. And we want the world to know about it”. **Rohinton Rivetna** reiterated the vision of SSZ – to encourage and promote scholarship, and the mission – to facilitate interaction among academicians, theologians/priests, educationists and practitioners. Due to an emergency eye surgery, **Pallan Ichaporia** was not able to attend but his papers were presented in absentia by his colleagues.

### DAY 1: EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

#### PRACTICING ZARATHUSHTI CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

#### SESSION I. CHAIR: AFSHAN BARSHAN

**Hosi Mehta** spoke of his personal understanding and experiences on Living a Zarathushti Life. **Pesi Vazifdar** described *The Zarathushti Calendar* – the different types, purpose of a religious calendar, religious content, meanings of the days and months, and gave some websites for further study and conversions. **Kayomارش Mehta** speaking on *Zarathushti Scriptures and Texts*, described the original 21 nasks and the collection of extant texts: the Avestan and Pahlavi texts, the Shah Nameh and the Persian Rivayets.





## SESSION II. CHAIR :TUSHAD MEHTA

**Keki Bhote** presented *The Gathas – an Uplifting Guide to 21st Century Living*, stressing how Zarathushtra's Gathas are as relevant to modern man as when the Prophet formulated them 4,000 years ago. **Bomi Damkevala** gave *An Overview of Personal Prayers*, describing the basic daily prayers (kushti prayers), Gahs, Nyaeshes, Yashts, Gathas, and other prayers from the Khordeh Avesta. **Edul Udvadia** described *Ritual Observances in a Zarathushti Household*: reciting prayers, a divo, prayer table, chalk and toran, (garland of flowers draping the entrance to a home) doing charity (e.g. donating body upon death).

## LUNCHEON PRESENTATIONS CHAIR: ZARINE DAMKEVALA



Photo above Rashna Ghadialy at podium, Shazad Mehta (session chair) and speakers Er Dr Jehan. Bagli, Rohinton Rivetna and Er Neville Vazifdar (who assisted in the participatory Jashan demo)

**Jehangir Mobed** spoke of the inspirational lives of *Two Learned Scholars – Mobed Rostam Shahzadi and Mobed Firooz Azargoshasb*, who were religious spokesmen for the Zarathushti community in Iran. **Jameshed Modi** presented an inspirational tribute to his grandfather, the highly acclaimed scholar, priest, author and speaker *Shams-UI-Ulama Dr. Sir Ervad Jivanji Modi*

## SESSION III. CHAIR SHAZAD MEHTA.

**Er. Jehan Bagli** gave an enlightening description of *The Padyab-Kushti Ritual*, explaining the significance of each prayer, and the method of performing the kushti, with proper reverence and understanding. **Rohinton Rivetna** urged *Participating with Understanding in the Jashan Ceremony*. He suggested congregational participation at appropriate points during the Jashan ceremony.

*The Need to Preserve, Conserve and Restore Ahura Mazda's Creation* was the theme of **Rashna Ghadialy's** presentation. "Today being an environmentalist, 'green', eco-friendly is chic," she said, "But for us Zarathushtis, it is an imperative,"

## SESSION IV. CHAIR BAKHTAVAR PRESS

**Keikhosrow Mobed** presented the *History and traditions (e.g. the Haft Shin table display) of the Nou Rooz festival*. **Farida Sharyari** described *customs and traditions observed during the Gahambars, the festival of Jashne Sadeh, Tirgan and Mehrgan*. **Mahnaz Farhadieh** described the *Sofreh (Ritual Display)* set up for various occasions. **Bahram Farhadieh** described *Life Cycle Ceremonies for Birth, Navjote, Wedding and Death, and associated customs and traditions*. A handout *A Guide to Funeral Ceremonies and Prayers* by **Ervad Dr Kersey H. Antia**, was distributed. A proposal to build a Dakhma (Towers of Silence) and Bungli (a place for holding ceremonial last rites) at Waterwood, TX, about 85 miles from Houston. was presented in a paper *Khurshed Nagiroshni – Tower of Silence – Sky Burial – Dokhma and Bungli* by **Jehangir K. Shroff** read in his absence by **Porus Dadabhoy**.

## DAY 2: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH PAPERS

### SESSION I.

#### CHAIR: ARDA-VIRAF MINOCHERHOMJEE

**Pallan Ichaporia** submitted a paper, *Gathas are not Didactic*. Almost all scholars, not to speak of lay translators, are inclined to consider the Gathas as a didactic poem, a sort of religious handbook with carefully coordinated and harmonized paragraphs. Yet this opinion is contradicted by the enigmatic style of the majority of Gathic stanzas (Y. 28-51), which evidence a sacrificial mysticism and spiritual isomerism. The Gathas are, in fact, poetical texts of visionary character, and most of the evidence briefly given indicates that Zarathushtra composed the Gathas to invoke and glorify Ahura Mazda. **(Paper read by Prof James Russell)**

*Dr. Ichaporia, an elected Fellow of The Royal Asiatic Society of Gt. Britain and Ireland is an associate of Prof Helmut Humbach at Mainz University and has co-authored several books. Works under progress include The Concordance of the Gathas.*

**Dr. William Malandra's** paper *Orality and literacy in the Transmission of the Gathas* summarizes various facets of Gathic scholarship bearing on the transmission of the received text of Zarathushtra's Gathas. In the course of oral transmission certain phonetic changes were made owing to the fact that the priests no longer spoke Gathic Avestan; and that the received text was actually an instructional, school-text, that deviated from the oral delivery of the priests in the context of the ritual.



It is then proposed that this school-text was a written text and that, in the course of time, it became the standard text both for the Pahlavi Gloss and for the priestly recitation.

*Dr. Malandra has a PhD in Indo-Iranian Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. He taught at the University of Minnesota, and is now researching Archaism and History in Avestan: laryngeals in Standard Avestan, and teaching part-time at the University of Texas-Austin. He is a regular contributor to the Encyclopaedia Iranica.*

## SESSION II. CHAIR: MINOO PRESS

**Keki R. Bhote** presented *Zoroastrianism's Influence on the Offshoots of 3 Major Religions - the Essence of Judaism, the Gnostic's and Nestorian of Christianity and the Sufis of Islam*. (1) Essenes. The 1947 discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls revealed the great influence of the Religion of Zarathushtra on the Essenes.



Photo above Minoo Press at podium, Keki Bhote and Dr William Malandra (reading the paper of Prof Humbach)

(2) Gnostics. The influences are: the emphasis on knowledge, not blind faith; a dualism, carried over from later Zoroastrianism; belief in a transcendent God, not in the divinity of Christ. (3) Nestorians. Nestorianism disputed the nature of Christ as divine; it was protected from the persecutions of the Church of Rome under the early Sasanian Empire (4) Sufis. Sufism, with decidedly Zoroastrian roots, was formed in opposition to Orthodox Islam. Their cardinal principle is to "experience" God, rather than "intellectualize" Him, in keeping with the early mysticism of Zarathushtra.

*Mr. Bhote, a pioneer in furthering Zarathushti Religion in North America, was a founder - president (1965) of the Zoroastrian Association of America, the first in North America, a founder and trustee of the Zoroastrian*

*Association of Metropolitan Chicago and president of the World Zoroastrian Organization, US Region*

**Helmut Humbach** submitted a paper on *Jamsheed in the Gathas and their Pahlavi Translation*. The mythical figure of Yima (Jamsheed) was inherited by the Iranians from the Proto-Aryan period. It is closely related to that of the Indian Yama, the first mortal in Rigvedic mythology. Yima was the prototype of mankind in which both good and evil are inseparably linked with each other until the time of the Renovation of the world. The determinant factor of his fall is what the poets of the ancient Greeks call *hybri*, an excess of ambition ultimately causing the transgressor's ruin.

*Prof. Humbach, Professor of Indo-European Studies, University of Mainz, works, in collaboration with Dr. Pallan Ichaporia. His works include: The Gathas of Zarathushtra, (2 vols. 1991), The Heritage of Zarathushtra, (1994) and Concordance of the Gathas, (in progress), Dictionary of the Gathas, Pahlavi Version of the Gathas, and the re-edition of Zamyad Yasht.*

**THE LUNCHEON KEYNOTE ADDRESS** was given by **Dr. Rustom Kevala**. He spoke of the important place Zarathushtis have in this world – to bring *frashokereti*, renovation and harmony. In North America, Zarathushtis are focusing on the three primary areas of Unity, Awareness and Building Community Infrastructures. He announced that FEZANA will now have a FEZANA office with a part time administrator, in Chicago. FEZANA is also exploring establishing a central resource centre for Zarathushti literature, books, magazines, CDs, videos, scholarly research material, etc.. He proposed that FEZANA should adopt a North American Zarathushti Seasonal Calendar as the official calendar for all FEZANA work. This initiative is in no way a break from any traditional linkages – as Zarathushti *behdins* and *athornans* will continue to use their traditional calendar preferences.

*Dr. Kevala President of FEZANA, has been President, Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, President, Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, Chair, FEZANA Information Receiving and Disseminating Committee, FEZANA Treasurer, Board Member and Treasurer of the Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington.*

## SESSION III. CHAIR DARA PATEL

**Er. Jehan Bagli** presented *From Mankind to Mazda – a Voyage in Life*. To Zarathushtra the supreme Divine being – Mazda – is a personification of Wisdom. Religion is a quest for one's true self, a quest for the Divine within. Zarathushtra elaborates some six primal values – the *Amesha Spentas*. Mankind must honor the sacredness of the universe, be its steward, and protect it, save it,





renew it, and share it. When Man learns to do all that in this voyage of life, his physical self will be in unison with his innate spiritual self. This oneness with the divine within, will brighten the perception to visualize God in everyone and help everyone visualize God in themselves.

*Er. Dr. Jehan Bagli, President of the North American Mobed Council (NAMC), and Vice-president of WZO, was a founding member and President of Zoroastrian Association of Quebec. He is author/co-author of four books: Understanding and Practice of Jashan Ceremony (2001), Religion of Asho Zarathusht and Influence through the Ages (2003), Understanding and Practice of*



*Obsequies (2006) and Congregational Prayers for Jashan Ceremony (2007).*



PF 0698



**Prof. Matthew Stolper** (right in photo )described The *Persepolis Fortification Tablets* Project at the Oriental Institute. The tablets, accidentally discovered at Persepolis in 1931 and excavated by the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, are in crisis because of a lawsuit that seeks to have them seized and sold. Only about 5,000 of the over 15,000 tablets, with seals, coin impressions and text in cuneiform, Aramaic, Greek, Old Persian, Phrygian and Akkadian, have been studied so far. What makes this discovery truly exciting is piecing together the narratives that emerge – of the deeds of great men, or observations of daily Iranian life, business and traditions. These are the actual statements of people living some 2,500 years ago, exactly as they were written. Research work on this vast flood of information from the heart of the Persian Empire, has radically transformed every aspect of study of the Achaemenid Empire.

*Prof. Stolper, has been on the faculty at the University of Chicago since 1980 and is currently the John A. Wilson Professor of Oriental Studies, at The Oriental Institute. Most of his research is with Achaemenid Elamite texts, language and history and has participated in several archaeological experiences in Iran.*

**Photo left PF 0698**, an administrative document from the Persepolis Fortification archive. The cuneiform text, in Elamite language, records an outlay of poultry, more than 400 birds, to supply the Achaemenid king and court, in year 21 of King Darius (501-500 BCE). The reverse has an incomplete impression of Persepolis Fortification Seal 0007. A complete impression of this seal (as we know from comparing many incomplete impressions) would show that it has an inscription with the name and title of Darius, identifying its owner as figure of high administrative rank and high social status.

#### SESSION IV. CHAIR PHIROZE NAGARWALLA

**Prof. James Russell** spoke *On Some New Discoveries and Directions in Zoroastrianism*. He presented some significant achievements and discoveries in Zoroastrian studies over the past two decades. Prof. Russell has done pioneering work on bas-reliefs from China, which portray Zoroastrian funerary rituals. This and similar discoveries has revolutionized our understanding. Russell has proposed that Zarathushtra came from what is now known as Kazakhstan; and his name means "eldest camel". Regarding his date, all evidence of a late date (during the Achaemenian period) has been shown to be false. Prof. Skjaervo sees Zarathushtra as a legendary figure constructed gradually by tradition; whereas Martin Schwartz finds strong evidence of the distinct personality of an ingenious poetic visionary. Nicholas Sims-Williams has deciphered documents in the Bactrian language, unearthed recently in Afghanistan. Russell's principal contribution to Iranistics is in the field of Armeno-Iranica.





SSZ



Photo above Phiroze Nagarwalla at podium, Kersey Antia James Russell (seated).

With the conversion of Armenians to Christianity during the fourth century, churches were erected over the atrushans (fire-temples). In the Middle Ages, the girdle worn by an Armenian priest was called a k'ustik – the kushti! From his study Russell concludes that the cult of Mithra (called Mher in Armenian) originated in Armenia. Russell closed with a description of the world's largest Mithraic monument: "a woman wearing a Liberty cap (the ancient Phrygian pilos) with the sun-rays of the typical Bactrian or Sasanian icon of Mithra framing her head" – the Statue of Liberty.

*Prof. Dr. James R. Russell is the Mashtots Professor of Armenian Studies, at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University since 1993. He has a Ph.D. in Religious Studies (Zoroastrianism), School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Among his vast number of publications are his thesis on Zoroastrianism in Armenia (1987) and Armenian and Iranian Studies (2004).*

**Dr. Kersey H. Antia** spoke on 'Life' after Life According to Zarathushtra. Zarathushtra is recognized as the first person in human history to lay down a clear rationale for what awaits us humans after our life on earth. He laid down the principles for this life – recognizing the importance of free will; and the consequences – worst existence for those who stray from the True Path, and the Best Mind for those who follow the Path of Asha. Vahishta ('best') later became 'behesht', the word for paradise. He developed a comprehensive belief system about Heaven and Hell. The ashavan attains khshathra (happiness) and a blessed existence; and the dregvant trembles and falls at the Chinvat Bridge into the House of Lie. Zarathushtra's revelation was a turning point in the history of beliefs in afterlife, and his emphasis on free will laid the foundation for human progress and liberty.

*Dr. Antia, is a fully-ordained priest, from the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute in Mumbai. Dr. Antia studied religion and Avesta-Pahlavi under Dasturji Dabu, Mirza and other learned priests. He has served the Zarathushti community of Chicago as an honorary priest and has been its high priest since 1977. He has lectured widely*

*and is the author of numerous papers on religion and psychology.*

#### PROCEEDINGS:

A compilation of all papers (in hardcover binder) presented at the Educational Seminar on Day 1, is available upon request for US\$15 (+ shipping cost). Contact [RRRivetna@aol.com](mailto:RRRivetna@aol.com).

All research papers presented on Day 2, will be published as an SSZ publication, with sponsorship of FEZANA. Contact [PRIchaporia@aol.com](mailto:PRIchaporia@aol.com).

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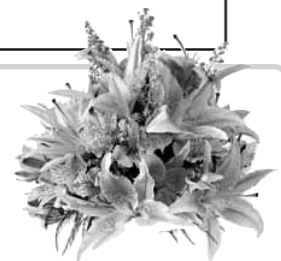
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May the new year bring peace and prosperity, goodwill and Understanding, and may  
Ahura Mazda's blessings be showered on us all

***Humata, Hukhta, Havareshta***







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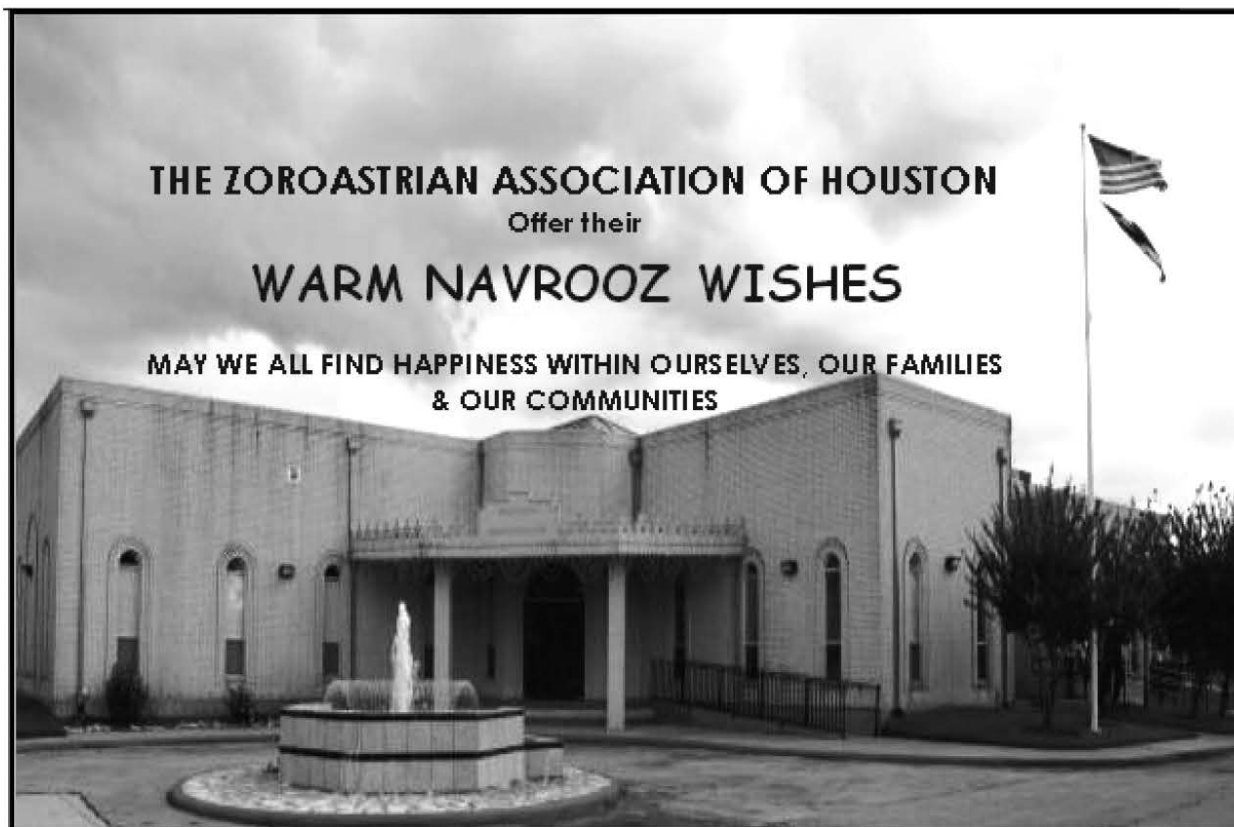
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To make the future bright for our children  
And grand children  
In HIS wonderful world!

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# Bringing Religion Into Medicine

## TREATING THE MIND, BODY, AND SOUL

NIKAN H. KHATIBI, MBA

### INTRODUCTION

If you ask why John Ryan's tumor unexpectedly vanished the night before his surgery, his doctors will try their best to come up with an answer. Perhaps a molecular switch shut off, or maybe it was a wrong diagnosis to begin with. But ask John's mother and she calls it Faith.

Many doctors don't like to use the word 'faith', a concept that carries mystic or religious overtones. An unanticipated recovery is an unusual wrinkle in their scientific beliefs, but it does happen. There are different reasons some patients mysteriously get better. Sometimes, it has to do with the biology of the disease. Other times, a patient may belong to the lucky two percent of the population who respond to treatment.

Someone may also live longer than expected because of a misdiagnosis that predicted a shorter life. And then there are recoveries that have no clear-cut explanation: like the case of 2-year-old John Ryan of San Diego, or Tim Cook of Pennsylvania whose dying heart repaired itself, or Michael Ludlow of New York who survived a rare cancer that produced a softball-sized tumor.

Religion is not new to medicine. For years religion and medicine have cycled between cooperation and opposition as scientist, physicians, and religious leaders debated their link to one another. Numerous studies have been done and countless hours of research have been dedicated to resolve what many hope to be a new way of treating the ill. Even when the Dalai Lama visited New York in 1998, he spent a day at Beth Israel Medical Center conferring with 20 physicians and research scientists from around the country to discuss how they might find common ground between modern Western technology and ancient Buddhist practices.

But can religion be the solution to saving the lives of millions? And more importantly, do you believe that religion alone can heal the ill and cure the dying – I don't. However, I do believe that religion can provide an additive role in healing that medicine alone cannot do. It was the great Reverend Walter Smith that said "We know a lot about the body, less about the mind and least about the human spirit. When the body is assaulted by disease, and the mind is having a hard time coping, what is left to help the person hold together?" So I hope as you read the discussion below you will keep an open mind and realize that there is more to medicine than just treating the disease.

### RELIGION: THE NEW MAGIC PILL?

How religious would you consider yourself? Well according to a poll conducted in 2003, religion plays a larger role in the lives of millions more than some would think. Over 90 percent of individuals questioned were



quoted as saying they believe in God or a higher power with close to 75 percent acknowledging they pray on a daily basis. (Miller and Thoresen 2003). So it's fair to say that a majority of individuals hold religion very high in their lives. But what happens when we ask the same group of individuals how they feel religion affects their health? Their responses were very motivating. More than 75 percent of surveyed patients want their physicians to include spiritual issues in their medical care and nearly 50 percent would like physicians to pray with them. (Matthews et al. 1998). But what would happen if physicians started discussing religion in the office – would we find a greater number of individuals living healthier and more vibrant lives or would it just be false hope? Would you feel comfortable even discussing such a topic?

### WHAT DO THE STUDIES SHOW?

Not one, but a multitude of studies and analysis have correlated religious involvement with a decreased morbidity and mortality. (Ball, Armistead, and Austin 2003) Even some studies have associated higher levels of religious involvement with up to seven years of longer life expectancy (Helm et al. 2000). One study conducted by Comstock and Patridge (1972) found that those individuals who regularly attended church had a lower prevalence of serious health conditions such as cirrhosis, emphysema and suicide from depression. Studies have even looked at the correlation between blood pressure, affecting over 65 million Americans, and church attendance. The study conducted by Morgan and Walsh 1998 demonstrated a decreasing effect on blood pressure with church attendance.

Even more interesting is the way religion can influence the outcome of our surgeries. Studies have confirmed that religiousness may in fact correlate with better outcomes after major illnesses and medical procedures. In T. E. Oxman analysis of 232 patients following elective open-heart surgery, lack of participation in social or community groups and absence of strength and comfort from religion were consistent predictors of



mortality. R. J. Contrada (2004) found that, in patients who underwent heart surgery, stronger religious beliefs were associated with shorter hospital stays and fewer complications.

Those who support bringing religion into medicine argue that there is a substantial body of evidence to prove that religious activities promote good health. They draw the conclusion that greater participation in religious activities would produce healthier individuals, and, further, that it is appropriate and even desirable for doctors to counsel their patients to that effect. Take alcohol and drug use for example. Religion can play a huge role in educating people about the dangers of alcohol and drugs and for many, the fear of violating religious principles and doctrines can have a powerful effect (Stylianous 2004). At the same time, active religious involvement may keep people occupied and prevent boredom that can lead to substance abuse. Just as much peer pressure can be found in the church to remain abstinent as can be found on the streets to use drugs and alcohol.

### THE MIND

Just as fascinating to medicine is the role religion has on healing the mind. For instance, a number of researchers have looked at the effects of religion on depression. Studies have found a strong association with religious involvement and remission of depression, especially in the ill older adults (Koenig, George, and Peterson 1998). It has even been suggested that religion plays a protective role in preventing the onset of clinical depression.

What about religion's ability to help an individual cope with the stress of illness? According to a study conducted by Patel et al in 2000, religious belief may provide greater meaning in people's lives and, in turn, help patients' better cope with their diseases. Although many major religions have deemed illness and suffering the result of sin, many also believe that pain and suffering can be strengthening, enlightening, and purifying. According to various religious teachings, pain and suffering are inevitable and can be cleansing, test virtue, educate, readjust priorities, stimulate personal growth, and define human life (Amundsen 1982).

### THE SKEPTICS

Linking religion with medicine may seem intuitive. But a group of healthcare chaplains and biomedical researchers feel differently. In a report published in June of 2000 in the New England Journal of Medicine, this group of skeptics strongly feel that integrating the two fields oversteps the boundaries of medicine and diminishes the power of religion. They were quoted as stating: 'As patients with various illnesses, we generally accept our physicians' professional authority and expertise. There are times when we entrust them with our lives. But what exactly are we supposed to think if our doctors question us about our religious beliefs or advise us to pray more frequently? Is this within their area of expertise as well?'

Many argue that in these times of evidence-based medicine, it is essential that all recommendations by physicians be grounded in solid scientific data that can be theorized and proven. If anything, spiritual counseling is an abuse of a physician's authority many skeptics believe. It has the power to coerce people who are vulnerable and afraid. That is not what medicine is about. Nor is it what religion is about.

### CONCLUSION

For hundreds of years, the wall separating religion and medicine has been built as thick as the one separating church and state. But now, those walls are being torn down as doctors and nurses, priests and monks, acknowledge that they may in fact have a better chance of curing the ill and promoting healthier lifestyles by working together.

But what is about religion that promotes health? To many, it's the words of encouragement to live a better, happier life. While for others, it's a feeling of faith that a higher being is out there looking after each of us, listening to our prayers. Whatever it is, research is showing that there are aspects of people's lives that impact their health status aside from how much they jog or how many vitamins they take.

In the case with John Ryan who's tumor disappeared or Tim Cook who's dying heart repaired itself, faith provided more than just comfort during their illness, it assisted in their recoveries when science said it could do no more.

With this I leave you with a quote I heard a while back ago and it goes – 'Faith is like the wind – you can't see it, nor hear it but you can feel it'. Ladies and gentlemen, science can only heal what can be seen by the eyes, everything else, should be left to Faith.

*Graduating from the University of California, Irvine with a Bachelor in Science (B.S) in 2004 and then spending a year earning his Masters in Business Administration (MBA), Nikan Khatibi is currently a third year medical student pursuing a career in Ophthalmology with an emphasis on retinal surgery. He has published numerous scientific articles on Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) and has spoken publicly to crowds of over 500+ members on his research. His was awarded the Joseph M. and Eula C. Lawrence Retinal Foundation grant last year for his research on the genetic associations with AMD.*

*In the future, Nikan would like to continue his public service by taking on a position as a member of the United States Congress with the hopes of improving the quality of living for millions around the world.*



# Bringing Religion Into Medicine

BY: NIKAN H. KHATIBI, MBA

## GOD'S MECHANICS –A TALK WITH DR. ARASH KEYHANI AND DR. KOROUGH KEYHANI

*"Medicine must not only address the mind and body, but the personal soul. If I can't minister to the soul, then I can't do medicine." - Dr. Arash Keyhani*

Dr. Arash and Dr Koroush Keyhani are known to their friends as God's Mechanics. These two identical twin surgeons have decided to take a different path towards providing health to their patients. Instead of just treating the disease, they've decided to treat the whole person addressing the mind, body and soul. According to Drs. Keyhani, when you are able to reach in to a person's soul and wake them up, various things happen to the body that allow a patient to heal a lot better especially in times of great stress.

Both doctors admit to taking the time to sit with their patients and at times just sitting on the bed and holding their patient's hand to determine if there are other concerns besides medicine that are effecting their patients ability to heal. A lot of times, they have found that personal distress with family, a fear of dieing, and even a fear of not connecting with God is a source of many problems.

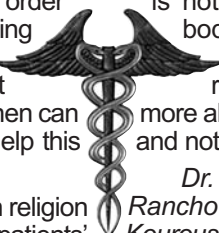
"Zarathushtra taught us to reach for spiritual perfection, Havarotat, and immortality of the soul, Amretat. And in order to reach them, we must do so with our minds" according to both brothers. "That is why we take the time to really talk to our patients and make sure they are at ease with themselves and those around them. Only then can we say we've done everything we possible can to help this person."

In the past a clear boundary has existed between religion and medicine: chaplains visited hospitals to tend to patients' spiritual needs, while doctors and other healthcare providers were expected to solely treat the physical. Now those boundaries are being eroded as doctors and nurses, priests

and rabbis acknowledge that they may have a better chance to cure ills and promote health by working together, not apart.. People are starting to realize the importance of religion in healthy living. In medical schools, courses are now being taught to address the spiritual needs of patient and students are taught how they can activate a patient's inner spirituality in hopes of improving health.

"Medicine is different today – not just because of all the new gadgets and drugs that are out there, but because people are now realizing that health is not just about the body. I'm glad to see medicine is really becoming more about the person and not the disease."

Dr. Arash Keyhani (top photo) currently resides in Rancho Palos Verdes, California while his brother, Dr. Kouroush Keyhani (bottom photo) resides in Houston, Texas. Both brothers are in their last years of their vascular surgery fellowship.



## Miracles Do Happen

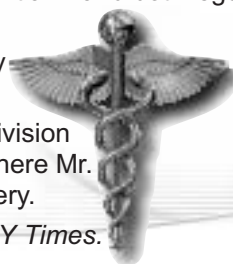
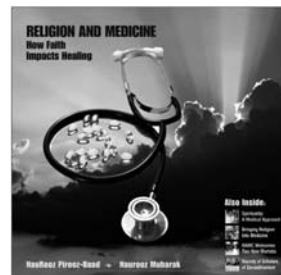
(150 meters) from the side of a Manhattan apartment building when the platform he and his brother Edgar were standing came loose. His brother was sliced in two and died immediately.

Alcides suffered injuries to his brain, spine, chest, abdomen and multiple fractures to his ribs, right arm and both legs. He underwent nine surgeries.

But on Christmas day, he reached out and stroke the face of a nurse. His first words to the family were "what did I do?"

"If you are a believer in miracles, this would be one," said Dr. Philip S. Barie, the chief of the division of critical care at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center in Manhattan, where Mr. Moreno, 37, is being treated. Dr Barrie is hopeful that Mr Moreno will make a functional recovery.

Source: NY Times.





# Bringing Religion Into Medicine

## THE MIRACULOUS POWER OF IMPLICIT FAITH

SAM KERR. M.D (Sydney, Australia)

*Scientific 'truths', even with their strong support network, can offer no certainty about anything concerning life even after long hours of experimentation, which is open to reinterpretation and arbitrary variables. This becomes particularly apparent when they claim the right to address deeper questions of our very existence on earth. It is being slowly realized that all sciences cannot monopolize an only way of 'knowing.' Their integration with other modalities of 'knowledge' is becoming apparent globally.*

This short dissertation is about belief, faith, our lives and our deep yearning to attain perfect wellness. It's about how our beautiful individualistic mind (vohu manah) imprints through our good conscience (daena) on our indomitable human spirit (chisti) and our physical self (tanu). It's about how to manage ourselves and others at a time when the physical self begins to show signs of deterioration and disease and the whole world begins to fall apart.

Spirituality and the Sciences are certainly not fully compatible co-travelers. Whereas scientific validation demands concrete proof Faith can provide anecdotal evidence only or none at all. Yet, such is the latter's latent force it silently empowers suffering patients to invent strength out of weakness trustfully becoming totally in tune with an unknown energy field with quiet confidence, as if a dear one were leading, holding the hand.

***"Of the five healers - the healer with purity, that with justice,  
that with the knife, that with plant extracts and that with the holy word -  
by far the healer-of-all-healers is the healer with the holy word."***

- Ardibehest Yasht, verse 6

This, of course does not imply that modern medication to alleviate symptoms and timely surgery has no place in healing. Modern scientific medicine, though, does palpably suffer from a basic drawback in that patients' 'individuality' is often miscued as a disease-ridden statistical object fit only for mending and comparing. In over 50 years of practice I was noted to refuse to indicate to advanced cancer patients how long they are likely to live or what percentage of survival they may have with one or the other modality of treatment merely because the stage and cyto-pathology are not the ultimate determining factors. Involved are many more complex issues, the answers of which modern allopathic practitioners are now crying out to improve outcomes. Depending upon the flow of conversation, "Let us take each day as we progress together," was generally my most likely comment.

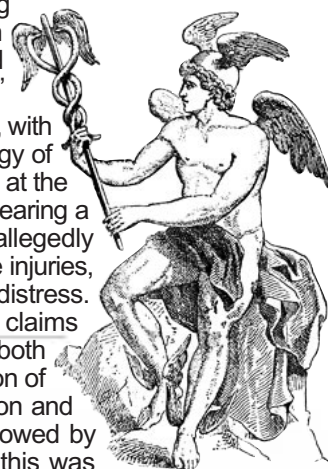
***"To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary.  
To one without faith no explanation is possible."***

- St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

The understanding of the full integration of our mind, conscience, spirit and physical self is now becoming more obviously imperative in the pursuit of good health. What, then, is good health? It is simply a continuing feeling of well-being. It is obvious that to experience such a feeling one must be normal in the physical self as well as in the mind. In our university circles I have been repeatedly quoted as telling students "when you treat a child bear in mind you are treating the mother as well."

In these times of unrequited clamor for indemnity from injury, real or otherwise, the mind, with its enormous capacity to devise, can play a horrific role. From among my massive anthology of case reports scribbled over 50 years, I have chosen a couple of lived experiences, which lie at the heart of this complex subject matter. Here is one incidence: - A handsome young mother wearing a tight fitting 'hijab' and full length flowing dress sits opposite claiming a garbage truck allegedly knocked down her little boy while on a 'zebra' crossing. He was deemed to sustain multiple injuries, his whole face covered with blood. In fact there was blood everywhere and immense distress. Passers-by had jostled the driver savagely. He was arrested and charged. The files of claims involving several specialists were huge. I noted the child had scabs on one elbow and both knees. There was a prominent blood vessel arising from the floor and running up the partition of the nose on one side. Just touching it would make it bleed profusely. I explained its reason and pathology and I suggested a trial of 2-3 weeks of local conservative treatment to be followed by electro-coagulation if problems persist. The mother flared up and insisted I write down this was entirely related to the accident. I gently indicated that his problem had existed for quite some time. Even minor jolts at home could make him bleed. She became severely agitated at my non-compliance.

Clearly, there was no alternative but to touch her heart with words. Though governed by the mind our conscience resides in a most secretive corner - its very seeds implanted deep in the heart. With my hands raised to the level of my shoulders in the manner of reverence, I stood up and, looking deep into her angry eyes, spoke uninhibitedly. "Allah, in his glory, has blessed you with a lovely son. Allah, in his mercy, has also saved him from a horrible mishap. Still,...(I then paused)... 'He' retains the power to reverse the situation at any time 'He' so wishes if you and your advisers insist on maintaining this irrational attitude."



***In Yasna 49.11 Zarathushtra calls such falsified conscience 'duz-daeneng'***

***"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"***

*- Holy Bible-New International version, Jeremiah 17:9*

A sudden transformation occurred. Her eyelids fell, the rosy-ness of her cheeks disappeared and her glowing face showed ashen pallor. She lowered her head. Abruptly, she grasped the folds of her 'hijaab' in a convulsive movement and said, "Dr. K, you are right. The garbage truck had halted before it reached the crossing. My son, he is rather mischievous. He had tripped and fallen forwards near the wheel. He falls over often at home. I am sorry to take your time. I will follow all your instructions." Her dented conscience (Zarathushtra's 'duz-daeneng') had now turned scrupulous. Her good but dormant conscience had been elevated into full consciousness making her determined now to use her own individuality as a loving mother come what may. I could sense it was now going to be entirely between her vigorous self (embracing her loving child closely) and the 'rest' - the husband, her close ones and the legal fraternity. To reverse this unforeseen situation the 'rest' tried to 'move heaven and earth'; but neither seemed to move. Such was the vigorous devotion of her motherly love and beliefs. And I....I, the catalyst remained merely a bystander. The "full report" I was ordered to provide I dismissed in a few lines stating only the relevant facts, thus making countless pages in massive files effectively obsolete. The long-suffering garbage truck driver was exonerated and his family saved from a lasting calamity.

***"We gave clear miracles to Isa, son of Maryam, and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit. And if Allah had pleased, those after them would not have fought one with another after clear arguments had come to them,..... but Allah brings about what He intends."***

*- Holy Qur'an, Sura al-Baqarah 2.253*

Here is a second case report: - A middle-aged Chinese presented with advanced post-nasal (back of the nose) cancer with secondary cancer in multiple neck lymph nodes on both sides. Our department holds a weekly multidisciplinary cancer council, which assesses and gives a recommendation for the best possible approach. We offered him a bilateral block dissection (removal of all lymph channels and nodes along with all structures except the two major arteries and one vein - not a readily agreeable proposal to some) followed by Radiotherapy (X-ray irradiation) to the postnasal space and to both sides of the neck. He could not accept this and gently stated he would first prefer to try Chinese herbal treatment and would return if it failed, much to the annoyance of my colleagues. They showed dismay at my approval. He told me he would be away in Shanghai for the trial treatment with herbs, which could last for 3-4 months. This remained a source of some disquiet until his return.

***Regarding 'Daena'***

***"I will maintain my righteousness and never let go of it; my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live."***

*- Holy Bible-New International version, Job 27:6*

He returned after 4 months with regression of the bulk in the postnasal mass but his enlarged lymph nodes had persisted. He agreed to undergo block dissection on both sides as previously advised. This I did. His herbal medication (based on a system traced back five thousand years) involved mainly a 'carcino-cidal' (destroying cancer), 'carcino-suppressive' (restricting cancer from spreading locally and to other regions via lymph channels), 'immuno-enhancer' (improving the immune processes to attack the cancer cells), 'appetizer' (improving nutrition and immunity) and some tonics. I encouraged him to continue this oral medication. He, subsequently, underwent a full course of Radiotherapy to the postnasal space and both sides neck resulting in total disappearance of the masses. A happy man by nature, he regained normal weight and even enjoyed re-employment. A Chinese disease, the progress of this form of cancer in the state he presented is rapid even with full treatment. At the time of writing he was symptom-free for over 12 years and working.

Encouragingly the holistic approach to disease management is now slowly experiencing integration with modern medicine in major universities globally, thus acknowledging the individuality of each patient and respect for legitimate reasoning.

**REFERENCE: -**

Kerr, Sam, "The philosophical concept of 'Consciousness' in Zarathushtra's teachings." See [www.vohuman.org](http://www.vohuman.org) & [www.w-z-o.org](http://www.w-z-o.org)

Sam Kerr, born in Bombay, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine (London). He has postgraduate qualifications of Colleges of Surgery in London, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Australia. Sam was Surgeon/Lecturer, the University of NSW and its College Hospitals, Sydney, Australia from 1968 to 2003. He is now Emeritus Surgeon at the University and its College Hospitals.

He initiated the Australian Zoroastrian Association of NSW, Sydney in 1969 and became its founding member. In addition to his professional writings he has published and lectured on the social, cultural, historical and scriptural aspects of the religion of Zarathushtra.





# Spirituality: A medical approach

Anahita Dua

From the beginning man has had spirituality and from the beginning man has had science. These two forces, seemingly inherently at odds with one another, these two famed titans, faith and logic, have been battling in the minds of beings for centuries.

## FAITH AND LOGIC

Faith, being defined as an unquestionable belief regardless of proof, has formed the basis of spirituality, while logic, defined as a process that only treads where evidence has laid a path, formed the basis for medicine. And so, spirituality and medicine became known as virtual enemies, the Romeo and Juliet that could just never be. Only now in the last few centuries, have people begun to see the beauty of a marriage between spirituality and medicine, and only now have humans begun to appreciate that medicine, in fact, cannot achieve its powerful potential without the support of spirituality.

Nowhere is this seen more potently than in the far reaches of the most destitute and forgotten places on earth. Countries where war, famine, and atrocities of human behaviour plague daily life, are logically places in which the citizens cringe at the very thought of a God. When their spirituality could not keep away the bullets, drought, or terrorists why would faith be the reason they would make it through an illness? While working in Kenya and the Congo, everything from the 'flu, to blunt trauma, to a massive facial tumour, walked through my clinic. The pain varied, the symptoms varied, but the treatment was always the same, "take some Tylenol, a few vitamins, and pray." My patients, regardless of their ailments, were more than happy to take away this regime because meeting with a student doctor, another person who had faith in their potential recovery gave them the strength to deal with their illness and the will to continue in spite of everything.

## THE STORY OF ROSE

There was a young 22 year old patient named Rose who came in to see me because her young child had a cough. When she walked through my door I was stunned by the tumour as big as a fist protruding from her lower lip. She could barely speak and as she

left with her bottle of liquid paracetamol in tow. I saw the nurse crying in the corner. She said that she cried every time this young patient visited because this woman had only a few more months to live if that tumour was not resected and only another year or so if it was. However, in a child's life to have her mother one extra year was a big deal, then I was determined to get that surgery for my patient. I called up my mommy and daddy who always seem to bear the brunt of all my antics and asked them for the donation to get the surgery done. They sent it immediately and we were able to get Rose admitted to the Kenyatta Hospital and have the tumour resected. After it was done, I spoke to the nurse via telephone and was told the first words Rose uttered were, "thank you Jesus." I think the point is clear.

## FAITH IN THE DOCTOR AND IN GOD

We are taught in medical school that the human mind is an amazing creation that has the power to heal the body simply because it wants to; hence, as physicians we are required to nurture, reassure, and encourage our patients to recovery by allowing them to put their faith in us. To walk into a building and put the fate of your life in the hands of a complete stranger is unheard of and could even be termed foolish, but is that not exactly what one does when entering a hospital? It is only one's spirituality, the idea that something greater, controls one's fortune that allows such a "what will be, will be" attitude.

It is a fact that people turn to spirituality when faced with the greatest trials and tribulations of life (and what greater trial than a terminal illness) and, contrary to popular belief, it is not fright that causes one to do this. It is a need for something more, a

desire to accept the belief that even if death is imminent something else awaits and the soul will never be destroyed or forgotten. This spirituality gives a patient a calm approach to treatment and allows the de-stressed body to truly focus on just the healing. Aside from helping the patient themselves, relatives, who are sometimes more affected by the illness than the actual patient, truly find solace in spirituality. While in Palestine the typical scenario was that of a young mother bringing her 3-year-old child in for traumatic heart surgery. In these close-knit families, nothing could disrupt life more. Children are the most important thing in a mother's life and to see the face of an awaiting mother while her child is on the operating table is one of the most heart wrenching sights in the world. However, these Palestinian women whose faith in Allah keeps them going used their spirituality to accept whatever fate God willed for them. This brought a sense of mental peace to the family and allowed them to focus all their energy on helping the child along and consoling each other. Without spirituality in this equation, havoc would have broken out.

Overall, medicine cannot provide for the total human package without spirituality. Human beings are special in that, regardless of the situation, faith, hope, and resilience are found shining through, even in the darkest corners. When the sun sets on a person's life, and medicine has tried everything, the family sits together and prays for a miracle which may come in the form of a new treatment or discovery, but is, nonetheless, based solely in spirituality.

*Anahita Dua is a 4th year medical student in the UK. She has a passion for international medicine and travels on a variety of medical missions each year. She is set to leave for Afghanistan for a month this December to work in maternal health care in Kabul. Prior to medical school, she completed a BA in organic chemistry and upon graduation from medical school intends to work abroad with humanitarian organizations.*





# Religion and Medicine

DIANA BHARUCHA

As part of the Zarathushti faith, we often move through our lives with the mantra of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds in the back of our minds. This is a mantra that is so often in my mind while I work with families and children in my training in pediatrics. However, a question I am occasionally struck with is – what is the role of religion and spirituality in medicine? Are these two elements that should remain separate? Do the ideas of science and religion conflict in medicine as they have in various other areas of science over the course of history? And most importantly, if religion and medicine are connected when it comes to patient care – then what is our role as physicians as we approach a more holistic patient and family centered care model?

I have found that my best solution to these questions has been through cultural awareness for my patients' beliefs and expectations. When dealing with a family of a sick child, not only am I asking about medical/ surgical history or family history, but I am also often asking about their thoughts on illness and acceptable treatments. This has most visibly come into play in working with families where a child has been given a more complex or potentially life threatening diagnosis. Such moments have been emotionally and spiritually challenging, yet rewarding. In understanding what my patients' and families' medical and spiritual hopes and goals have been, I have found the ability to help such families better cope with a new or grave diagnosis. Such moments include seeing families bring church or religious figures to their child for prayer; having families gathering in a patient's room and talking about hope, faith and their goals; or just merely sitting with a parent and hearing how they have been dealing with their child's illness. In all such situations, a mix of open mindedness, understanding, and effective communication has helped to strengthen my own physician –patient-family relationship, and thus has enriched my practice of medicine and healing.

*Diana grew up in Middletown, NY and then went on to Muhlenberg College for her undergraduate training. There she majored in Biology and minored in Asian Studies. During those years, she remained actively involved in various community outreach programs and cultural groups on campus. She then*

*completed four years of medical school at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia where she participated in various leadership positions and several clinical research endeavors. She is currently in her first year of residency training at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia where she is pursuing a career as a Child Neurologist with special interests in neuromuscular disease. In her spare time, she enjoys running, travel, spending time with family, and finding unique places to dine in the city.*



At the end of the day, I leave with my own Zarathushti background - of a religion that is not well known to so many people I've encountered in the past. I think coming from a less commonly known faith has helped me to appreciate the variations and depth of the practices and beliefs that my diverse patient population brings forth in my encounters with them. As I approach each patient and each encounter with an open mind to their ideas and beliefs on healing and life, then I feel I can move towards more effective and valuable communication and patient care.

## Spirituality And Other Traditions

Er Dr JEHAN BAGLI

***"Righteousness and Wisdom are commended, unbelievers and idolaters are denounced, and God overtakes the worshippers of false gods and the wicked generally....Rewards in a future life for the good, and punishment for the wicked...immortality of the soul".***

No, these are not the words from Zarathushtrian scripture. This is what is said in the "Wisdom" a book accepted by Roman Catholics as a part of the canon of Old Testament. Despite the fact that, there are specific reasons, why one finds commonalities among Judaic, Hindu and Zarathushtrian traditions, it must be realized that, often common pattern of human thoughts in metaphysical aspects, could emerge independently. The book of "Wisdom", believed to have been composed about a century before Christ, either by King Solomon or by a Jew of Alexandria, contains apostolic pronouncements similar to those found in the Gathic scriptures by Zarathushtra.

## RELIGIOSITY OF EARLY TRADITIONS

In this respect it is of interest to explore the views of religiosity of the other early traditions. One of the most complex terms Ch'i pervades through the Chinese philosophy and religion of the early era. Taoist philosopher Chuang-tzu in 4th century BCE wrote: "When the Great Earth exhales breath, it is called wind." By this time Ch'i was identified with "breath". During the classical age of the Chinese Philosophy (481-221 BCE) the concept of breath merged with the "Vital Spirit"- a life force of all creatures. It is of interest to note that Older Avestan literature (Ys. 55.1) as well as middle Persian Pahlavi works Bundahisn (Ch 3.13) refers to one of the constituent of the human body as "vital life force" known in Avesta as Ushtana, or Phalavi. Jan. Bundahisn tell us that after death this vital life force combines with the wind -Vayu, a divinity that is identified as Govad (Farsi, Bad).

With the passage of time Ch'i was expounded upon as the "flow of energy" within the body. Traditional Chinese art of acupuncture evolved as means to control the flow of Ch'i. For mind to have perfect control over the body Ch'i must be ideally regulated. East Asian martial arts, therefore, have a strong spiritual component to achieve the absolute physical mastery of the body.

In the Neo-Confucian revival of Sung era, Ch'i acquired a radically new meaning. This was the era responsible for the formative concept of T'ai-chi the "Great Ultimate" signifying the origin and basis of Heaven and earth and of all beings. Chou Hsi (1130-1200) who evolved the Neo-Confucian metaphysics insisted that truth of the Great Ultimate must be personally realized through moral self-cultivation. The Truth is not the knowledge about some external reality, but a personal knowledge rooted in self-awareness in the ethical-religious sense, thus defining human spirituality of Innate Self in terms of that notion. In the folk tradition the mysterious creativity of Ta'i Chi is implied in the spiritual and physical exercise known as 'ta'i-chi chuan' practiced to this day. This slow, firm and rhythmic exercise disciplines the body and purifies the mind through coordinated movements and regulated breathing. It is a remarkable translation of cosmic force into a physical and mental display for practical spiritual existence.

## YOGA AND MEDITATION

The philosophical credo of Hinduism is embodied in the principle of Yoga meaning to "hold fast". The practice of yoga in Indian religion involves the ascetic technique of meditation. The system signifies "the diversion of senses from the external world and concentration of thought within". The doctrine of Yoga assumes that the Divine soul is inextricably woven with the absolutely pure matter, and is endowed with supreme wisdom and goodness. God, thus lives in eternal bliss, within the matter, free of all the earthly impulses and misery that burden the living. This concept stands in intimate analogy with the Zarathushtrian concept of Divinity of Ahura Mazda innate in Human Being (Ys. 55.1, 26.4).

The practice of the yogic art of attainment of spirituality is the ability to reduce to absolute tranquility the mental function, which is largely under the influence of the external worldly forces. To begin with, it is crucial to focus ones thought process on a single entity, thus restraining the organ of thinking. This restrain is then coupled with strict discipline of bodily attitudes, such as posture, rhythm of respiration, emancipation of sensory activity from domination of the worldly forces. The perfection of this technique of "suppression of psycho-mental state" requires prolonged effort of coordinating physiological practices and spiritual exercises. This puts the thinking mechanics in complete consonance with the Inner Self, a convergence of the individual self (soul) with the Ultimate Self. In Zarathushtrian terms, it is the recognition of the Fravahar (Divinity) within. The final result of this endeavor is attaining of a state of mind that can recognize the "absolute knowledge" the state of Wisdom or Enlightenment--recognized in Zarathushtrian theology as the "Mazda", and known in the Yogic doctrines as Samadhi, a stage of revelation of the Supreme Self of the intuitive perception.

**[Source: Religion of Asho Zarathusht and Influence through The Ages by the author]**

*Ervad Dr Jehan Bagli is a retired Distinguished Research Fellow of the Wyeth Research Laboratories. He became an ordained priest at the age of 14 years, and currently serves as the President of the North American Mobeds' Council. (NAMC). He has lectured at Zoroastrian Congresses in Toronto, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Vancouver. He has published widely on a variety of topics related to the religion of Zarathushtra, and is the author and co-author on three books on Zarathushtrian Faith and its Rituals*



# Bridging Religions & Cultures to Benefit Health Education

Health and education are two basic requirements for human progress and perpetuation. One example of promoting this across religions and cultures is presently in works between Bel-Air Hospital in Panchgani, India and the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Nursing (UIC-CON) in the USA.



## FOUNDING OF BEL-AIR SANATORIUM

Bel-Air Sanatorium was founded in 1912 by a physician – Dr. Rustomji B. Billimoria in a bungalow on his property called Dalkeith, located on the Panchgani plateau of the coastal Western Ghats in India. It began as a 12 bed unit to treat tuberculosis and respiratory diseases. In a short period of 50 years it advanced to a 300 bed complex of 58 cottages under the stewardship of Dr. Rustomji and his surgeon son Dr. Bomi. Following Bomi's death, Dr. Rustomji transferred Bel-Air's stewardship to the Indian Red Cross Maharashtra

Branch.

In 1994 the Kerala Catholic Order of MCBS joined hands with the Red Cross to manage Bel-Air Hospital. Along with tuberculosis, treatments for the rapidly advancing HIV/AIDS were started under Bel-Air's administrator Fr. Tomy Kariakulam. Soon Bel-Air advanced to a 250 to 300 bed acute care hospital treating all illnesses and traumas.

## START OF A VISION

In January 2004, moved by an account in Parsiana, of the visit of India's President Dr. Abdul Kalam, to Bel-Air, Minu and Mehroo Patel of Chicago visited Bel-Air. At the conclusion of this visit, Fr. Tomy beamed with the vision of starting a nursing college at Bel-Air. The task seemed daunting, but challenge provoked action. Minu introduced the concept of collaboration to Dr. Janet Larson, professor and head of Medical Surgical Nursing at UIC CON. Dr. Larson presented the idea to the CON Dean, Dr. Joan Shaver, and the Associate Dean for Global Health Initiative of World Health Organization at UIC CON, Dr. Beverly McElmurry. Fr. Tomy visited Chicago in April 2004, and the concept spread like a wildfire throughout the UIC community of nurse educators, physicians and social work professionals. At this time the concept and Fr. Tomy were introduced to the Chicago Chapter of WZCC and the Indian-American Medical Association of Illinois.

## FROM DREAM TO REALITY

In 2006 overcoming trials and tribulations, cutting through red tape in India and the USA, Fr Tomy's concept became a reality, when the Memorandum of Understanding was reached between UIC-CON and Bel-Air. The Bel-Air CON admitted its first class of 40 nursing students in borrowed classrooms and dormitories. Ground was broken for the new nursing college building in late 2006 and the building was completed in late 2007

The formal inauguration event took place on December 9, 2007 with about 600 guests, including government and Red Cross officials, other invitees and the Bel-Air community. At the inauguration, Minu read the message from Dean Shaver and presented the congratulatory plaque from UIC-CON to Homai Modi. Mehroo addressed the faculty and the students of the college, inspiring them to rise above the ordinary.



*First row Mehroo, Patel, Mrs. Mangal K. Ancham  
Registrar Maharashtra State Nursing Council (cutting ribbon) Sr.  
Matha T. Reddy, Principal Bel-Air CON.  
Second row, Homai Modi, Fr. Tomy (bearded) in white robe, Minu  
Patel in black Nehru jacket*



Panchgani's Zarathushti community came together. Benediction Jashan was celebrated on December 8, 2007 by Mobed Burjin Dastur of Panchgani, assisted by Mobeds Bomi Sidhwa, Dinshaw Sidhwa and Jehangir Bhadha of Mumbai. It was held in the Bel-Air auditorium and attended by some 40 Zarathushtis of Panchgani, Mumbai and visitors from the UK and Australia. Bel-Air CON, Principal Sr. Martha T. Reddy and Fr. Tomy requested Minu to lecture a class of 70 nursing students of Bel-Air CON. Minu gave a 50 minute lecture on December 10, 2007 on the topic "Why and How of Research in Nursing".

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Minu and Mehroo Patel, Fr. Tomy and Homai Modi, Secretary of Indian Red Cross Maharashtra Branch, are truly indebted to many collaborators and well wishers in India and the USA – too numerous to name individually in this brief report. They have believed in the cause and concept of this global partnership, the bringing together of East and West across cultures and religions. They have given their time, talent, and treasure to benefit health and education through this partnership. Minu and Mehroo and the core-collaborators have started a not-for-profit corporation in USA "Bel-Air Benefit Foundation" to benefit contributors with income tax exemption under 501[c] [3] code. The foundation address is 11106 Lancaster Street, Westchester, IL 60154-4914 USA. The foundation thanks all past, present and future contributors for their support.

The vision of Bel-Air as a global health and education endeavor, advancing to a Health Sciences Complex on the Panchgani Plateau of India may be daunting but is achievable with all believers coming together and working together.

For more information on Bel-Air, call or email Mehroo Patel at 1-708-409-9361 / mkp@uic.edu or kamalrukh katra - krk@verusarchitects.com.



## MEHROO M. PATEL M.D., M.S., F.R.C.S. (Ed), F.A.A.F.P.

*Graduating with a M.B.B.S. from Mumbai University, Mehroo did her Master of Surgery specializing in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery and visited Bel-Air Hospital several times., She spent 3 ½ years in U.K. qualifying for F.R.C.S. (Ed). In 1967, Mehroo moved to Chicago and certified with American Board of Family Practice, becoming a Fellow of American Academy of Family Physicians. Mehroo was twice nominated as the Illinois Family Physician of the year.*

*Married to Minu, who retired in 1971 as Professor Emeritus (Honorary) at UIC-CON. Both have published extensively in scientific journals and in books. Minu & Mehroo are passionately involved with the Zarathushti Community of Chicago, and in 1983 gave the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, North America's (possibly) first a Zoroastrian Center Library. It was named Nania Kanga Patel Library/Learning Center, honoring five individuals who influenced their careers. Library has some 400 books on Zarathushtrian Religion, ethics and culture – some one of a kind..*

*Mehroo has promoted Parsi Cuisine and Culture at Ethnic Events, Edited Two Parsee Cook-Books, and contributed in Parsiana and the FEZANA JOURNAL.*

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# Reflections Of A Zarathushti Nurse

Sometimes I think back to a time before working, before I even started college and ask myself why did I become a nurse? The world was at my fingertips. It's definitely not a glamorous profession and I don't get paid particularly well. Some days can be so physically and emotionally draining that I can fall asleep in mid-sentence or start crying watching a diaper commercial on TV. But as quickly as the question comes out of my mouth, my reply is quick and sure - - the basis of all that I am, and do as a nurse, comes from three little words: Humata, Hukhta, Huvarashta.

Every morning I tell myself, "Today is going to be a good day." I go in and greet my patients one by one with a smile on my face and a positive tone and energy in my voice. Many patients who were seemingly well prior to their diagnosis or surgery are now in a mode of crisis. They have just undergone major surgery and everything is new and scary to them. It doesn't matter if you are a garbage man or a rocket scientist; the hospital is a scary place. People get nervous about walking, eating, or carrying out those basic human functions that we normally do without a second thought.

As easy as it sounds, just getting out of bed and walking even a short distance can be absolutely draining to the patient, and many will refuse to get up if they are just told to do so and not told why. That is where I come in. Not only do I get to educate them on the importance of mobility and activity post operatively, but I actually get to help them perform the task from beginning to end. Anyone can tell you how to do things, but I get to physically help them through that difficult moment of getting out of bed and following through. And, usually after their first time up, they will say, "Thank you so much. That wasn't as bad as I had expected." It gives patients the ability to participate in their own care. It gives them an understanding and peace of mind when they have been given the

information to think rationally and logically on why they are doing what they are doing. Along with getting them up to walk, I get to talk with them. I am there as an emotional support. I learn about their home situation and families. I learn about their concerns and worries and talk them through what to expect in their recovery process and plan of care. It gives them a chance to express how they are feeling. It seems that a lot of times, people are comforted by just talking. They have worries about burdening their family, when they can go back to work, and how their daily life is going to be affected by their illness. And all this is from just walking with a patient.

Of course, there are those challenging patients. The ones that are angry at the world and are ready to take it out on anyone that gets in their way. How do you cope with someone yelling at you all day? How do you help those who don't want to be helped? You sympathize and empathize with their situation. Generally, it is anxiety related to the stress of the illness or surgery. It doesn't help the patient to ignore the issue at hand. They can develop complications, extend the length of hospital stay, increase the patient's level of anxiety and/or depression, the list goes on and on. I think I am truly blessed in being a Zarathushti, a chameleon that can blend with anyone and win over people using our good mind/education and positive energy/attitude. Zarathushtis are adaptable and are able to build a nice rapport with others. But sometimes it doesn't work out, and no matter what you say or do, it ends up being a losing battle. At least you have a sense to understand their issues, and you can give them what they want and need to keep them comfortable and help them heal properly.

My whole day is one of good deed. I physically assist, provide emotional support, educate, and empower my patients to care for themselves or their family member. I guide people through a difficult time

in their lives and I never have to feel my conscience asking me if I am making the right decision. I don't have to lie or stretch the truth - - well, maybe about the quality of the hospital Jell-O, but other than that, I don't.

I get to do good for the sake of doing good and, luckily for me, I do get rewarded in multiple ways. I am genuinely thanked and appreciated by my patients, their families, and by my peers. I get paid for what I do. And best of all, I feel good about what I do. My good thoughts and faith in the care that I provide can be transmitted through my words and actions. Zarathushtian core values are a part of who I am and what I do as a professional. Who can say they get to help people all day, every day? I can. At the end of the day, when I remember an elderly double-amputee patient of mine telling me, "I love you, nurse," in her heavily accented and pain-filled voice, I feel proud of who and what I am, a Zarathushti nurse living a Zarathushtian life.



*Zarine Damkevala is an active member of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago. She received a BS in Nursing from Northern Illinois University and worked for many years as a registered nurse on an orthopedic unit at Northwestern Memorial Hospital (NMH) in Chicago, IL. She has volunteered her time with Gram Seva Trust out of Kharel Hospital in Gujarat. Currently, she is working on a surgical oncology/urology/trauma unit at NMH.*

# Prescription For Prayers

As a young child I often wondered about and questioned our "Parsi Prayers" that we were taught to recite for all occasions, some of the most important of which were our Kusti prayers, especially Ashem Vohu and Yatha Ahu Vaheryo. All these totally foreign prayer-words from my ancient, ancestral past, my heritage of long ago, meant something to me. I could feel it intuitively—but intellectually I wanted to know what each and every word meant. Yes, even at that young age I wanted to know and understand. I wanted to be all knowing!

A little intimidated and in total awe of my elders, I never verbalized my doubts, my longing to know, out loud, but I was glad that others did. Many asked my father and my uncles, who were ordained priests and the answer by one of my uncles, Dastoor Kaikhashrow Mahiyar Kutar captivated and enlightened my young intellectual curiosity.

When approached by skeptics, the curious and those genuinely trying to know the meaning of our prayers in Gujarati and English, and as to why we did not recite the translations instead of the ancient original Avesta, my Kaikhashrow foowaji (uncle) would give this analogy.

When you are not feeling good you go to the doctor for medicine. The doctor tells you what is wrong with you, and as per his diagnosis, writes out a prescription for your ailment. You look at the prescription, which is in a way a blueprint for your recovery and good health and if you are lucky enough to figure out the doctor's handwriting, you read what he has prescribed for you. Do you understand the long, almost unpronounceable, chemical formula or name of the medication that he has scribbled on the prescription pad? It's all Greek and Latin to you, right? Whether or not you could read his hand writing or understand this medical and pharmacological recipe, do you not, then have your prescription filled, take the medicine home, not knowing anything about it; and then do you not on blind faith, knowing it will make you feel better, put the medicine in your body?

So it is with our Zarathushti prayers that have their roots in antiquity. We recite them day and night—at birth and death, at Navjotes, weddings, ghambars, and all other ceremonies—without challenge, without questions, without doubts.

Yes, we recite out our ancient and beneficial prayers in Avesta, with absolute trust and unwavering conviction, as it had been in the beginning, at this present time and forever, more times to come...with absolute certainty that it will bring us nothing but good and make us feel better!

*More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Where fore,  
Let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and  
day.*

Alfred, Lord Tenyson  
Morte d'Arthur, line 415



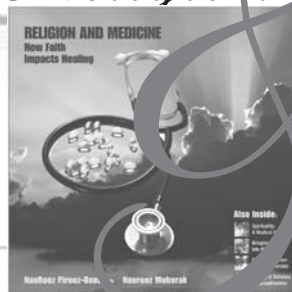
*Dinaz Kutar Rogers is a teacher and a published writer. She thinks of herself as a modern day Johnny Appleseed: sowing not apple seeds but hope, knowledge, inspiration, pride and joy about the magnificence of Ariana Vaego and oit ancient faith-Zarathushti deen.*

*{This article appeared in FJ Fall 1999, page 61}*

My Thanks P.D. (Phiroze Darab Kutar) for reminding me of this wonderful treasure from our childhood.



# *Ethical Issues Between Religion & Medicine*



Farokh Erach Udwadia

## **SCIENCE, MEDICINE AND GOD**

The future holds the prospect of science and medicine questioning the need for religion and the existence of God. If the mysteries of birth and death, of health and disease come to be increasingly unraveled, if human beings in the future are cloned, science may well exclaim "does God exist". Darwin's theory of evolution explains the genesis of man. After a delay at the stage of unicellular organisms for billions of years, there commenced a slow evolution of increasingly complex living organisms, culminating in the appearance of man on earth. Our evolutionary path has been long, unpredictable, and beset by many hazards. Medical science claims that this evolutionary path was governed solely by chance and necessity. I believe this to be the apparent truth but not the whole truth. I believe there is a Providence or a Divine Force operating over and above and guiding the visible happenings of biological evolution. "Evidence- based medicine" (an unfortunate slogan of modern medicine) would undoubtedly scoff at this unscientific "evidence-lacking" concept. But then truth does not cease to be so because it cannot be proven. On a lesser plane this is applicable to some of the unpredictable and impossible to prove responses of man to diseases and his equally unpredictable interaction with the art and science of medicine. On a higher plane this concept embraces some of the mysteries of the universe and of the existence of man as a conscious, thinking , experiencing, creating individual who comes into being at birth but apparently ceases to be at death. It would be a profound tragedy for man and medicine if science were to refute this religious vision of the universe or if scientific dogma were to negate the innate spirituality within man.

## **ETHICAL QUESTIONS**

Future medicine will pose grave moral and ethical questions. The pace of development in the science of genetics in relation to reproduction and procreation has far outstripped the pace at which ethical questions are being resolved. Bioethics is an uncharted sea, and we need to map and charter this sea if humanity is not to be wrecked on its shoals, and reefs. The future will have to ensure the freedom of scientific research and yet safeguard the respect for fundamental human rights. It will have to strike a balance between science and humanity for the benefit of man and medicine. The General Conference of UNESCO in November 1997 discussed these issues and adopted the "Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights". The Declaration considered the explosion in genetic engineering techniques, their application in medicine and the fundamental rights of man to exercise choice. The Declaration states that freedom of research is part of freedom of thought and is necessary for the progress of knowledge. It maintains that the application of research in genetics, biology and medicine, concerning the human genome must be directed to the relief of suffering and improving the health of individuals and of humankind.

It is impossible to ban or curb freedom of thought or the research that goes with the freedom of thought. Yet should the science of genetics on the pretext of reducing human suffering be permitted to extinguish any life that is doomed to disease at its very genesis? It would be unethical and immoral to allow the application of scientific research on the human genome to prevail over the respect for fundamental human rights, freedom and dignity. It would in my opinion be dangerous to trespass into the future and use the power of science to ensure that only good genes prevail and that "bad" or "not so good" genes are eliminated. If man and medicine were to counter nature and the process of natural selection, would the world have seen Homer, Toulouse Lautrec, Helen Keller or Stephen Hawkins? To consider every genetic defect in the human genome as a tragedy that needs to be extinguished at its very origin violates human dignity and rights. Genetic engineering to cure diseases such as cystic fibrosis or muscular dystrophy is welcome and is to be encouraged. But to trespass into the future and to use the science of genetics to alter our DNA and genome radically to evolve into new life-forms or into a new super-race, is wrong and fraught with danger.

The moral philosophy that many scientists today consider worth following is that of Immanuel Kant, the moralist and philosopher of the nineteenth century. Kant considered each human being an individual and an end but not as a means to an end. Under this moral precept, human cloning stands condemned as unethical and undesirable.

Ethical questions in the near future will also be increasingly centered on the problem of active euthanasia, which under certain conditions and safeguards has already been legalized in Netherlands and Australia. Many in the West are increasingly concerned with maintaining a good quality of life and putting an end to unbearable suffering in incurable diseases. But who is to judge the basic minimum in the quality of life? And is it ever possible to quantify suffering? Is not suffering often a state of mind and cannot the state of mind be subject to changing social pressures and social mores?

Pain and suffering are an integral part of life and living. Modern medicine has both the art and science of relieving suffering. Should doctors of the future take on the role of gods and decide who lives and who dies? The dangers of legalizing euthanasia in a poor country such as India would be even more immense. The poverty, corruption and exploitation of loopholes in the legal system would open the floodgates to murder.

Active euthanasia can never be a solution to the relief of human suffering or to a poor quality of life so many of us are condemned to live. Yet there should be a tacit pact between Man and Medicine that all forms of suffering be relieved and that the act of dying be smooth, humane and in no way prolonged. This pact would guarantee the protection of human rights and human dignity.

## **QUO VADIS MEDICINE**

In the final analysis Man and Medicine will be linked as in the past with concepts, philosophies, morals, ethics, economics, and attitudes to life and living prevailing in the centuries to come. In the not too distant past, all that a physician had to combat disease with was compassion, courage, common sense and just a few specific cures. Now that he has the awesome power of science and technology to back him up, his human qualities are on the ebb. Is it not likely that the high-powered physician of tomorrow will be embarrassed to hold the hand of a dying man or tarry with him a while to ease his passage into the unknown. The terrifying futuristic prospect of machines, computers and robots ministering to the sick and suffering is matched by the ever more terrifying concept of future man evolving as an appendage to a machine.

The history of science from the beginning is a chronicle of change. Medicine hopefully in the future will embrace the holistic-model of the mind-body complex in which man is an integral part of nature. This will transpire when science proves that organs "talk" to each other, communicate and influence each other, to ensure that the human organism works as an integrated harmonious whole to vibrate in unison with nature. It will transpire when science realizes that "consciousness" is a mysterious feature, distinct from and unexplained by the anatomy and physiology of the billions of neurons that constitute the human brain. The control of the mind over the myriad functions of the body will then be elucidated, as will the importance and use of biofeedback mechanisms to influence the course of the disease.

The future of man and medicine rests with Man. He should not be blinded by the dazzling light of science nor bewitched by its power and beauty so as to be servile to it. He should channelize it for the benefit of mankind, subjecting it to ethical and moral constraints. If he does so, man and medicine may usher in a brave new world. If not, mankind will once again be plunged into "a new Dark Age made more sinister and perhaps more protracted by the light of perverted science"

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Man and Medicine, A History, by Farokh Erach Udwadia  
Oxford University Press, 2000 ISBN 0 19 565457 9***

# Personal Profiles

## On Spirituality and Medicine:

Nawaz Merchant

### Interview with Dr Roda K. Patel, a pediatrician with a mission

*"Dreams do come true, but sometimes they take thirty years!"*

In 1995, Dr Roda K. Patel an established Pediatrician left her practice in Chicago to work in some impoverished villages of Gujarat. I interviewed Roda to ask her why, and learned some

unexpected truths. Roda came to the US as a Fullbright scholar in 1963 to study neonatology. She intended, even then, to return to India and help children. That plan was put on hold as her husband, a Cardiovascular and Thoracic surgeon, completed his 6 years of training and started his practice in the Chicago area for over three decades. As they raised three children, Roda worked as Chief of Ambulatory Pediatrics at Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge. She had always loved art, but like many of us, was fully occupied with work and her family and did not pursue her hobby. Then her life changed.

Over the Memorial Day weekend in 1977 she was diagnosed with breast cancer. As her children, twelve & eleven year old sons Farhad and Shiraz and 8 year old daughter Rokhsana watched her undergo exhausting and painful chemotherapy treatments, they poured over the phonebook to give her a surprise Christmas present, classes with Joe Steiner, a local artist. "Art was therapy" Roda explained, "a way for me to express myself and recover". With her family's support, she returned to work and continued to take classes at the American Academy of Art. Then in 1995, with her children married and settled, her life took another sharp turn. Starting with the India Development Service and contact with Dr Antia, a plastic surgeon, she met Drs Anil and Lata of Seva Rural in Bharuch District, and then Drs Ashwin and Harsha Shah, who had located an abandoned hospital in the impoverished Kharel area

of Gujarat. Roda spent 9 months helping to establish the pediatric unit at this Gram Seva Trust Hospital. Today this has grown to a 50 bed general hospital which offers free care to all the needy neighboring rural and tribal areas. Initially Dr. Roda sought to provide "Anganwadis" (Child Health & Education Centers) services and medical checkups in 4-5 villages where the state government had

no services. Once the Govt. started their Anganwadis, they were asked to support 40 AWs. The dedicated team rose to the challenge and today cares for over 78 Anganwadis. Last year Gram Seva opened a crèche for children of landless laborers. This year a dormitory residence is planned, with a couple on-site to nourish, clothe & educate the needy children especially those of migrant workers.

Malnutrition among the 0-5 year olds and preventative medicine is the greatest need, says Roda. But this did not prepare me for the distressing photographs of starving children on her CD. These images

at last form part of the

answer to my question – why?

Despite all their efforts, Dipiksha, the first child treated for a serious cardiac condition did not survive. When another child Ketan was diagnosed with a similar condition, Roda tells how Dipiksha's father approached Ketan's reluctant parents to persuade them to accept treatment. Through Gram Seva, Ketan was successfully operated at the Cardiac Hospital in Surat. Later, as Roda visited Ketan in his village and examined him among the other children, she exclaimed "This is Ketan! He's not blue anymore!" Her personal involvement with the children in her care is such that 13 years later she still recalls them by name.





As she poured in financial and emotional energy into this fledgling hospital in Kharel, her husband Khushroo continued to practice medicine "to fund my habit" as she says. Later, donations from Anil Nayak (CEO Larsen & Toubro) funded the new hospital & residential building for the hospital staff. "We started caring for 50 children in 1995 & now care for over 4000 children. Our project now encompasses the entire spectrum from conception through adolescence." Roda explained. Their goal is to care for all the 31,000 children in the Gram Seva area and 4000 they care for amounts to only about 13% of these children. For those who wish to help further this goal, it is noteworthy that Gram Seva Foundation is tax exempt 501(c)3 in USA. Additional details and photos are available at [www.gramseva.org](http://www.gramseva.org)

Through the years, Roda continued to sketch and paint. Roda's paintings have been exhibited and sold to raise funds for the Gram Seva Children's Projects. "Music and Art played a huge role in my recovery from cancer," she told me. Her paintings are frequently images of mothers and children, and the tribal families of Gujarat.

Did you ever regret all the years before you could find the time to paint? That was her first life, she responded, of work and motherhood. This is her second career, of service and art. "A diamond is cut a thousand times- only then does it acquire its beauty," she quoted a line from a song by Mana-De in reply. Living and experiencing life's ups and downs make one's art more meaningful, she believes. Whether she is in the US fundraising for the hospital or working in Kharel, Gujarat, where she spends four months each year, Roda is equally at home in both worlds, helping Gram Seva and painting.

Roda was deeply influenced by the example of her parents. As a child in Navsari, she watched her father race to the aid of locals who were stranded in flooded areas. In a calm matter-of fact manner her mother routinely fed children from neighboring slums in their home, and Roda grew up playing with them. Was she influenced by Zarathushti principles? I asked. While she

was raised in a devout Zarathushti family and attended a Zarathushti school, Roda believes that all religions have essentially the same message. Her faith is a practical one. "We are here to live as brothers and sisters. To give and to receive love and to serve humanity".

Despite this life of service, the couple endured another crisis when her husband was sued for malpractice, despite all his effort for his patient. "Trust in God," Roda said when I asked about her reaction to this trial, "believe in yourself and your lawyer." Her smile came through the phone line as though we were in the same room. A week after our interview, the Doctors Patel won their case and prepared to return to their work with Gram Seva, as Khushroo also joins Roda in the services at Gram Seva.



Actions, they say, speak louder than words. Roda's hard work and dedication has already benefited many needy children and families in Gujarat. Already charmed by Roda's warm, honest and unassuming manner, I read through the slides showing the tragedy of children she could not save, and those who benefitted from the medical services of Gram Seva. No one can fail to be impressed by the

humanitarian work being done and the free services brought to these desperately poor families. In their retirement years, Doctors Roda and Khushroo Patel continue on the Zarathushti tradition of dedication and philanthropy. I learned much from my conversation with Roda and am deeply honored to get to know this truly noble soul.

*Nawaz Merchant is an active member of the New York-New Jersey community and Vice President of Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY)*

# In The News

## Two Zarathushtis Honored in *California*

Two Zarathushtis were felicitated and honored by the US Congress representative Linda Sanchez in Los Angeles California.

**Zarrir Bhandara** was felicitated by the **U.S. Congress representative Ms. Linda Sanchez and Red Cross Society of U.S.A.** on December 2nd 2007 in Artesia, CA. for donating blood. According to the Red Cross

every time you donate blood you save upto three lives. Mobed Zarrir by donating blood (plasma and blood platelets) over 111 times has saved over 300 lives.



**Ms. Ketty Alamshaw**, MSW, a social-worker with Fairview Developmental Center, a CA state facility for child and family issues was honored for her involvement as a community social worker helping the people from all communities to solve children and family related issues. She also champions the cause of empowering women.

Ms Alamshaw is a graduate of San Bernardino University CA with a major in Child and family issues.

## Ontario Pharmacist Zubin Austin Develops Programs For Better Utilization Of Human Resources To Improve Health Care System In Canada



Zubin Austin, Ph.D, associate professor and Ontario College of Pharmacists Professor in Pharmacy at the University of Toronto is the recipient of Ontario's 2007 inaugural Faculty Teaching Award for Leadership in post-secondary education and excellence in teaching and research

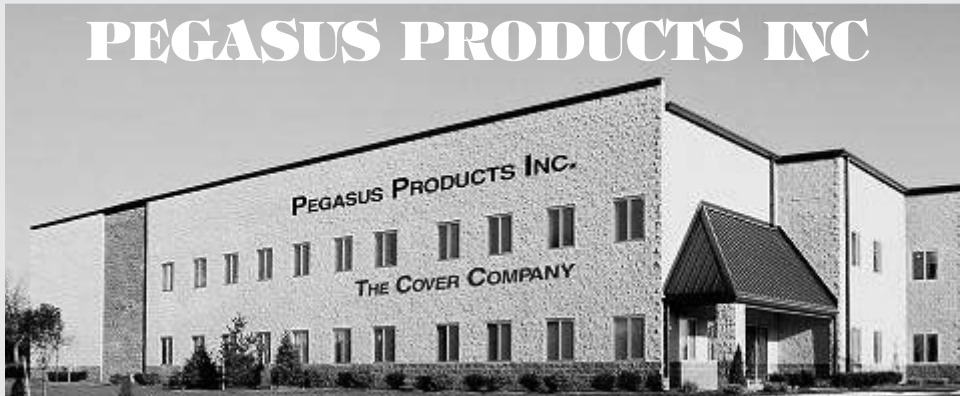
Zubin has always tried to find better and more effective use of resources through spearheading research and pilot programs. In 2001 Zubin established the International Pharmacy Graduate Program at the Faculty, a bridging program that helps internationally educated pharmacists transition their skills to Canadian standards.

In January 2008, with Zubin as the project lead, a similar 10 week orientation program for internationally educated health professionals will be launched in five cities in Canada. This will help pharmacists, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical laboratory technicians and medical radiation technicians adapt to working within the Canadian health care system

Zubin is a published researcher with over 60 peer-reviewed articles. He is a consultant to Health Canada and the Provincial Ministries for Health, for optimal utilization of health care professionals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the health care system.

# In The News

## PEGASUS PRODUCTS INC



**PEGASUS PRODUCTS INC.**, a manufacturing company in Somerville, NJ and owned by Farrokh R. Patel, was listed in the 12th annual listing of 100 top Indian-American privately owned firms in the USA. The top 100 companies are featured every year based on their annual revenues.

Farrokh Patel came to the United States in 1962. He received his Masters degree from New York University in

1963, and worked in sales for a number of years.

In 1982 he founded Pegasus Products, a custom fabrication company for swimming pool liners. In 1992, a sister company *The Cover Company* was opened, manufacturing swimming pool safety covers under the brand name "Coverlon". Both companies have earned a strong reputation for producing quality goods, helping it to grow to national status.

Other ventures engaged in are the fabrication of tents for the US Army and now spa covers. Growth has been slow and steady.

*Farrokh Patel was the recipient of the WZCC 2004 AWARD for EXCELLENCE FOR OUTSTANDING ZARATHUSHTI ENTREPRENEURS.* (Pegasus Liners and Coverlon can be seen on the back cover of the FJ).

*Dinaz Dadyburjor*

**SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,  
OPERATIONS AND  
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**"TOP100 MOST POWERFUL WOMEN IN CANADA"**

Women's Executive Network (WXN) is Canada's most influential female audience and the country's leading organization dedicated to the advancement and recognition of executive minded women in the workplace.

Dinaz Dadyburjor was selected by the Women's Executive Network ("WXN") as one of the "Top 100 most powerful women in Canada". The award was presented on November 21, 2007 at a function held at the Metro Convention Centre, Toronto,

Top 100 winners are recognized for their professional success and contribution to their field of endeavor in the following categories: Corporate Executives, Entrepreneurs, Public Sector Leaders,

Trailblazers & Trendsetters, Professionals, Champions, Future Leaders and Arts & Communications.

Dinaz, Senior Vice-President - Operations and Administration at Brookfield Asset Management Inc., won the award in the Corporate Executive category, which is awarded to women who hold the most senior positions in Canada's largest publicly-traded and privately-owned Companies for their professional achievement and social contribution.

Dinaz is married to Khushroo Dadyburjor and is the mother of two young boys, Darius and Cyrus.





# In The News

## **Celebration of Excellence: Dolly Dastoor and her Team win the Douglas Cup for innovative services in Dementia Care in Montreal**



The team of the recently established Program for Dementia with Psychiatric Comorbidity (PDPC) started its work when patients moved into the Moe Levin Centre in April 2003, a Centre which was specifically designed and adapted for the needs of patients with psychiatric pathology and or behavioural disturbances in addition to mild to severe loss in cognitive functions.

The mandate is to provide highly specialized evaluation services and clinical care for this particular clientele. In addition, transfer of knowledge to families and to the different community partners is an important facet to assure better quality services at the earliest possible time. The PDPC Program was given a regional mandate for this ultra-specialized service for adult patients with cognitive deficits and psychiatric and or behavioural problems regardless of their age. The PDPC Program concentrates on development, participation and collaboration in research projects in the dementia care field which is of great importance, to broaden the knowledge base that can eventually be of benefit to patients and their families. The program consists of a Memory Clinic, a Day Centre and an 18 bed inpatient unit. The close interconnection between the different components of the program makes it possible to respond almost immediately to patients and families in crisis needing quick intervention and possibly admission. As a result, readmission rates on the in-patient unit are low.

*Dolly Dastoor Ph.D is the Clinical administrative Chief of the Program.*



# In The News

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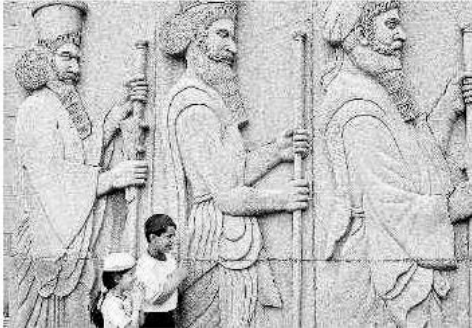
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5 September, 2007 — zoroastriansnet

They say the community is becoming smaller,

**but Zoroastrians are all over the World Wide Web!**



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## www.zoroastrians.net

### A Unique Resource

For the Zarathushti community, the net is a great place to come together, share ideas, and foster bonds. Which is why, the new website, [www.zoroastrians.net](http://www.zoroastrians.net), is such a welcome addition.

After the runaway success of [www.theparsidirectory.com](http://www.theparsidirectory.com), where more than 63,000 Parsis/Iranis globally have already registered themselves, the promoters have now launched another most useful website, [www.zoroastrians.net](http://www.zoroastrians.net)

This new website is unique in the sense that it covers everything related to the Parsis/Iranis, plus you can post your comments on improvements/additions/deletions for each covered topic if you feel such a change should be effected in any of the sections.

#### Creating Links

You can also include your own website about your area of interest under the appropriate topics covered by [www.zoroastrians.net](http://www.zoroastrians.net) to enable you reach out globally to all those who are interested in Zarathushtis and the Zarathushti religion.

Please take some time to visit [www.zoroastrians.net](http://www.zoroastrians.net) and post your comments/views therein. Consider it your own playground and share your views on how it can be improved further still.

Above all else, be part of the World Wide Web movement that is linking the community and creating value by offering all kinds of common interest areas and avenues to enhance interaction.

# In The News

## CELEBRATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA



### Houston Celebrates

Momentum is building for the 10th Anniversary Celebration of Zoroastrian Heritage Cultural Center. ZAH will showcase our Zarathushti religion and culture to the greater Houston community, as we establish our identity and move confidently into the future. Visionaries, who made our Center from a dream to a reality, will be honored. A myriad of year long activities starting, with Jashan-e-

Sadeh in February 2008, Sport events, a Mela, a Religious Education Seminar, and a 3-day GALA EVENT in May 2008.

**ALL ARE INVITED!** Join Us!

### Darbe Mehr Silver Jubilee, Chicago Celebrating 25 Years.

The Silver Jubilee of the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr, Chicago on Labor Day Weekend 2008 (Saturday August 30th-Monday September 1st). Tentative plans for the three days include, "Silver Jubilee Gala" a black tie and gara" affair, "Back to the Future", a Grand Jashan, recognizing and honoring the priests, the "Next Generation", the elders, "WZCC-celebrating Zarathushti Business and Enterprise" with a seminar and lunch recognizing Zarathushti business and enterprise in North America.

A Natak (comedy) performance is planned for Sunday June 21, 2008

**ALL ARE INVITED TO SHARE IN THE FESTIVITIES.**

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# INTERFAITH INTERALIA

## HOMI DHALLA ATTENDS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RELIGIOUS SUMMIT MEETING ON MT HIEI, JAPAN

The 20th anniversary of the Religious Summit meeting on Mt Hiei, was held in August 2007 in Japan. Representatives from the various religious traditions were invited with Dr. Homi Dhalla representing the Zarathushti tradition. The first part of the meeting held in Kyoto opened on the first day, August 3, with a seminar on "Harmony and Sustainable Living with Nature" where Dr. Dhalla spoke on the Zarathushti view of ecology. During the discussion session, he elaborated on the constructive role of the Indian judiciary as well as the House of Tatas in preserving the environment.



On August 4, the entire group moved to Mt. Hiei for an interfaith prayer meeting. The World Peace Bell, a replica, which was donated to the Japanese people, was rung at Mt. Hiei. The original bell is placed in the UN headquarters at New York. The UN Secretary General rings this Bell every year on September 21, the Day of Peace.

Representatives of the various religious traditions were then requested to recite prayers on peace from their scriptures. Dr Dhalla recited few prayers which were translated into English by his son, Darius. The entire meeting was televised. (photo left Dr Dhalla with son Darius in cap)

On August 6, Homi and Darius went to Hiroshima. Thousands had gathered there for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony, which was attended by the Prime Minister of Japan. It was a chilling reminder of that fateful day, at 8:15 a.m., 62 years ago when the roar of a B-29 broke the morning calm. Within minutes Hiroshima had become a living hell – the Atomic bomb was dropped over it. Within the year, 1,40,000 had died. Many who had escaped death are still suffering from various diseases. At this meeting, flowers were dedicated and a silent prayer was followed by ringing the Peace Bell. The Peace Declaration was read out by the Mayor of Hiroshima, followed by a release of doves and finally the Hiroshima Peace song was sung.



## Hunger Bytes!

### WFP and YouTube viral video competition

The World Food Programme [WFP] calls on students, would-be filmmakers and any other interested folks in the web universe to put their creativity towards raising awareness about hunger through a unique, international competition - the best short video about 'byting' global hunger .

To enter the contest, videos are submitted to WFP. The five most compelling clips, between 30 to 60 seconds in length, will then be let loose on the web through YouTube.

Competitors can increase their chances of winning by sharing the link with friends and online communities such as Facebook, MySpace and through blogs.

The video that gets the most views by World Food Day - October 16, 2008 -will win.

<http://www.wfp.org/>

# INTERFAITH INTERALIA

## World Day of Prayer for Peace Celebrated in Montreal *Peace* 20 November 2007



(Photo: Nicolas Tayaout)

500 people representing eight different faiths gathered in Montreal, Canada, on 27th October to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the first inter-religious World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi.

The event was jointly organized by Initiatives of Change, World Conference of Religions for Peace and the Montreal Peace Center, and was hosted by the Franciscan family of Quebec at the Franciscan chapel in Rosemont Boulevard. It recalled the historic event in 1986, when Pope John Paul II brought together leaders of different faiths from around the world for a World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, Italy. The event follows a series of interfaith gatherings by

the same organizers in different places of worship throughout Montreal under the title Spiritual Gatherings for Peace.

Lucia del Pilar Diaz, a journalist, reports:

It was a wonderful night... the altar was filled with the lights of little candles in different colours to represent the diversity; they were almost 500 people representing 8 different faiths: first nations, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Baha'is, Sikh and Hindus. All came in a spirit of friendship, in order to share their common attachment to values of peace and solidarity.

During the night representatives of each spiritual community expressed their faiths and beliefs in different ways. Some of them explained the main concepts about their religion, others just sang to worship God, others danced and read sacred passages of their holy books".

<http://www.iofc.org/en/abt/newsroom/5641.html>

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## 2009 World Parliament on Religions in Melbourne,

# Australia

The Parliament of the World's Religions is convened every five years since 1993 in a major international city (Chicago 1993, Cape Town 1999, Barcelona 2004).

Sponsored by the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, the 2009 Parliament will take place in Melbourne, Australia.



Registrations are now open.

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**Ervad Bhadha and Ervad Bhandara from California undergo Martab Ceremony in Mumbai, December 2007. The Community in North America salutes them.**



**The Zarathushtri Community in North America salutes two young priests from California, Ervad Varun Rayomand Bhadha and Ervad Zerkxis Zarrir Bhandara, for attaining their second degree of priesthood known as Martab in Mumbai in December 2007.**

Martab is the next higher level of ordainment for an Ervad after becoming a Navar. This qualifies him for performance of inner liturgical ceremonies of the Yazashne, the Vendidad and the Baj. The Martab ceremony requires a candidate to go through nine days of seclusion, (above, Bareshnum House Iranshah photo courtesy Ervad Soli Dastur), including prayers in all five Gahs, to attain the desired level of ritual purity. On the tenth day, in company of a qualified priest, the candidate performs a Khub ceremony reciting Yazashne with ritual and follows up with the recital of the Vendidad with ritual during the night from 1 A.M. to 6 A.M.

Ervad Shams-UI-Ulama Dr. Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, in his book "The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees", 2nd Edition, Reprint 1995, Page 197, states that "The word (Martab) is Arabic murattab lit. prepared, classified. It seems to be connected with the word martaba a step, dignity. It may thus mean, one who has risen to a higher step or grade or dignity. .... The sense then would be "one who has passed through more than one grade or rank." ....."

Vendidad or Vi-dev-Dat, the Zarathushti liturgy of "Laws against Demon" was composed sometime in the BC era and was transcribed in written form in the Sasanian era. It is always recited at night based on the belief that strength and power of the evil -ignorance- is optimal during the darkness and that spiritual strength of the recital would help dissipate the evil influence.

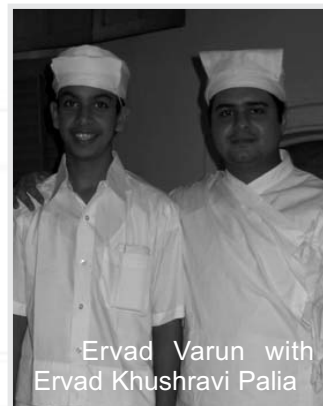
Ervad Bhadha and Ervad Bhandara, are now eligible to perform all Inner Liturgical Ceremonies of the

Yazashne, the Vendidad, and the Baj. They are now also qualified to perform the "boi" ceremony in an Atash Behram, the highest grade of our Fire Temple.

A priest who is only a Navar can perform the "boi" ceremony in a "Dadgah" or an "Adaran" or an "Agiyari" but not in an Atash Behram.

A devotee visiting an Atash Behram in India sees an Ervad tending the holy fire in the Sanctum Sanctorum. Such an Ervad has gone through the second stage of priesthood i.e. Martab, and has to attain a ritual purity by taking a Bareshnum and performing the Yazashne ceremony.

**Ervad Varun Rayomand Bhadha is the son of Rayomand and Bakhtavar Bhadha of California.** He is also the grandson of Colonel Jambo Bhadha, Parachute Regiment, who played an active role in 1971 Bangladesh War and parachuted in Dacca in the final hours of the war.



Ervad Varun with Ervad Khushravi Palia

**Ervad Zerkxis Zarrir Bhandara is the son of Mobed Zarrir and Tenaz Bhandara of California.** (photo right)

Both these Martab ceremonies took place at Sethna Agiary in Mumbai under the stewardship of Ervad Captain Pavez Dordi and Ervad Khushravi Palia. Ervad Dordi is a retired pilot of Indian Airlines. His father was also the Panthaki of the Sethna agiary.



Ervad Varun went through the Martab ceremony on Saturday, December 22, 2007 and Ervad Zerkxis went through the Martab ceremony on Friday, December 28, 2007.

*In the present times it is very rare to see young boys attaining the second stage of priesthood, i.e. becoming Martab. Hence we congratulate these two young Ervads for undergoing this difficult ceremony.*





## Evolution and Practice of the Religion of Zarathushtra During the Achaemenian Dynasty

Ervad Cawas Desai

Excerpt of a Paper presented  
at the NAMC Seminar on May 19, 2007

**THE TIME AND PLACE OF ZARATHUSHTRA** In order to understand the evolution of Zoroastrianism during the Achaemenian Dynasty, it is necessary to establish a time-line of that Dynasty in relation to that of the religion.

In 558 BCE, Cyrus the Younger, overthrew his maternal grandfather, Astyages, and established the Achaemenian Dynasty which lasted for 228 years, till 330 BCE.

The date when Zarathushtra lived is one of great speculation. The ancient Greek historians place Zarathushtra in eras varying from 7,000 BCE to 2,000 BCE. The Vedic Sanskrit scholars place Him before 3,500 BCE. Others claim a more acceptable date of 1,000 BCE. 19th century scholars, contending that a date of 7000 BCE would place Zarathushtra in the Stone Age, and relying on the "so-called Parsi tradition" of 258 years before Alexander, assigned a date of about 600 BCE.

The "so called Parsi traditional date" of 588 BCE as the birth date of Zarathushtra, would make Zarathushtra a contemporary of Cyrus the Great, and place the religion in the Achaemenian Dynasty. Therefore, one of the key questions regarding the Achaemenian Dynasty, "Was Cyrus the Great a Zarathushti" becomes moot. Such a date would also make Zarathushtra contemporaneous with the establishment of Buddhism. As Chatterjee puts it, *"To seek to make Dharmaraj Zarathushtra more or less a contemporary of Gautama Buddha is the height of frivolity"*.

If the date of Zarathushtra is open to debate, so too is His birth place. Tradition says that Zarathushtra was born in Raga, medieval Rayy, near Teheran. The Avesta contains several place names, but there is no mention of any place west of Rayy. Most scholars, therefore, agree that the religion not only began, but also developed, in Eastern Iran, specifically in the Herat area with connections south to Seistan, east to Bactria and north to Merv.

Even if we accept a date of 1,800 BCE for the birth of the Prophet, twelve centuries passed before Zoroastrianism first entered western recorded history. As the gospel of Zarathushtra traveled westward from its original homeland, the language and practice of the religion was bound to change.

**PRE-ZOROASTRIAN CONCEPTS** Greek historians indicate that Zarathushtra composed some two million words of verse, most of which have been lost. Shortly after Zarathushtra, elements of the old polytheistic

beliefs began to creep back into the religion as can be seen from the content of the Yashts which are clearly pre-Zoroastrian. However the language of the Yashts, except for the Yasna Haptanghaiti, is post-gathic Avestan. The names of Indra, Varuna and Mithra are mentioned in the Haptanghaiti, and there is no question that these are pre-Zoroastrian divinities, which today continue to hold prominent positions in the Vedas. The names of these and other pre-Zoroastrian divinities subsequently evolved into the Yazatas whose names are incorporated as the days of the month in the Zarathushti calendar.

In 1450 BCE, a treaty between a king of the Hittites and a ruler of the Mitanni mentions Mithra, Varuna and Indra. Since history has never been able to establish any Indian influence in the Middle East, it seems reasonable to assume that these names were in common use among the Aryan tribes which settled on and around the Iranian Plateau.

About the end of the second millennium BCE, the Persians from Southern Iran moved eastwards and conquered a tribe known as the Elamites, becoming the rulers of the Kingdom of Anshan, ruling as vassals of the Medes. In this same period, Zoroastrianism heavily influenced the Indo-Iranians who had moved eastwards around the Caspian Sea and settled in the valleys of the Zagros Mountains. These included the five Median tribes, one of which was the Magoi (Magi), a sacerdotal literate tribe, and provided the priesthood for the Medes and Western Persians.

**ACHAEMENIAN INSCRIPTIONS** None of the Achaemenian inscriptions include the name of Zarathushtra and the Greek historians, in describing the religious customs of the Achaemenids do not mention any rituals familiar to us today. However, the name of Ahura Mazda constantly appears in the inscriptions, the name given by Zarathushtra to His God.

The oldest Achaemenian object discovered is a gold tablet giving the titles of Aryaramna, probably the son of Ctespes. *"This land of the Persians which I possess, provided with fine horses and good men, it is the Great God Ahuramazda who has given it to me. I am the King of this land"*.

Little is known about the religion followed by Cyrus himself. However, from his actions, in which he epitomized the religious creed of Zarathushtra, one can have no doubt that he was a Zoroastrian. He will be remembered for his forbearance against the people he conquered. But history's greatest remembrance of Cyrus will be the freeing of the Hebrews from the Babylonian Captivity. This act is forever immortalized in the Old Testament Book of Isaiah, and was the start of the five centuries of close contact between Judaism and

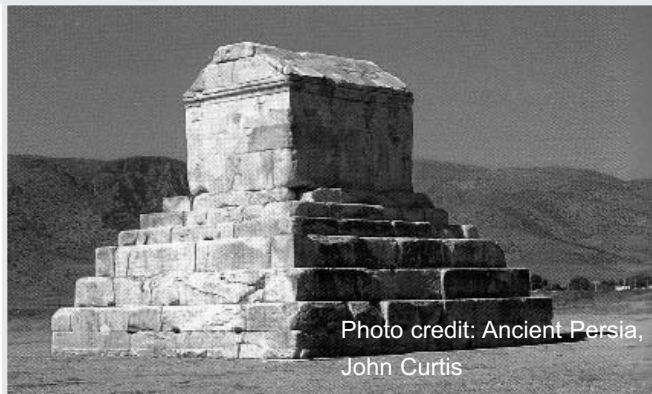


Photo credit: Ancient Persia,  
John Curtis

*Tomb of Cyrus at Pasargadae, inscription reads "Mortal! I am Cyrus son of Cambyses, who founded the Persian empire and was King of Asia. Grudge me not then my monument."*

Zoroastrianism -- the influence of the religion of Zarathushtra on the religion of Moses.

Pre-Exilic Judaism had no concept of heaven, hell or a judgment after death. These concepts dramatically changed in post-Exilic Judaism. As Boyce puts it, "Isaiah celebrates Yahweh for the first time in Jewish literature as Creator, as Ahura Mazda had been celebrated by Zarathushtra.... The parallels with Zoroastrian doctrine and scripture are so striking that these verses have been taken to represent the first imprint of that influence which Zoroastrianism was to exert so powerfully on post-Exilic Judaism".

Except for the inscriptions on his tomb, "I am Cyrus the King, the Achaemenian", Cyrus left no other inscriptions behind to give us any direct clue as to the religion he followed.

With Darius the Great, we come to the truly Persian succession of the Achaemenian Dynasty. Starting with Darius, the Achaemenids left some 47 inscriptions. Darius' inscription at Naksh-e Rostam proclaims "O man do not go contrary to the precept of Ahura Mazda, do not leave the path of truth, do not sin".

At Susa, another inscription says "A great God is Ahura Mazda, who created this earth who created that heaven, who created man, who created happiness for man, who made Darius King, the one King of many, the one Commander of many. I am Darius the King, the Great King, the King of Kings".

It is interesting to note that the earliest inscriptions of Darius refer only to Ahura Mazda and His Will. In his later inscriptions, we see the introduction of the "Other Gods", and "The Gods of the Clans". In an inscription at Behistun, (photo right) Darius says "Ahura Mazda came to my aid – as well as the other Gods". At Persepolis,

Darius says "May Ahura Mazda and the Gods of the Clans come to my assistance".

By the time of Artaxerxes we find Mithra and Anahita named alongside Ahura Mazda. At Susa, an inscription of Artaxerxes II reads "By the will of Ahura Mazda, I have raised a temple to Anahita and to Mithra" adding "May Ahura Mazda, Anahita and Mithra protect me". In an



Photo credit: Ancient Persia,  
John Curtis

inscription of Artaxerxes III at Persepolis we find Mithra alone in association with Ahura Mazda, and treated as a God, "May Ahura Mazda and the God Mithra protect me, myself, this land and all that I have done".

**CULT STATUES AND THE MAGI** Berosus, writing 70 years after the reign of Artaxerxes II, records that the emperor was the first to make cult statues of divinities and had them placed in temples around the empire. Berosus also substantiated Herodotus in saying that the Persians knew of no images of gods until Artaxerxes II erected those images. As for sacrifice, Herodotus adds "they raise no altar, light no fire, pour no libations". Altars with wood-burning fires and the Yasna service at which libations are poured identifiable with modern Zoroastrian rituals, were apparently practices that had not yet fully developed in the 5th century BCE.

Herodotus observed that "no prayer or offering can be made without a magus present". Although the unequivocal identification of the Magi with the religion came later during the Sassanid era, it is from Herodotus' Magi of the mid-5th century BCE that Zoroastrianism became subject to doctrinal modifications. It is during the later Achaemenian period that we see the introduction of the cults of Anahita and Tishtrya. It is also at this time that the cult of Mithra had its beginnings, which would reach its height during the Roman Empire.

It remains an open fact that Zarathushtra's religion was distorted and reinterpreted in many respects by the Magi after they took over the reigns of the religion during the sovereignty of the Achaemenians. The reintroduction of pre-Zoroastrian divinities, the concept of dualism, the





timeline of creation, the coming of the Saoshyant, and the consecration of fire can all be attributed to the Magian leadership. After the defeat of Darius III, by Alexander the Accursed, the Magi, except for some sporadic appearances, seem to have faded from history until they are seen again at the birth of Christ.

In 330 BCE, Alexander the Macedonian brought down the curtain on the greatest land empire that the then known world had seen. He attempted to destroy Persian culture through the forcible mass marriages of Persian women to Greek soldiers, but it is the attempted destruction of the Zoroastrian religion, its clergy and its writings that earned him the sobriquet, "The Accursed".

Of the Hellenistic age, Mary Boyce says, "Every inch of territory conquered by the Macedonian Alexander had been held before him by the Achaemenians, so that wherever Hellenistic culture established itself in his wake, it was on soil where Persians had been living, as members of the ruling people, for generations, and where accordingly their religion had long been represented."

The Greek Interregnum of Iran lasted for some 60 years. In 247 BCE the Seleucids lost control of northern Iran, when Arsaces I revolted and established the Parthian Dynasty, which ruled over Iran for 455 years when it succumbed to the Sassanians in 208 CE.

It is an accepted fact that the religion of Zarathushtra has had a profound impact and influence on every other major religion. Starting with the Cult of Fire and ending with individual accountability leading to the judgment of the soul and the after-life, Zoroastrianism influenced Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Hinnels, in his treatise on Zoroastrianism, says "To Hinduism and Buddhism it is said to have given the belief of a savior to come. But it is

Judaism, Christianity and Islam which owe the most to Zoroastrianism. Beliefs in a devil, heaven, hell, the end of the world, the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment, all these are thought to have developed in Jewish, Christian and Muslim thought as a result of Zoroastrian influence. Perhaps no other religion has influenced so many people in so many continents over so many centuries".

One can only hope that with the burgeoning renaissance of Zoroastrianism, and as more and more people become aware of its timeless and universal principles, the religion will once again reclaim its rightful place as the oldest revealed monotheistic faith in the pantheon and history of world religions.

A.V.W. Jackson, "Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Iran".

Xanthus of Lydia, Plato, Pliny and Plutarch.

Jatinchandra Mohan Chatterjee, "Athraivan Zarathushtra, the Foremost Prophet".

Richard Frye, "The Heritage of Persia".

Dinkard, edited by Peshotan Dastoor Behramjee Sanjana, translated by Ratanshah E. Kohiyar;

Iranian (Greater) Bundahishn, translation of Behramgore Tehmuras Anklesaria;

Al-Biruni, "Athar-ul-Bakiya".

Jatinchandra Mohan Chatterjee, "Athraivan Zarathushtra, the Foremost Prophet".

Richard Frye, "The Heritage of Persia".

Richard Frye, "The Heritage of Persia".

Xanthus of Lydia, Plato, Pliny and Plutarch.

R.C. Zaehner, "Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism".

R Ghirshman, "Iran, From the Earliest Times to the Islamic Conquest".

R. Ghirshman, "Iran, From the Earliest Times to the Islamic Conquest".

The Old Testament, Book of Isaiah.

Mary Boyce, Article in FEZANA Journal, Winter 2004.

Jamshed C. Tarapore, "Cyrus the Great, a Brief Study".

Jamshed C. Tarapore, "Cyrus the Great, a Brief Study".

Ardeshir Jehanian, "The Religion of the Achaemenians".

L.C. Casartelli, Bishop of Salford, "The Religion of the Great Kings".

L.C. Casartelli, Bishop of Salford, "The Religion of the Great Kings".

Berosus, "Babyloniaca (The History of Babylon)".

Herodotus of Hallicarnassus, "The Histories".

Mary Boyce, Article in FEZANA Journal, Winter 2004.

Hinnels, "Zoroastrianism and the Parsis".



Ervad Cawas Desai is an Akabar of the Navsari Bhagarsath Anjuman and a student of the Religion and it's History.



# YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING.....

## The Opening of a New Taste Bud

FARAH MINWALLA

Graffiti is one of the most comfortable living rooms in New York City and that is exactly how pastry chef extraordinaire Jehangir Mehta likes it. Located in the heart of the East Village, Graffiti, Mehta's new restaurant combines the likes of French Asian influences and an array of his own personal dishes. Mumbai born Mehta who is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in New York has been a pastry chef at the finest restaurants in the Big Apple including Jean Georges, an upscale French restaurant inside of the Trump International Hotel. Mehta has also graced the tabletops of Union Pacific, Virot and Compass and Aix, but now has his eye and food aimed in one direction towards his newest business adventure, Graffiti.

Opened back in mid-September of 2007, Mehta describes Graffiti as "something he has always wanted to do," and boy are people with an appetite lucky. The 'je n'ais sais quoi' of Graffiti has propelled its simple menu and contemporary chic décor into an instant hit. "I wanted everything in the restaurant to be as simple as possible. It [Graffiti] was designed to look like your living room and for the food to be coming out from your own kitchen," says Mehta.

Simplicity in the highest form has been displayed within Graffiti's menu, which is broken into four categories based on price: six, seven, twelve and fifteen. Graffiti serves up a diverse mash up of international plates as well as some dishes that come natural to Mehta, which will feature his love for mixing assorted flavors and spices. Anchovy seaweed tamarind pizza, sesame bread beef sandwich with a kimchee radish and a cumin eggplant wrap all grace the menu, as most of the food on Mehta's menu strives to be uncomplicated. "I like food that is done for a reason and taking the same aspect of things and making it different. I like simple stuff in terms of food," professes Mehta.

Even before Graffiti, Mehta had spread his cooking expertise all over NYC with a business venture of his called "Candy Camp" which is a confectionary class for children. In these classes, children will learn how to make cookies, candies and chocolate from Mehta himself. "Anything to do with children I love. One day I wish to write a children's book," says Mehta. Apart from Candy Camp, Mehta runs Partistry, which features handmade chocolates, teas, and confections; Partistry also has hand painted, fresh flower wedding cakes and wedding favors.

Now with one-step and dish headed towards the future, Mehta is embarking on his first novel entitled 'Mantra: The Rules of Indulgence' with publishing powerhouse Harper Collins. "The book will feature one ingredient and one recipe to follow. The book has about 80 highlighted ingredients (papaya, pomegranate, etc) and will talk about the ingredients origin and health benefits," explains Mehta.

From Mehta's business savvy Partistry to Candy Camp to Graffiti; Mehta has indeed channeled his love of food into the hungry stomachs of many. Food critic Moira Hodgson of the New York Observer seems to agree in calling Mehta, "One of the most daring and original Pastry Chefs, I have come across in New York. His creations are unexpected but with coherence and personality." Indeed Graffiti and everything else Mehta graces his Midas touch with will turn into four stars.

For more information on *Graffiti* please visit <http://www.graffitinyc.com>

For more information on *Partistry* and *Candy Camp*, please visit <http://www.partistry.com>

*Mantra: The Rules of Indulgence* by Jehangir Mehta will be sold in bookstores and online starting the last week of May 2008.



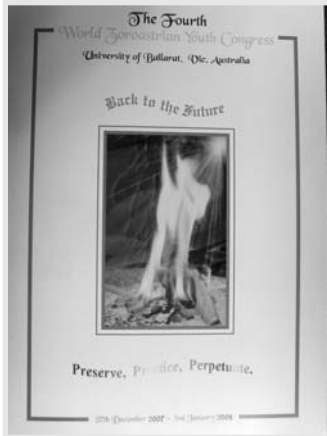
*Farah Minwalla, a freshman in New York City, is pursuing a degree in Journalism and Archeology. She hopes to emphasize faith and community service throughout her articles. She is a regular columnist for the Youthfully speaking section and comments can be sent to [PMinwalla@cox.net](mailto:PMinwalla@cox.net)*

# The 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress

## from our Perspective

DECEMBER 27-JANUARY 3, 2008

As we got on the buses to attend the 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, a lot of us felt at home already. Within the first hour of the ride, friendships were budding, friendships that will last a life time. As we reached our destination of the University of Ballarat it was with great pleasure that we heard "kem che bawa" and to which we replied "hu maja ma chey"! Delegates were mingling and getting to know others from across the globe from Pittsburgh to Perth. Once we arrived at the campus of the University of Ballarat, we were swiftly given units in either the Bella Guerin Hall (home of C4!) or Peter Lalor Hall on the Mt. Helen Campus and our room keys were allocated to us as well as our lollies



themed "Back to the Future", featuring the talents of our youth, including the well known singer Farita. It was overall a very welcoming first day at the 4th World Zoroastrian Congress and it only got better from there! **Nahid Dashtaki and Ava Afshari** (photo left) performed a dance on the first night.



### OPENING CEREMONIES

They commenced with a welcome by a representative from the Victoria State Legislature and an Aboriginal performer playing an authentic Australian didgeridoo. (photo below, Sherazade Mehta with the

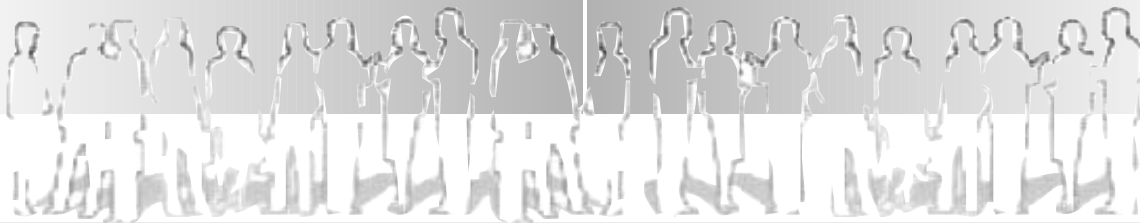


(candy), aussie hand purses (bags), and 4WZYC polo t-shirts and 4WZYC hats.

Everyone hated the location the first few days but after we got used to it we loved coming back home. It almost felt like a Zarathushti colony, it was very nice.

After settling into our residences we prepared to attend the largest internationally attended Jashan in the Southern Hemisphere in the Caro Convention Centre. It was truly a memorable experience hearing the vibes of the prayers and we were thankful for the many Ervads from all over the world could offer us young Zarathushtis such an occasion. **Ervad Mehernosh Bhadha of Pakistan and Ervad Shayan Dastur of UAE** also participated. After a long awaited dinner of Dhan-Daar, we attended the Entertainment Extravaganza, which was





performer). After the opening welcome, the congress delegates witnessed the raising of the Zarathushti flag, represented by the fravashi. Bang! Bang! Bang! Three gunshots were heard, not in the distance or in the Middle East, rather right in front of us. We were honored to have a historical Australian military regiment salute the raising of the flag. This indeed was an amazing way to start off a superb week of fun, games, and a more profound understanding of the Zarathushti culture. Seeing our Zarathushti flag raised high on a clear sunny blue sky day; it made us realize once again who we are and how proud we are to be Zarathushtis and to stay on the path of righteousness. Our chief guests **Dastoorji Cyrus Dastur of Surat, Er. Dr. Ramiyar Karanja, Khojeste P. Mistree, and Prof. Dr. James Russell of Harvard University**, were on hand for the inauguration of the first ever Zoroastrian Exposition set up by **Khojeste Mistree and Firoza Punthakey Mistree**. What would life be like down under without shearing of sheep? Well, we were lucky enough to see exactly how it is done.

Due to the extreme heat the organizers had to cancel the OZ Olympics. However, this did not dampen the spirit and pride of a group of young Zarathushtis from participating in Aussie sports. Games such as the Aussie favorite, handball and footy were played and many new bonds and friendships were formed out on the field that lasted throughout the week. A Bush Dance was scheduled for that night. Even though we did not have a typical aboriginal bush dance, we were able to dance the night away to a disco fever night mixed western music and some Aussie favorites.

### **DAY THREE KEY NOTE ADDRESS, Q&A SESSION, YOUTH YAKKA, BEACH PARTY**

The keynote address by **Khojeste Mistree** was appropriate for getting the religious side of the congress fully underway. He gave an interesting talk on the central themes of our religion, providing basic understanding for many who had less religious knowledge. He also presented answers to questions that were sure to come up during the congress, such as why it is our duty to the religion for youths to marry within the community. The keynote address was followed by a talk by **Dr. James Russell**, a scholar of Zarathushti religion who was much sought after before the congress was over. His extensive knowledge of and passion for our religion caused more than a few audience members to become emotional. We had the opportunity of participating in a question and answer session with both scholars, which proved very educational. This was without a doubt the highlight of the congress.

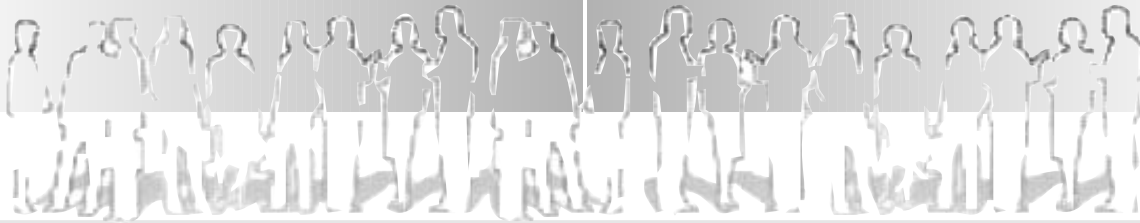
Unfortunately the beach party didn't go over too well as a result of bad timing and the weather. Getting all the delegates organized and onto the buses was very difficult, because most people arrived late and delays were inevitable. As Ballarat is quite far inland, it took two hours to drive to the beach. It was 5:30 in the afternoon when we arrived and sadly by that time the weather had taken a turn for the worse. However many spirited people braved the cold air and the even more frigid ocean, swimming anyway as this may have been their only chance to do so in Australia. Most of the delegates preferred to chill on the grassy areas beyond the beach or warm up in cafes along the streets. For dinner we were provided with delicious hot KFC, and then it was back to the buses for the long ride home.

### **DAY FOUR BALLART TOUR, ANIMAL SANCTUARY, SOVEREIGN HILL, SON ET LUMIERE (Sound and Light Show)**

This day entailed a lot of education about Ballarat and a lot of fun in the hot sun. First we were taken on coach buses with drivers giving us a verbal and visual tour showing us around the town and giving us some history about it. We went first to the Ballarat Wildlife Park and Animal Sanctuary and thoroughly enjoyed seeing,







feeding and taking tons of pictures with the kangaroos, koala bears, wallabies, and wombats. The Animal Sanctuary included many different reptiles and their history and presence in Australia. We then got back in our busses and headed to Sovereign Hill, an old gold mine, which I came to learn, is what Ballarat is famous for. We had about five hours in the historic town. It really gave you a feel of how life was at the time (including the no air conditioning in the buildings!) and there were many shops, bars and tons of mining facilities that allowed us to see the process of the gold mining. Some of us took a tour down to a mine, and learned a lot about how the gold was mined and the conditions the miners were under.

There was a 15-minute show that played inside the main building at Sovereign Hill, but prior to entering Sovereign Hill we signed up to see the *Son et Lumière*, (Sound and Light), show. As there were two showings, we went back to the University of Ballarat, ate dinner according to the timing of the show we were to see, and went back to Sovereign Hill. The long, and highly acclaimed show consisted of sound effects, fire, and lights depicting the struggle of the gold miners in Sovereign Hill more than a hundred years ago. While the show was not what most were expecting it was an interesting experience.

#### **DAY FIVE YOUTH YAKKA COOKING AND CHALK COMPETITION, Q&A SESSION, NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA**

Today, men and women were able to showcase their talents during the men's cooking competition and the women's rangoli chalk competition. (photo pg 67) Groups of three men were given an assortment of random ingredients and asked to whip up a wonderful culinary masterpiece.

Dishes ranged from Asian stir-fry to parsi dhansakh and participants were given points for taste as well as presentation. After the official judging, congress

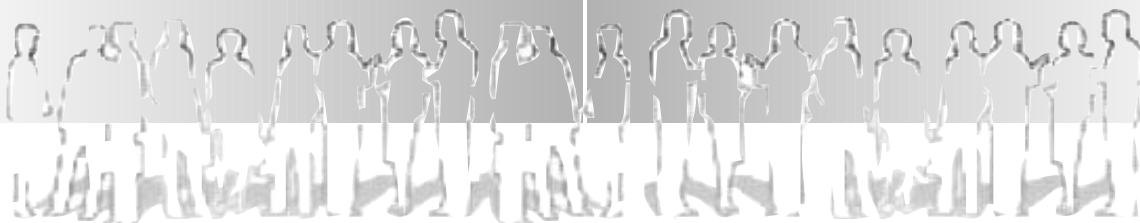
delegates were allowed to sample each dish -- and from the speed at which they did so, it was apparent that our Zarathushti men do have some culinary expertise! The rangoli chalk competition was equally colorful -- with designs ranging from themes of friendship to the atash. Teams of two women put their creative talents to work to create beautiful chalk designs on the sidewalk outside the dining hall that passer bys enjoyed for days to come. The best chalk art definitely came from those who were either experienced or who had brought stencils from home; however, the non-experienced artists did get extra points for creativity and spirit! **Anahita Rustom, of Nova Scotia, Canada and her partner Pearl Sanga, of Mumbai won the third prize (photo pg 67)**

**Shireen Cama and Dinsha Mistree (photo left)** spoke on the theme of *Social Justice and Humanitarian Action in Zoroastrianism*. They highlighted some of the links between religion and service as demonstrated in the gathas as well as throughout our rich history. They then offered examples of how contemporary Zarathushtis have integrated the Zarathushti ideals of service into their respective professions.

**Dr. Susan Kaboly-Zadeh** made a presentation *Breaking Down The Stereotypes! What it is Like Being A Zoroastrian in My Part of the World*. She talked of her experiences as a First Generation Zoroastrian Iranian-Canadian. Her parents and siblings left Tehran nine years before the Revolution, and became the first documented Zarathushti-Iranian family who relocated to North Vancouver, BC, Canada. Susan highlighted the core adjustments youth make while growing up as minorities. She also illustrated her parents' experiences moving from Iran to Canada, while sharing her own.

Later in the afternoon there was a Youth Yakka question and answer session. The youth asked the difficult questions and the panel offered answers regarding Zarathushti views on conversion, intermarriage, various rituals and spirituality generally. **The question and answer session definitely highlighted the need for representation of different viewpoints on congress panels.** Following the lectures there were rarely any questions asked of the speakers, and yet at the question and answer session there was barely enough time to get through all the questions. It was inspiring to hear the passionate concerns of the youth and it showed that when the youth attend congresses they seek answers. Thus, there is in a sense a responsibility on organizers to ensure the panelists are religious scholars equipped with the answers.

For **New Years Eve Night**, people were dressed to the nines in suits and gowns. A red carpet was unfurled so that the glamorous delegates could make their



entrance into the decorated hall in true style. The volunteers decorated the hall beautifully and it was complete with video broadcasting of all our glamorous entrances. The dinner entertainment left nothing to be desired with **Kobad Bhavnagri** singing "I just whispered your name" with **Yuhan Reporter** on clarinet and Kobad ended the entertainment segment with a very entertaining rendition of "New York, New York". The entertainment also included **Farita Khambatta** dazzling us with the song "Sonia" while her Z dancers **Delara Mistry, Shalayne Ghaswala, Farzana Pestonji, Zeelnaz Parabia & Anaita Kanga-Parabia** showed the crowd that Zarathushti women really know how to move!

Ring in the New Year with so many new friends was truly a treat, and no one seemed to mind when the "lai lai lai" singing crew started the countdown about a minute early. The celebrations continued in the famed C4 suite well into the morning.

#### **DAY SIX YOUTH YAKKA, Q&A, DEBATES, TRADITIONAL NIGHT, LAGGUN-NU BHONU**

A bountiful display of hugs and kisses brought in the New Year by enthusiastic congress attendees. Unfortunately, the late night revelry led to early morning "blues" as the youth sessions were sparsely attended.



**Naomi Bhappu**, a 16 year old from Houston, Texas, (photo left) was the first to make a presentation on January 1, 2008. Her speech entitled "*The Solution*" was based on the topic of Zoroastrianism: A Model for World Peace and focused on the Amesha Spentas and how the principles that they embody, can be used to solve world problems. The Amesha Spentas can be used as steps, one can take to make a decision or find a solution.

The presentation concentrated on the genocide crisis in Darfur and how along with the Zarathushti ideals of the Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds, the Amesha Spentas provide a rational way to find The Solution.

Further sessions were dominated by Priests, as the **High Priest of Surat, Vada Dasturji Cyrus Dastur**, discussed the importance of the sudreh-kusti ritual. This talk was followed by a presentation by **Ervad Mehernosh Bhadha**, a young delegate-priest. In closing

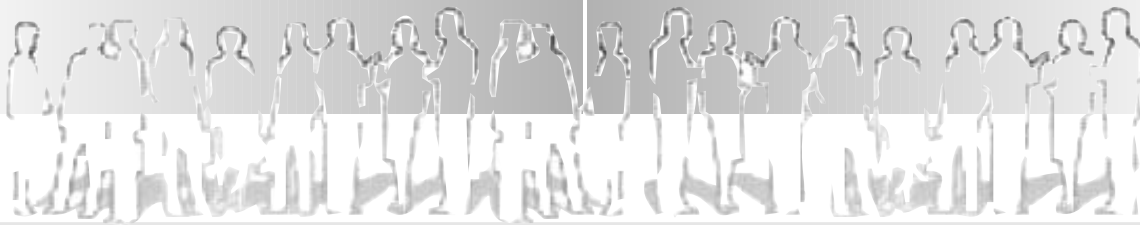


of the morning sessions, **Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia** also gave a presentation on religion and spirituality.

Following lunch, the afternoon sessions drew more delegates in attendance. North American delegates **Nahid Dashtaki and Ava Afshari** took the podium to discuss *The Shahnameh*. (photo above, Ava Afshari at the podium. Nahid on left) After the youth presentations, delegates were divided into nine groups with each group assigned to solve a single "great debate," (issues that have embroiled our community). Many delegates were particularly drawn to addressing the tensions between Parsis and Iranians. Such discussions worked up a great appetite for an evening program, whereby a traditional Parsi wedding feast was prepared and experienced by all. Complementing the traditional foods, a number of delegates were in traditional clothing and partook in what had fast become a congress tradition in its own right: post-dinnertime dancing. While the delegates were surely worn out after the full day of activities especially considering the events of the night before, many participants came to an informal late-night Q&A period led by **Khojeste Mistree and Professor James Russell** of Harvard University until two o'clock in the morning.

#### **DAY SEVEN YOUTH YAKKA, GHAMBAR, Q&A, FANCY DRESS PARTY**

The seventh day of the congress brought with it more excitement in the conversation amongst the youth. The Youth Yakkas were quite interesting and it was fantastic seeing the youth representing the themes that were most important to them. During the Question and Answer period conversations were ignited and ideas were shared. It was a wonderful opportunity for the youth to have an open forum. Hopefully, there will be one at future congresses with the moderation of scholars. One favorable event organized for the youth was the group discussions. It was half way through the day and the



attending delegates were separated into 10 groups to discuss pre-arranged topics. (photo above) All groups involved were asked to discuss and come up with solutions, which was quite promising. Hopefully the congress committee will organize some of those fantastic ideas into reality .

**Sherazade Mehta** represented ZYNA, on behalf of **Nikan Khatibi**, chair of ZYNA, with a power point presentation making the youth of the world aware of what activities the youth of North America are doing and how ZYNA and FEZANA work together to achieve these goals. This included the role FEZANA played in supporting the youth in the form of various awards and scholarships given out annually.

After a day of discussions, the night event called for a bit of fantasy. The evening was enjoyable but brought with it some disappointments from those who were not aware that fancy dress required costumes and not actual formals. Walking amongst angels, movie stars, mobsters and regular gentry everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves while dancing well into the night, even though many could have done with more Persian music. Overall, the seventh day of congress was a nice conclusion to an interesting week.

#### **DAY EIGHT HANDING OVER CEREMONY**

On the last day of the congress, everyone gathered slowly into the Caro Convention Centre for the final felicitations and farewells. Formal thank-yous were given to the volunteers, and the organizers for their hard work, and for the excellent time we delegates had at the congress. A presentation was made by **Narius K. Dastur, Susan Kaboly Zadeh, and Vista Pourbahrami**, (photo right) delegates representing the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia, the next host for the 5th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress which will be held in Vancouver, Canada in July 2011. Narius was presented the congress flag from the 4th World Zarathushti Congress to be passed to the 5th Congress organizers. Then we had to do our final packing, and our final

farewells to all the friends with whom we had spent the last week. We got back on the same buses that we had arrived on, half of us went directly to the airport to catch our connecting flights out of Melbourne, and the others took a scenic route back to the airport via the Great Ocean Road.

Overall everyone was very impressed by the preparation and outcome of the congress, with the exception of everything starting on "Parsi time" and the fact that there was no air-conditioning in the middle of the summer. This congress was different than most of the other ones because we were isolated from the rest of the city and many distractions which enabled all the delegates as a whole to create stronger and long lasting friendships. For the most part, all of us had an excellent time at the congress, and we would like to once again thank the volunteers and organizers for their hard work in making the congress what it was, and to all the delegates and friends, we'll see you in 2011!

#### **REPORT PREPARED By**

#### **FEZANA SUBSIDY DELEGATES (photos below)**

Photo credits: Raman Shazadi, Narius Dastur, Farrahnaz Bulsara, Sherazade Mehta, Nahid Dashtaki, Dinsha Mistree, Naomi Bhappu







1. 4WZYC Executive of the Congress; 2. and 3 Dancers; 4-32 delegates from Iran; 5-Mr Amiability Mobedyar Hooman Faravani of Kerman and Miss Congeniality Tashan Mistree of Atlanta; 6-Singer Farita Khambatta

## Youth Congress Subsidy

The very successful ZYNA sponsored 2005 Youth Congress in Miami made a surplus, hence at the 2006 FEZANA AGM in Atlanta the ZYNA leadership proposed and the FEZANA board accepted that \$10,000 be allocated to sponsor the youth to attend the 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Ballarat, Australia in 2007/08

Terms of Reference were drawn up by Firdosh Mehta. Applications were invited from across North America for a FEZANA subsidy of US\$500 with an additional subsidy of US\$250 from their own association. According to the terms of reference each recipient had to write an essay, agree to participate in some way at the congress and conduct good awareness for FEZANA.

A total of 15 youth delegates from North America were sponsored (15x \$500= \$7,500).

Two youth delegates were sponsored by two associations. The balance of the \$10,000 allocated, to be used for future youth participation at Congress, subject to board approval.

Sherazade Mehta	ZANT
Narius Dastur	ZSBC
Shireen Cama	ZAGBA and ZAPA
Susan KabolyZadeh	ZSBC and CZC
Vista Pourbahrami	ZSBC
Naomi Bhappu	ZAH
Nikita Bhappu	ZAH
Dinsha Mistree	AZA
Carl Irani	ZATAMBAY
Farrahnaz Bulsara	OZCF
Kershan Bulsara	OZCF
Anahita Rustom	ZAAC
Nazneen Rustom	ZAAC
Nahid Dashtaki	CZC
Ava Afshari	CZC

There were other youth delegates from North America, attending who were not sponsored

All the delegates from North America did us proud. THANK YOU

**We are proud of the ZYNA leadership for their foresight and wisdom for deploying their surplus to such excellent use. THANK YOU**



### نقش مذهب در اجتماع

مذهب یک سیستم باورها و علایم و مراسم است که انسانها را هدایت و به زندگی آنها معنی میدهد. و ما بین کسانی که به آن باور دارند اتحاد بوجود میآورد. مذهب میتواند دارویی برای تغییرات اجتماعی باشد. همچنین مذهب میتواند نتایج منفی داشته باشد. سرمایه داران از مذهب به عنوان اسلحه برای فرمانروایی استفاده می کنند. متعصبین مذهبی روز به روز افزایش میابند و تکنولوژی جدید و تغییرات اجتماعی را تهدیدی برای مذهب میدانند. زیرا پیروان آنان از گروه جدا شده و بطرف مدرن نیزه خواهند رفت. پژوهشگران باور دارند که مراکز مذهبی هنوز مهمترین مرکز گردهمایی مردم میباشد. بعزت هجوم مهاجرین به کشورهای پیشرفته جهان مخصوصا امریکا وضع ادیان در اینگونه کشورها در حال تغییر میباشد. مهاجرین با خود انواع جدیدی از مذاهب را آورده در نتیجه انواع مذاهب در هر کشوری رو به افزایش است. در آینده سکولاریزم و فئاتیسم بیشتر خواهد شد. عده ای باور شدید به دین دارند و عده ای دیگر دین را باور ندارند و منکر وجود خداوند هستند و خرد انسان را منشع زندگی میدانند. همچنین انواع مختلف مذهب را می بینیم که فرم ها و سیستم مخصوص بخود را دارند که با گذشته بسیار متفاوت میباشد. طبق امار بدست آمده از پژوهشگران باتوان بسیار کمتر از گذشته به سوی مذهب گرویده اند و در مورد مذهب بسیار روشنگرا هستند. ایمان یک باور بدون سنوال و جواب است که احتیاج به ثابت کردن و شهود علمی ندارد. کسانی که عالم هستند دین را در علم و علوم طبیعی و خلق کردن می بینند و همه خلایق و خدا را به علم ربط میدهند. بعضی از مردم که تعصب فراوان دارند دنیای بعد از مردن را بهتر از این دنیا میدانند و این دنیا و زندگی را فدای دنیای بعد از مردن مینمایند. محققین و پژوهشگران بر این باور هستند که بیشتر متعصبین از طبقه کم در آمد هستند اما در میان آنها افراد پولدار و طبقه متوسط هم دیده میشوند. این گروه متعصبین کاملا مخالف مدرن شدن مذهب هستند. در هر زمان و با هر ایده و عقیده ای باید به نیروی ماورای تفکر بشریت کمی بیشتر اندیشید.

**"Religion without science is blind and science without religion is lame"**

Albert Einstein



## نقش مذهب در اجتماع

چنین تشخیص داده شده زمانیکه انسان معاصر با تازه های جهان آشنایی پیدا میکند این آشنایی او را به جامعه سکولار (سیاست عدم دخالت مذهب در امور مملکتی) پیش میرسد بطوریکه مذهب و این یک امر خصوصی تلقی گردیده و اصلا به زندگی عمومی مربوط نمی گردد و در میدان عمومی مذهب کاملا بی اثر میماند. اکنون چنین بنظر میرسد که دوباره کاملا حالت متضاد آن ظاهر شده است و لازم است که روحانیت را دوباره به حساب آورد و در مورد آنها بیشتر تفکر نمود. یک انسان واقعی بایستی باورهای مذهبی خود را قبل از اینکه در لید عمومی قرار دهد در قلب خود بررسی نماید.

ما نباید انتظار داشته باشیم که بطور کامل بیک رضایت کامل ما بین گروه مذهبیون و یا جامعه های مذهبی و یا بدون مذهب دست یابیم. باید بخاطر داشته باشیم که آزادی بدون مسئولیت آزادی را از بین میرسد. باید کمی بیشتر فکر نماییم و ببینیم چه نقشی بایستی ایمان در اجتماع بازی کند؟ چه نقشی مذهب باید در برابری اشخاص و حق آزادی آنان بازی کند؟ آیا ایمان موجب محرومیت انسانها از جامعه سکولار میشود؟ نقش مذهب در دنیای سیاسی امروزه چه میباید؟ آیا مذهب در شکل دادن قوانین اجتماعی نقشی دارد و باید داشته باشد؟ و از همه مهمتر آیا مذهب باید نقشی در علوم و رشته پزشکی داشته باشد؟ هر زمانیکه بیماری احتیاج مبرم به خون انسانهای دیگر و یا به قسمتی از اعضای بدن انسانها احتیاج دارد آیا در اینگونه مواقع مذهب میتواند نقشی داشته باشد؟ هیچ فکر کرده اید بیماری لاعلاج که تمامی پزشک ها به او جواب رد داده اند و روزی هزار بار از درد میمیرد و تمامی دارو ها و مسکن ها در او بی اثر است آیا حق دارد از پزشک خود بخواهد که او را آزاد نماید آیا پزشک در این عمل خود کشتی مقصر میباشد؟ آیا مذهب باید در این امر دخالت داشته باشد؟ آیا لازم است مذاهب بهمین صورت کنونی حفظ گردد یا با توجه به رشد و احتیاجات زمان تغییراتی در مذاهب ایجاد گردد؟ اکنون یک شورش مذهبی جهانی شروع گردیده و جهان بجز جهان غرب بسوی یک جامعه غیر سکولار پیش میروند. حال ما چگونه زندگیمان را با هم ادامه دهیم؟ آیا خداپرست یا منکر خدا باشیم؟ بهر حال همگی ما در یک کره خاکی زندگی میکنیم و در حقیقت همگی ما در اطراف یک میز هستیم و باید به دور این میز بنیاد باشیم. باید باور داشته باشیم برای حفاظت جامعه و استقلال فردی هر دو گروه باید بکار گرفته شوند و در کنار هم بطور مسالمت آمیز زندگی نمایند و احترام به زندگی و زنده بودن باید پایه اصلی و اساسی انسانها باشد. اخیرا بهترین کتابهایی که بفروش میرسد کتابهایی هستند که منکر خدا میباشند و مذهب را شدیداً تنقید مینمایند. در آخرین لحظات زندگی که مغز و علم بشریت به جایی نمیرسد همه باور دارند که نباید نا امید شد و باید دست دعا بلند نمود و از وجود خداوند کمک خواست. در هیچ زمان نباید ناامید شد و به نیروی قوی تر و ملورای عقل و علم بشریت اعتقاد داشت. خرافات و تعصب مرکز اصلی فساد و ناپسامانی و اختلافات بشریت میباشد.



# NauRooz

## BELIEF & PRACTICE: Zoroastrian New Year

March 23, 2007

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week1030/belief.html>



**BOB ABERNETHY**, anchor: This Monday (March 26, 2007), the world's remaining Zoroastrians -- followers of the Prophet Zoroaster in ancient Persia -- will commemorate the birth of the Prophet. This week (March 21) also brought the celebration of spring and the beginning of the Zoroastrian New Year. The holiday is called Norooz.

Zoroastrianism teaches that people should do good to help their one God in his cosmic struggle with the power of evil.

We visited a Zoroastrian family of Iranian-Americans, the Aiduns, in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

Norooz is celebrated at the precise moment that spring arrives.

The Prophet Zoroaster's message was very universal, centered around the tenets of good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

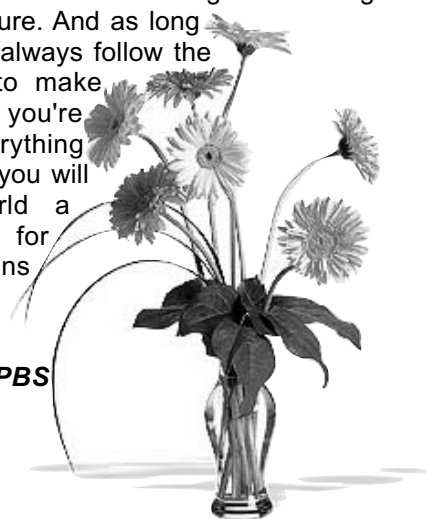
The Haft Seen table is central to the Norooz celebration. "Seen" is one of the letters of the alphabet. Items beginning with the letter "seen" are traditionally put on the table. (Chanting the Ashem Vohu -- prayers).

There's a misconception amongst many, that, Zoroastrians are fire worshippers. Traditionally, it's customary to pray in front of the fire or pray towards a light source. Light is very significant in the Zoroastrian religion, and it's a sign of knowledge and wisdom.

"We offer the mirror. It's essentially a sign of light. You look in mirror and you get some rosewater, which is very aromatic. You also get to see yourself and how you look at the beginning of the year.

**ARZAD AIDUN** hugging his children Happy Norooz and teaching his children at the kitchen table Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds.

I believe in one God, Ahura Mazda. My God allows me to think and to choose what's right and wrong. "Asha" is the law of nature. And as long as you strive to always follow the path of Asha, to make sure that you're considering everything in the universe, you will make this world a better place for future generations to come.



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<http://www.pbs.org/religion>

## Ashkan khosropour

Ashkan Khosropour born in Tehran, 1988 is now finishing his pre university studies. In his first year of high school he attended journalism classes under supervision of Pooya Lotfian (member of Iranian Journalists association) and was the chief editor for two years of his school magazine.

In 2005 he was awarded the first place in a journalism contest for students' publications Besides working for his high school publication, Ashkan has written reports for national newspapers in Iran like Amordad (the Zarathushti newspaper), Shargh, ISNA and Mirase Khabar.



### Summary

First day at 21:55: Some people are at haft seen table, some are going on a trip, some are anxious. Some sending holiday emails, SMS and everybody is waiting for the change of the year. They say, whatever you do in the beginning of the year will continue till the end of the year.

Fifth day : 21:55: The day of celebration of different historical events. Some on trip, some anxious. Some prepare for the sixth of Farvardin ( birthday of Zarathusht)

Tenth day : 21:55 2 days remain to end of holidays. Some planning for

13th and "lie of 13" ( like April Fool). Some returning home from trip. Some anxious. some waiting for 13th but not wanting the holidays to end

15th 21:55 : 1 day after the end of holiday vacations. Things are back to normal. No news. Some return from trip. Some anxious. Some sending emails about different thing. ( English Summary by Mitra Namiranian)

## از بهارش پیداست

اول - ساعت 21:55 گروهی سرفسره هفت سین . گروهی در راه سفر. گروهی دستپاچه و سرگردان. گروهی درگیرامسال sms و e-mail تبریک سال نو. همه منتظر تحویل سال هستند. می گویند اول سال هرکار بکنی تا آخرسال ادامه دارد.

پنجم-ساعت 21:55 کمتر از یک روز مانده به ششم فروردین. می گویند در این روز بیشتر از 72 پیشامد مهم تاریخی اتفاق افتاده. یکی روزتیراندازی آرش کمانگیر، دیگری زایش اشوزرتشت پامبر ایرانی و.... گروهی این روز را جشن می گیرند. گروهی در راه سفر. بعضی دستپاچه و سرگردان. گروهی درگیرارسال sms و e-mail تبریک ششم فروردین. خیلی ها در انتظار فردا هستند. این روز را جشن می گیرند.

دهم- ساعت 21:55 یکی ، دوروزی بیشتر به پایان تعطیلات نمانده . بعضی ها برای 13 نقشه می کشند. برای کارهایی که باید بکنند و جاهایی که باید بروند. به اینکه " دروغ 13 " شان چه باشد. همان دروغی که بن مایه دروغ 13 آوریل هم هست. گروهی هم از الان بارهایشان را بسته اند. گروهی در راه بازگشت از سفر. بعضی دستپاچه. گروهی درگیر ارسال sms و e-mail دروغ 13. همه در انتظار 13 هستند اما پایان تعطیلات را هم نمی خواهند.

پانزدهم-ساعت 21:55. یکی . دو روزی از تعطیلات گذشته است. همه چیز تقریباً عادی شده است. خبر خاصی نیست. همه چیز مثل همیشه . گروهی از سفر برگشته اند. بعضی دستپاچه و سرگردان. گروهی درگیر ارسال sms و e-mail با موضوعات متفرقه.

## خسروپور

اشکان خسروپور در ۲۲ مهرماه ۱۳۶۷ خورشیدی (۱۴ اکتبر ۱۹۸۸ میلادی) زاده شد. او تحصیلات خود را تا پایان دوره دبیرستان در تهران گذراند و اکنون نیز دوره پیش دانشگاهی (پایه پیش از ورود به دانشگاه) را می گذراند.

در سالهای نخستین دبیرستان در کلاس های آموزش روزنامه نگاری زیر نظر پویا لطفیان (عضو انجمن صنفی روزنامه نگاران ایران) به یادگیری حرفه روزنامه نگاری پرداخت و تا دو سال دبیر گروه فرهنگ ماهنامه دانش آموزی دبیرستان محل تحصیلش بود.

در سال های ۱۳۸۳ و ۱۳۸۴ خورشیدی (۲۰۰۴ و ۲۰۰۵ میلادی) در جشنواره نشریات دانش آموزی سراسر کشور، به ترتیب رتبه سوم و نخست را در بخش گزارش نویسی به دست آورد.

وی همچنین در کنار همکاری با ماهنامه داخلی دبیرستان (زسا)، برای روزنامه های شرق و امرداد (هفته نامه خبری - فرهنگی زرتشتیان ایران) و خبرگزاری های میراث خبر (خبرگزاری سازمان میراث فرهنگی و گردشگری ایران) و ایسنا (خبرگزاری دانشجویان ایران) گزارش هایی نگاشته است.

# NauRooz

## GIVE ME A CHANCE

Jamshed R. Udvadia

O Maker mine! O timeless one  
Who is the Father and the Son,  
What hast thou wrought?  
Though deep waters I do wade,  
Know not wherefore I was made \_\_\_\_  
In some web caught;

Day by day I knock and ask  
If thou wilt let me know the task  
Intended for me;  
Show thy inscrutable face \_\_\_\_  
That is neither steel nor lace \_\_\_\_  
And set me free.

Night follows day, day follows night  
And the end is not in sight \_\_\_\_  
What purpose, I wonder?

Is it all a great big jest  
Before we are all laid to rest \_\_\_\_  
Or torn asunder.

O Thou, who made thy presence felt  
Where Cyrus ruled and Zarthost knelt  
Give me a chance;  
Give me one word, 'tis all I ask,  
One ray of light pierce thy mask,  
Today perchance?

That I may know that Thou art there  
Truth and Justice and Loving Care  
And Glorious Sound;  
That I may come and at thy feet  
Find myself a humble seat  
On hallowed ground.

*GIVE ME A CHANCE, published by the World of Poetry Press, Sacramento, California, 1982 in a volume titled 'Our Twentieth Century's Greatest Poems', ISBN 0-910147-00-0, Library of Congress catalog card number 82-050849.*

## THE REAL NOU ROUZ OF 2008 (3746) IN BRUSSELS AND PARIS



Fariborz Rahnamoon

Nou Rouz is one of the only scientific New Year celebrated in the world today. Ferdowsi in the Shahnameh tells us that Shah Jamshid celebrated the first New Year (Sal-e-Nou) on the first day of spring after the Ice Age on the day called Ormazd in the month of Farvadin.

"SAR E SAL E NOU ORMAZD O FARVADIN"

3733 years ago Zarathushtra the sage of ancient Iran coined the word "Nou Rouz" which means the "New Day" as against 'Sal e Nou' which means "New Year". It was to record the phenomenon that occurred on the New Year of 1725 BCE in Sistan where Zarathushtra had his planetarium.

In 1725 BCE the vernal equinox coincided with sunrise at Sistan whereby the New Year and the New Day began at the same time. This phenomenon happens every year at a different point on earth but repeats at about the same longitude once in about a millennium.

According to recorded history the spring equinox of 487 BCE, Nou Rouz was celebrated at Takht-e-Jamshid (Persepolis), when the first rays of the rising sun lighted the square stone set in the central hall of the Apadana palace. This celebration was no coincidence, the Persians scholars and astronomers had pre calculated this event and Darius the Great had designed the Apadana for this great event.



# Naurooz

After the fall of the Sassanian Empire, the Arab invaders enforced their lunar calendar upon the Iranians; they destroyed libraries and burnt books, they killed the learned and cut the finger and hands of Persian scholars who attempted to write. The ancient knowledge was lost and today Nou Rouz (New Day) has become synonymous with Sal e Nou (New Year).

**The fact is that Nou Rouz or - the coinciding of the sunrise with the equinox - happens every year at a different location on earth and the ancient followers of Zarathushtra celebrated it as a special event whenever it occurred in their kingdom.**

Today with the Persians spread all over the world it is time to revive the ancient festival with new vigor and introduce it to the world. This coming Nou Rouz on 20 March 2008, the equinox will coincide with sunrise in Europe. At the time of the equinox the sun will rise at about 4 degrees longitude. This happens to be close to Brussels and Paris. *The equinox will be at 05:48:19 hours GMT/UTC while the sun will rise in Brussels at 05:45 and in Paris at 05:53 GMT/UTC.*

The Nou Rouz of 2009 will happen on the North American continent where the sun will rise at about 86 degrees longitude at the time of the equinox (11:43 GMT/UTC). This happens to pass close to Chicago where the sun will rise at 11:54GMT/UTC and Louisville Kentucky where the sun will rise at 11:46GMT/UTC.

Nou Rouz of 2010 will happen in the ocean and 2011 in Mongolia and China so let us come together and revive Nou Rouz in its true colors for the next two years for it occurs where our communities reside.

**I propose that the Zarathushties and the friends of the culture of ancient Iran, who reside in Belgium and France, with the help of the local planetarium find the right location to host the Nou Rouz of 2008 and facilitate all who wish to be present and watch the sun rise at the moment of the equinox, as it happened in Sistan in the year 1725 BCE and at Takht e Jamshid in 487 BCE.**

Thus reviving the ancient knowledge and showcasing the wisdom of the great sage Zarathushtra, with the hope that knowledge and wisdom prevail over superstition and that peace and love reigns over upheaval and hatred.

For the skeptics, there is further proof of the ancient wisdom of the Iranians. Zarathushtra had also calculated the first meridian and called it "**Nim Rouz**", which means "**Mid Day**". The **Meridian of Zarathushtra** was located in ancient Sistan at 62 degrees longitude. Even today that location in Afghanistan is called the Nimruz Province.

When it is mid day at the Meridian of Zarathushtra (62 degrees longitude) there is sunshine from Japan the land of the rising sun, to the western tip of Africa. What better location can there be for an intellectual and scientific meridian.

**May Wisdom Prevail**

**May we unite to show case the Real Nou Rouz**

## **FARIBORZ RAHNAMOON**

*Born in Yazd, Iran was raised in Bombay, where he obtained his masters degree in Business Management. He now runs his own business in Vancouver Canada. He has served various Zarathushti organizations from a young age and still continues to do that. He is the Editor of Iran Zamin, a bilingual cultural and religious magazine and webmaster of [www.ancientiran.com](http://www.ancientiran.com) where he presents his research on the teachings of Zarathushtra as was followed before the advent of Alexander the accursed and before the intervention of the Sassanian dynasty. He is also in the process of translating the Gathas with a different paradigm, some of which are available at [www.ancientiran.com](http://www.ancientiran.com)*



*"Genocide of the Zarathushties" at <http://www.ancientiran.com>*

*To see this natural phenomena live on the internet at 12 noon Afghanistan time check*

*<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/sunearth.html>*

# NauRooz

پیشنهاد می‌کنیم که زرتشتیان و دوستداران زرتشت و فرهنگ باستانی ایران ساکن شهرهای پاریس و بروکسل پیس قدم شوند و با همکاری اداره محیط زیست یا رصدخانه ها، محل دقیق طلوع خورشید در زمان اعتدال بهاری را پیدا کنند و امکانات برگزاری جشن را در آن محل بوجود بیاورند و برای مشاهده این پدیده طبیعی به یاد جشن های 1725 (ق م) در سیستان و 487 (ق م) در تخت جمشید همه را دعوت کنند تا در این جشن نوروز راستین شرکت کنند.

به امید اینکه این جشن که مبنی علمی دارد یاد آور شکوه ایران باستان باشد و علم و دانش دانای بزرگ ایران زمین زرتشت را به مردم جهان بشناساند تا خرد و دانش بر خرافات پیروز شود و صلح و صفا جای دشمنی و جنگ را بگیرد.

برای ناباوران چشمه ای دیگری از خرد و علم ایرانیان باستان را یادآور می‌شویم. زرتشت اولین خط نصف النهار را به دست آورده بود و بر آن نام نیم روز<sup>2</sup> نهاده بود. او در رصدخانه خود در سیستان محاسبه کرده بود که زمانی که خورشید به حالت نیم روز بر سر سیستان (62 درجه طولی زمین) قرار دارد آفتاب تمام سرزمین های نیم کره زمین از ژاپن تا آفریقا را در بر می‌گیرد<sup>3</sup>. چه محلی علمی تر و پرمعنا تر از این برای خط نصف النهار. امروز نیر در افغانستان به آن بخش از سیستان استان نیم روز میگویند.



به امید پیروزی خرد  
خرداد باد  
(برسائی برسیم)  
فریبرز رهنمون

<sup>1</sup> برای اطلاعات بیشتر رجوع شود به <http://www.ancientiran.com> Genocide of Zarathushties  
<sup>2</sup> .. برای اطلاعات بیشتر رجوع شود به <http://www.ancientiran.com> Nou Rouz & Nim Rouz  
<sup>3</sup> این پدیده را میتوانید ساعت 12 به وقت افغانستان بر روی تارنمای زیر ببینید

<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/sunearth.html>



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NAUROOZ  
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## نوروز راستین 3746 (2008) در پاریس و بروکسل

نوروز یگانه جشن سال نو علمی در جهان است. فردوسی در شاهنامه می فرماید که شاه جمشید پس از دوره یخبندان اولین سال نو را روز اورمزد در ماه فروردین جشن گرفت.

### سر سال نو هرمزد فرودین

3733 سال پیش زرتشت دانای بزرگ ایران زمین، برای به ثبت رساندن اتفاق ویژه ای که در سال 1725 (قبل از میلاد) در سیستان رخ داد واژه نوروز را در برابر سال نو بنیان گذاشت.

زرتشت در رصد خانه ای که در سیستان داشت محاسبه نموده بود که در سال 1725 (ق م) برآمدن خورشید (طلوع آفتاب) در سیستان و تحویل سال نو همزمان رخ خواهد داد. و سال نو آن سال را نوروز نامید. این اتفاق در طبیعت هر سال در جاهای مختلف رخ میدهد و شاید بیش از هزار سال طول بکشد که دوباره به همان محل برگردد.

طبق مدارک تاریخی در سال 487 (ق م) در هنگام تحویل سال نو اولین اشعه نور خورشید بر سنگ چهارگوشی که در تالار آپادانا تحت جمشید گذاشته بودند تابید و آن سال را جشن ویژه ای گرفتند. این نشان میدهد که ایرانی ها از این پدیده طبیعی با خبر بودند و با محاسبه دقیق آماده برگزاری این جشن ویژه بودند.

پس از حمله اعراب، عربها بکارگیری گاه شماری قمری را بر ایرانی ها اجبار کردند، کتابخانه ها و کتاب ها را سوزاندند و دست نویسنده گان و دانشمندان را بریدند. حتی کتاب ها را به جای جزیه گرفتند و از بین بردند.<sup>1</sup> رفته رفته علم و دانش ایرانی ها به فراموشی سپرده شد و امروز ما فرقی بین سال نو و نوروز یا روز نو را نمی بینیم.

واقعیت این است که، زمان اعتدال بهاری تحویل سال نو میباشد و سالی که تحویل سال با برآمدن خورشید در سرزمین ایران همزمان می شد آن سال را نوروز می نامیدند و جشن ویژه ای می گرفتند.

امروز که ما ایرانی ها در سر تا سر جهان پراکنده هستیم می توانیم این پدیده طبیعی را با گرفتن جشن ویژه در محلی که این اتفاق رخ می دهد برگزار کنیم.

زمان سال تحویل نوروز 2008 (1387) همزمان با طلوع خورشید در 4 درجه طولی زمین نزدیکی شهر های بروکسل و پاریس می باشد. زمان اعتدال بهاری یا تحویل سال ساعت 5:48:19 به وقت گرین ویچ می باشد و طلوع خورشید در بروکسل ساعت 5:46 و در پاریس ساعت 5:53 به وقت گرینویچ میباشد. پس محلی در حومه این دو شهر برای دیدن این پدیده طبیعی و برپا کردن جشن ویژه نوروز مناسب خواهد بود.

نوروز 2009 (1389) در آمریکای شمالی، در حومه شهر های لوئیسویل کنتکی و شیکاگو اتفاق می افتد.

نوروز 2010 در آقیانوس و 2011 در مغولستان و چین اتفاق می افتد. پس بیایید دست به دست هم بدهیم، در دو سال آینده که نوروز ویژه در اروپا و آمریکا اتفاق می افتد، جایی که ایرانی ها به تعداد زیاد ساکن هستند، جشنی پرشکوه برپا داریم.



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# Laugh & Be Merry

A well-dressed woman was accosted in the street, by a particularly dirty and shabby-looking homeless woman who asked her for a couple of dollars for food.

The woman took out her wallet, extracted ten dollars and asked, "If I give you this money, will you buy some wine with it instead of food?"

"No, I had to stop drinking years ago", the homeless woman replied.

"Will you use it to go shopping instead of buying food?" the woman asked.

"No, I don't waste time shopping," the homeless woman said. "I need to spend all my time trying to stay alive."

"Will you spend this at a beauty salon instead of food?" the woman asked.

"Are you NUTS!" replied the homeless woman. "I haven't had my hair done in 20 years!"

"Well," said the woman, "I'm not going to give you the money. Instead, I'm going to take you out for dinner with my husband and myself tonight."

The homeless woman was astounded. "Won't your husband be furious with you for doing that? I know I'm dirty, and I probably smell pretty disgusting."

The woman replied, "That's okay. It's important for him to see what a woman looks like after she has given up shopping, hair appointments and wine."

*[forwarded by Yazdi Sidhwa, Texas]*

Last New Year's Eve, a lady stood up at the local pub just before midnight to announce that it was time to get ready for the celebrations.

At the stroke of midnight, she wanted every husband to be standing next to the one person who made his life worth living.

Well, it was kind of embarrassing. The bartender was almost crushed to death

*[forwarded by Salim Currim, Toronto, Canada]*

A woman awoke excitedly on Valentine's Day and announced enthusiastically to her husband,

"I just dreamt that you gave me a pearl necklace for Valentine's day! What do you think it means?"

With certainty in his voice, the man said, "You'll know tonight."

That evening the man came home with a small package and handed it to his wife. With anxious anticipation the woman quickly opened the package to find a book entitled - "The meaning of Dreams".

*[Anon]*



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# 16. Seyavash

## The Peacemaker

After his trial by fire, all the Iranian people viewed Seyavash as a hero. King Kay Kavus forgave Sudabeh for conspiring against Seyavash and there was peace in the royal household. But it lasted only for a short time. Sudabeh soon started to poison the King's mind against Seyavash. And the King once again became suspicious of his son, but for now, he kept his thoughts to himself.

Meanwhile, news reached the royal court that Afrasyab, the King of Turan, and his Turkish army had started war against the kingdoms near Iran as part of their plan to conquer the world. Summoning his courtiers, Kay Kavus said to them that it was time for him to attack Turan and put an end to Afrasyab's bullying once and for all. "If I don't stop him now," thundered Kay Kavus, "he will attack Iran and lay waste our territories as swiftly as an arrow flies from the bowstring!" But Kay Kavus' warriors were worried that the old King would not be able to win the fight and they urged him to send his warriors to lead his army instead.

Seyavash saw this as an opportunity to get away from the troubled royal household and convinced his father to let him go. Kay Kavus agreed, but only on the condition that Rostam, would accompany Seyavash. Rostam agreed and soon he and



## SUNDAY

## STORIES FROM THE

## Shahnameh

Seyavash were on their way followed by an army of thousands with warriors from all over the world.

The Iranian army marched towards the lands Afrasyab had conquered and set them free. The defeated Turkish lords retreated to Turan and told Afrasyab stories of their defeat at the hands of the Iranians. They begged the King to gather his army and prepare for battle. But Afrasyab ignored their concerns and berated them for their retreat.

Then, one day, Afrasyab had a nightmare. He awoke in the middle of the night screaming. He summoned his brother and told him about it, "It was a terrible dream. I have never seen anything so horrible. The world was full of snakes, and everywhere one looked there was only death and destruction. A large Iranian army destroyed my palace and the city around it. The warriors stormed into my court and threw me from the throne. They bound me and dragged me before Kay Kavus. But on his throne sat a young boy of barely fourteen! He raged and hacked at me with his sword!"

Afrasyab's brother called for the best dream interpreters in the kingdom and they all told Afrasyab that his dream was, in fact, a prophecy. "The young man in your dream is the young Iranian prince, Seyavash" they said, "When he was born his father had his horoscope cast and it was predicted that he will destroy Turan. If you fight him, you will bathe our fields in blood and the Persians will not leave a single Turk alive. You will regret such a battle for all eternity."

Afrasyab grew alarmed. "Instead of looking for world dominion", he said, "I have no choice but to sue for peace. I shall send Seyavash gold, silver, crowns, thrones and countless jewels, a hundred camel loads of carpets, Indian swords with silver scabbards, four hundred slaves, and I will give up the lands I conquered before. May be then disaster can be averted." Afrasyab told his messenger



Garsivaz, "Tell Seyavash that we have no quarrel with him and that we make no claim on Iran. Tell him I pray God will grant us peace and happiness and that his good fortune will bring joy to the world. Tell him to tell the King of Iran to soften his warlike ways. And flatter Rustam and give him gifts also."

Garsivaz took the King's proposal for peace to Seyavash and paraded all the King's gifts before him. Still, Rustam and Seyavash were suspicious. They thought over the proposal for a week. Then they told Garsivaz to take a message back to Afrasyab. "Tell the King, that he is right: we should wash all thoughts of vengeance from our minds. Tell him that if this is a trick, he should know that he will not win against us. But if he is sincere in his desire for peace, then he should withdraw from all the lands he has occupied, and he should let Rustam choose a hundred of his kin to be sent to us as hostages. These men will be guarantors of the King's good faith. I will stop preparing for war and I will write to Kay Kavus advising him to accept this peace as well."

When Afrasyab heard of this, he felt he had no choice but to do as Seyavash had asked in order to avert the war. So he sent his family to Seyavash and withdrew his armies, without excuse or delay, from the lands they had conquered.

Seyavash kept his end of the bargain and sent Rustam to Kay Kavus, with a letter explaining all he had accomplished and pleading with his father to accept the peace. But Kavus grew angry. He did



*Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi lives in Marina Del Rey, CA. She writes as a hobby*



Citation for Picture 1:

Seyavash and Rustam Capture Balkh, Painted by painter A/ folio 168v, Courtesy of Private Collection, appearing in Dick Davis (Trans.), *Fathers and Sons: Stories from the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi*, Volume II (Washington, DC: Mage Publishers, 1998), p. 31.

Citation for Picture 2:

Seyavash Receives Gifts from Afrasyab, Painted by painter A c. 1520-30 / folio 171r, Courtesy of Private Collection, appearing in Dick Davis (Trans.), *Fathers and Sons: Stories from the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi*, Volume II (Washington, DC: Mage Publishers, 1998), p. 37

not want peace with Afrasyab; he wanted him destroyed! He dismissed Rustam, and sent another warrior, Tus, to Seyavash with an angry letter. "If you don't want to fight this war, and if you want to keep your word to our enemy, then hand the army over to Tus and get yourself back here!"

On receiving his father's angry letter, Seyavash felt trapped. "If I make war on Turan, God and my own men will condemn me, for righteousness demands that I keep my word. And if I hand over the army to Tus and go back to Iran, Kavus will never forgive me." He summoned his two most trusted friends, Zangeh and Bahram, and told them what had happened. He asked Bahram to take command of the army and hand it over to Tus when he arrived.

Then he turned to Zangeh and said, "Zangeh, I ask you to undertake a heavy responsibility: go to Afrasyab's court and tell him what has happened. Return to him the hostages and the gifts he has sent. Tell him this truce has meant peace for him, but only pain for me. Say that I will not break the oath that I swore to him, and that if this means that I am to be exiled from Iran, then God is my refuge, the earth will be my throne and the heavens my crown. Tell him I cannot go back to my father. Ask him to allow me free passage through his territories to wherever God wills I should wander. I shall seek out some distant country where my name will remain hidden from Kavus, where I shall not have to hear his reproaches and where I can rest awhile, away from his fury."

Not knowing what the future held in store for him, Seyavash set out on his own.

**Next time: A New Life for Seyavash**

<sup>1</sup> Dick Davis (Trans.), *Fathers and Sons: Stories from the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi* Volume II (Washington DC: Mage Publishers, 2000), p. 26.

# M I L E S T O N E S as of JANUARY 15, 2008

## BIRTHS

Zeus Irani, a boy, to Niloufer and Jersis Irani in North Vancouver, BC on September 4, 2007.

Benita Patel, a girl, to Dilshad and Neville Patel, sister to Azita and Mehrin in Folsom, CA on September 30, 2007.

Raika Namdari, a girl, to Antonia and Rostam Namdari, sister to Ross and Raha-Banoo in Vancouver, BC on October 18, 2007.

Daanish Sethna, a boy, to Parizad and Khurshed Sethna in Houston, TX on November 7, 2007.

Yohann Guard, a boy, to Persis and Freddie Guard in Naperville, IL on November 16, 2007.

Delnaaz Sanjana, a girl, to Kaneeza and Ervad Zubin Bahmanshah Sanjana, granddaughter to Freny and Bahmanshah Sanjana (Houston, TX) and Freny Soli Bhagat (Mumbai) in Simi Valley, CA on November 29, 2007.

Shiraz Zareen Austin, (below) a girl, to Pheroz and Zareen Austin, sister to Rushad, granddaughter to Guloo and Marzban Austin (London,



Ontario) on their 36th wedding anniversary and Rupy and Lovji Hakim (New York), in Laval, Quebec, on December 2, 2007.

Isabel Ann Bhatia, a girl to Yasmin and Vik Bhathia, granddaughter to Bomi Zarolia, in Dallas, TX on December 13, 2007.

Zia Dumasias, a girl, to Binaifer and Malcolm Dumasias, sister to Anosh in Fremont, CA on December 17, 2007.

Jasmine Myriam Saklatvala, (right) a girl, to Mel Saklatvala and Jossia Belisle, proud grandparents Zerene and Jimmy Saklatvala and

Lucie Rajotte and Jocelyn Belisle, in Montreal, on December 31, 2007.



## NAVJOTES

Zahra, daughter of Kersasp and Tazeen Bharucha, sister of Cyrus, granddaughter of Rusi and Banoo Bharucha and Sam and Khursheed Behramfram in Richmond, BC on November 10, 2007.

Vahishta, daughter of Lily and Kaiomarz Suntoke, (Ontario), sister of Farha, in Mumbai, December 14, 2007.

Riaan and Liam, sons of Binaifer and Rustom Mirza, (Ontario) grandsons of Putli and Ervad Noshir Mirza, and Hoshang and late Silloo Surty in Mumbai on December 26, 2007.

Tishtar Daruwalla, daughter of Nina and Kersi Daruwalla (Cupertino, CA) in Mumbai, India on December 27, 2007.

## WEDDINGS

Padra Farhangi, son of Goli and late Mehraban Farhangi to Sarah Rebecca Waite in Vancouver, BC on July 7, 2007.

Shirin Parvez Dastoor, daughter of Parvez S. and Patricia Dastoor (Farmington, MO) to Chad Clarke (Gulfport, MS) in Belize, Central America on July 7, 2007.

Edul Dinyar Nakra to Helena Palacios Fernandez at the Glen Magna Farms, Danvers, MA on July 21, 2007.

Minocher Sethna, son of Perviz and Dinshaw Sethna to Sweta Chopra in Houston, TX on October 20, 2007.

Nargis Nirumval, daughter of Paterasp and Pervin Nirumvala to Demetrios Nikopoulos, son of Yanni and Arlene Nikopoulos in Las Vegas on October 20, 2007.

Kikhosrow Kadhoda, son of late Parvin and Rostam Kadhoda to Shirin Jangi, daughter of Faramarz and Viloo Jangi in Vancouver, BC on November 10, 2007.

Danesh Kothari, son of Yasmin and Kanti Kothari (Romeoville, IL) to Sirilak Bouttavong, daughter of Khampang and Narin Bouttavong on November 17, 2007.

Shara Godiwalla, daughter of Arnavaz and Adil Godiwalla (Houston) to Cyrus Subawalla, (Chicago), in Mumbai on November 29, 2007.

Nina Godiwalla, daughter of Arnavaz and Adil Godiwalla (Houston), to Boris Siperstein, in Spring, TX, on December 15, 2007.

## NAVAR AND MARTAB

Rushad Bharda, son of Havovi and Khushroo Bharda (Ontario), brother of Tanya in Udvada, India on December 23, 2007.

Ervad Varun Rayomand Bhadha, son of Rayomand and Bakhtavar Bhadha of California had his martab ceremony performed at the Sethna Agiary, Mumbai on December 22, 2007.

Ervad Zerkxis Zarrir Bhandara, son of Mobed Zarrir and Tenaz Bhandara of California had his martab ceremony performed at the Sethna Agiary, Mumbai, on December 28, 2007.

## DEATHS

Rusi Navroji Mistry, 75, husband of Katy Bhiwandiwalla, son of Navroji and Goolbai Mistry, brother of late Dinsha and late Saker, Viraf (UK), Homai (Toronto), Soona (Montreal), Roshan (Saskatoon) Arnavaz UK, Dara (Vancouver), in Sudbury, Ontario, July 5, 2007.

Freny Engineer, 72 years, wife of Bahadur Engineer, mother of Jeroo (Pervez) Patel of West Vancouver, BC on September 12, 2007.

Goolrukhi Homi Irani, 80 years, sister of Arnavaz Afreedom, mother of Zarira H. Irani, Dinaz Mizan, Adil (Ava) Irani and Firoza (Rohinton) Aref, grandmother of Cyrus and Zeenia Mizan, Rhea, Bizhan and Shaun Irani, Natasha, Narika and Rohmin Aref in Mumbai, India on September 13, 2007.

Goolshun Dastur, 94 years, mother of Khushrav Dastur and Roshan Muncherji, mother-in-law of Kashmira Dastur and Jamshed Muncherji, grandmother of Burgess and Narius on September 13, 2007.

Nariman Variava, 90 years, father of Veera Darayus Irani (Vancouver, BC) and grandfather of Kaizad and Yohan in Pune, India on September 28, 2007.

Goolmai Variava, 80 years, mother of Veera Darayus Irani (Vancouver, BC) and grandmother of Kaizad and Yohan in Pune, India on October 2, 2007.

Dinaz Bamji, wife of Minoo Navroji Bamji, mother of Anita Nadir Contractor, Lyla Raymie Daroga, Natasha Adil Tarapore and Phiroza Kaizad Setna in Karachi, Pakistan on October 16, 2007.

Homi Bhathena, husband of Neena, father of Aarish, brother of Noshir Bhathena (Houston, TX) and Shernaz Garcia in Khopoli, India on October 30, 2007.

Jimmy Khambatta, 97 years, father of Eric and Percy Khambatta in Burnaby, BC on October 30, 2007.

Roda Kersi Hodiwala, 86 years, mother of Oorvax Hodiwala (Vancouver, BC), mother-in-law of Kashmira, grandmother of Naozad and Rushad in Ahmedabad, India on November 15, 2007.

Manijeh Burjorji Mistry, mother of Byram (Arnavaz) Mistry (Toronto), grandmother of Afreed Mistry (Toronto), Delnavaz and Behzad Dastur (San Francisco), in Jabalpur, India on November 18, 2007.

Rohinton Jal Katgara, husband of Mickie, father of Diana, brother of Dinoo Homi Chikhlivala, Adi and late Rusi Katgara, in Toronto, December 2, 2007.

Seru Khory, wife of late Jal Khory, mother of Fredoon Khory (Toronto), Ruby Billimoria (Mumbai), grandmother of Cyrus and Anita Khory (Toronto), in Mumbai on December 3, 2007.

Esfandiar Afsar-Keshmiri, husband of Shirin Gheibi, father of Bardia (Novin), Atria (Khosrow) and grandfather of Athra in Tehran, Iran on December 9, 2007.

Mahyar Shahmardan Pourbahrami, husband of Homayoun Foladi Chami father of Narges Pourbahrami (Washington D.C), Esfandiar, Shahryar and Paridokht, grandfather to Nahid and Khodarahm Pourbahrami in Tehran, Iran on December 15, 2007.

Aflatoon Kabolizadeh, 90, husband of Mehrbai, father of Farhad, Mahshid, Mahvash, Farshid at the Inglewood Care facility, West Vancouver, on December 21, 2007.

Mahshid Ardeschiri Sharifabad, wife of Shahram Pouresfandiari, mother of Pouyan and sister of Manijeh Ardeschiri in California.

Bahram Ferydooni, husband of Parichehr Khanum, father of Veyastar Itav, Kateh, Hitasp in California.

Sohrab Rostam Roozbehi Aliabad, husband of Jahanbanoo Shahryari, father of Behnaz, Mahnaz, Nahid, Tabandeh, Farkhondeh, Farahnaz, and Rostam

## Matrimonials

**FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties; We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna e.mail rrrivetna@aol.com.**

Female, 36, 5' 5", worked in food/hotel management in India. Currently airline flight attendant, based in Vancouver. Contact 778-863 2216. [F08-5].

Male, 29, 5' 11", M.D. in Internal Medicine, board certified, second year in gastro-enterology. Well rounded, with interests in sports, politics. Call 908-788 5379. [M08-6].

Male, 27, B. Arch. and M.F.A. in Interactive Design and Game Development; working as an Architect in Atlanta, GA, creating 2D and 3D computer presentations. Enjoys movies, video games, music, socializing, loves learning about new hardware/software and tinkering with computers. Well-traveled in Asia, US and Europe, with strong family values, broad-minded, fun-loving. Parents live in Bahrain, tel: 00973 17715221, email manijeh@batelco.com.bh. In US, contact 912-224 4232 or framarz@gmail.com. [M08-7].

### Looking for a Soul Mate?

Try these matrimonial sites and services,  
<http://matrimonial.zoroastrianism.com> -  
[www.TheParsiMatch.com](http://www.TheParsiMatch.com)

[www.shaadi.com](http://www.shaadi.com),

Mrs Gool Banaji, Parel, Mumbai,  
[goolpesi@gmail.com](mailto:goolpesi@gmail.com),

Mrs Serah Kotval, Dadar, Mumbai  
 Tel 91 22 2142 3570

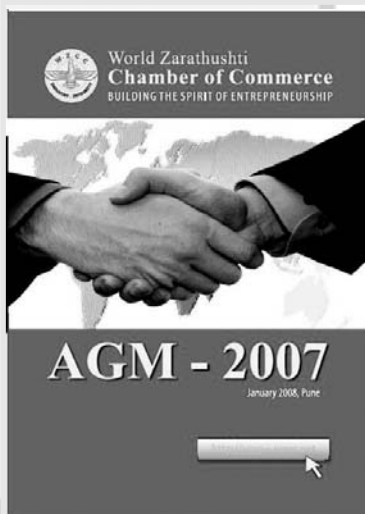
Please send all submissions for  
 "Milestones" to Mahrukh Motafram, 2390  
 Chanticleer Drive, Brookfield, WI 53045,  
[mmotafram@msn.com](mailto:mmotafram@msn.com), Tel: 262-821-  
 5296. NOTE: If no year is specified, it  
 implies "within the past 12 months."





# World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce

## WZCC Global AGM in Pune a Grand Success- JANUARY 12th and 13th 2008



The Zarathushti community has been at the forefront of pioneering entrepreneurship in India for over 200 years. Sir Jamshedji Jeejeebhoy was called the Merchant Prince of Mumbai, the Wadias were the first shipbuilders, and Jamsetji Tata started making steel despite being ridiculed by the British. Today, we're celebrating the launch of the Nano by Ratan Tata! Not just business, but the Zarathushti spirit of enterprise has touched all of society's concerns - medical, educational, social, cultural - with a host of public service institutions.

The World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC), a global body for entrepreneurs and professionals, started in 2000, hosted a two-day event in Pune (Jan 12/13), to celebrate the Zarathushti spirit of enterprise.

Flagging off the event was a factory visit to Tata Motors, where the sophisticated manufacturing process, complemented with superlative arrangements, made it a morning to remember.

**JANUARY 12th** At a Gala Night held on Saturday at the Ladies' Club, the *Honorary Membership of WZCC* was conferred upon **Dr. JJ Irani**, (photo left with Bomy Boyce, President WZCC) former Tata Steel MD and Director, Tata Sons. In his keynote address, Dr. Irani stressed, "*Vision without action is a mere dream, action without vision is a waste of time, but vision with action can change the world.*" Dr. Jamshed J. Irani, one of the most renowned personalities in the iron and steel industry in India, is a man who is made of sterling mettle! Born on June 2, 1936, Dr. Irani obtained an M.Sc (Geology) from Nagpur University, followed by M.Met and a Ph D from the University of Sheffield, UK. He began his career in 1963 as a Senior Scientific Officer at BISRA, Sheffield, rising to the position of Head, Physical Metallurgy Division. Upon his return to India he joined The Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd. (TISCO) as an Assistant to the Director, Research & Development, and became Managing Director in 1992 retiring in 2001 as MD of Tata Steel. Presently, he's a Director on the Board of Tata Steel.



At the start of the evening, **Adi Engineer, Pune Chapter Chair**, asserted, "Enterprise is the soul of growth for the community and country. This is a wonderful time for Zarathushti youth to come to the forefront of enterprise and fulfill the promise made by our forefathers of enriching society like the proverbial pinch of sugar in the glass of milk!"

**Bomy Boyce, WZCC President**, said WZCC has become a conduit for "opportunities unlimited". elaborating, "Every time I talk to someone, a new idea crops up. The pool of ideas is so rich that we're sitting on a pot of gold." Rohinton Rivetna, the Founding President of WZCC cautioned: "The Zarathushti spirit of enterprise is in a state of slumber. We need to awaken the giant." Minoo Shroff, President of the India Chamber, urged budding entrepreneurs to break out of their shell. "After all, everybody began small," he explained.

**Dr. KB Grant**, (photo left with Minoo Shroff, Chairman BPP) one of India's most eminent doctors,





## WZCC

and one of the first MDs in Pune. was awarded the WZCC's *Lifetime Achievement Award*. The secret of his success: "Nothing

is impossible. Why are we pessimistic about our community? We still have the fire in us!" Dr. K.B. Grant, is the founder, Chairman and Managing Trustee of Grant Medical Foundation, the institution that manages Pune's Ruby Hall Clinic, which he started in 1959 with 4 beds and has been its driving force since then. His vision and dedication facilitated the growth of Ruby Hall Clinic multi-fold from a 4-bed nursing home to a 550-bed hospital. Dr. Grant, Head, Chief Physician and Cardiologist of Ruby Hall Clinic was instrumental in bringing the latest technology to Pune: *Cobalt Angiography, Angioplasty, CT Scan, MRI Scan Bypass Surgery, the latest addition being the Linear Accelerator with Image Guided Radiotherapy (IGRT) - the only one in the whole of India and Southeast Asia.*

### ANNUAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

**Phil Madon, Director and Australia Chapter Chair,**

outlined the process for the WZCC Annual Recognition Awards, reiterating: "No dream is ever too small - no dream is ever too big." *The Annual Recognition Awards* were conferred upon Dr. Roshan Bhappu (Outstanding Zarathushti Professional), Khodi Irani (Outstanding Zarathushti Entrepreneur) and Shayan Italia (Outstanding Young Entrepreneur/Professional)



**Dr. Roshan Bhappu**, not present to receive his award for '*Outstanding Zarathushti Professional*', was born in Karachi, Pakistan. He received his undergraduate, graduate and doctorate degrees in Metallurgy from the Colorado School of Mines. In 1957 after completing his studies, he became a US citizen. To put it pointedly, Roshan IS the Mining Industry! He is globally recognized and continues to receive awards and recognitions on a regular basis. He is a Professor of Metallurgy and has been the Director, President, Vice President and Chairman of several companies and working committees. Author of more than 100 technical papers and several hundred unpublished reports for

different clients, he has published three books and has several patents to his credit. He was elected Fellow of the Society of Sigma Xi, and is listed in 'American Men of Science' and 'Leaders of American Science', a special consultant to the United Nations and World Bank. He was honored with the Medal of Merit, American Mining Hall of Fame and is amongst the 100 living engineers worldwide who has been selected as an Honorary Member of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers for over 50 years of outstanding service.

**Khodi Irani**, (photo above) born in Pune, and now living in the US with his own thriving engineering business, was delighted to accept the *Outstanding Zarathushti Entrepreneur Award* in person. He confessed: "Entrepreneurship is a way of life and a cocktail of belief, confidence, a great idea, lack of resources, and many sleepless nights! The evolution of Zarathushti enterprise comes from Zarathushti philanthropy. Years ago, the late Jehangir Daruwalla donated money for engineering seats at Sangli and countless Zarathushti engineers like me owe our careers to him." Khodadad Irani, or Khodi, as he is known to friends, is Founder-President and owner of MKM Engineering Inc. - a highly specialized environmental engineering company located in Stafford, Texas.. In 1982 he was awarded a B.S. in Engineering and a M.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Akron, Ohio. In 1991 he set up MKM I as a two-person operation, he and his wife working from home, with \$100,000 revenue, By 2006 it had grown from a small US-based company to a global competitor in the international market with revenues of approximately \$80 million. In November 2007, Khodi was recognized by SSAC (Seven South Asian Countries) as a business leader.

**Shayan Italia** was unable to receive his award for '*Outstanding Young Entrepreneur/Professional*' in person. Shayan is a musician, artist, composer, philanthropist and a proud Zarathushti. After acquiring a degree in International Trade Practices and Procedures, he went on to study sound engineering and later Mastered in Music Business Management. Shayan learnt how to set up a music business and grow it successfully. Along the way he also came to realize that nobody could sing his songs the way he could. His songs, '*Reflection*' and '*Soul*' have



# World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce



brought him immense popularity. He has been interviewed by Sir David Frost, coupled with a live performance, and says of the WZCC honor bestowed upon him: "I'm deeply humbled. I live by a simple saying, I've come to learn from experience. And it goes: If someone says something cannot be done, it's just their way of saying they cannot do it! I hope my music, in time, will touch all the corners of the world and the Zarathushti flame lights up within the music world which, till today, is carried high and mighty by Zarathushti musicians like Zubin Mehta and the late Freddie Mercury."

Adding a touch of entertainment to the Gala Night was actor **Bomi Dotivala** of 'Munnabhai...' fame, with his lovely wife, **Dolly**, who volunteered along with their talented team to stage a series of Adi Marazban-inspired skits, bringing the house down! A sumptuous buffet dinner followed.

**JANUARY 13th**, saw the WZCC's daylong conclave of business persons and professionals with interactive sessions, networking and interest group discussions, at the modern Ruby Hall Clinic conference facility, with **CEO Bomi Bhote** welcoming the WZCC delegates.

An inspired session on entrepreneurship was presided over by **WZCC Vice President Kersi Limathwalla**, former **WZCC India Director Dadi Mistry**, **Pune Chapter Chair, Adi Engineer** and **North Texas Chapter Chair Firdosh Mehta**. (photo left, top) Post-lunch, dynamic group interactions across varied interest groups like manufacturing, services, finance, etc moderated by **WZCC International Director for Global and External Relations, Zareen Karani Araoz**, saw several business connections being explored.



## CONCLUSION

**Zarine Commissariat, WZCC Director and Corporate Secretary**, (photo left middle) ably compeered the event on both days. WZCC Directors, along with several participating Chapter Chairs and delegates from all over the world, assisted with their inputs. However, the resounding success of the event was due to the untiring efforts of the committed team of the Pune Chapter, very ably headed by **Adi Engineer, Director, Tata Power**, with several young members volunteering their talents.

Commending the WZCC for its efforts in organizing the Global AGM in Pune, and applauding the Zarathushti spirit of enterprise, **Sonia Gandhi**, in an officially released statement, said: "*Businesses run by Zoroastrians stand out for their generous philanthropy, their strong sense of social responsibility, and their desire to be involved in nation building.*" Congratulatory messages were also received from **Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's office** and from **Industry Minister, Kamal Nath**.

All these messages and several global reports are part of the memorable souvenir that was prepared by **Shernaaz Engineer, Member, Managing Committee, Mumbai Chapter** and **Editor - WZCC-I Publications**, along with **Yazdi Tantra, WZCC Technical Director**. (photos third and fourth on left)

*Report prepared by Shernaaz Engineer and photos courtesy Yazdi Tantra*



# BUSINESS

## IRAs - Ignorance can be hazardous to your Wealth

Farokh Billimoria, MBA, CPA/PFS, CFP®

*(First in a series of three articles)*

Yes, I do realize this is an international publication and that countries other than the USA do not have Individual Retirement Arrangements (IRAs). However, there is such widespread misinformation and misunderstanding on this vital subject that it certainly merits awareness of the part of readers who do, in fact, own IRAs now or may inherit one in the future. When it comes to the proper handling of IRAs, ignorance can indeed **be hazardous to your Wealth**.

There is much information that needs to be communicated to the readers. As a result, by necessity, this article will be a series of three articles appearing in consecutive issues of the Fezana Journal. In the first article, I will address the eight basic errors made by people with IRA accounts. The second article will address the proper handling of IRA accounts owned by a decedent - by a surviving spouse, or another non-spouse beneficiary. The third article will cover the Roth IRA, its intricacies, its power, and how to use it to your maximum advantage to how to convert a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA in 2010 without having to meet any qualifications, and without having the amount converted becoming immediately taxable.



The warning for all IRA owners: Handle IRAs with the utmost care for particular situations, get professional advice before you do anything. An IRA is like an egg, once it is cracked, you cannot put it back together. The ramifications of incorrect decisions and actions can come back to haunt you and you could find yourself subject to penalties and taxes that could set you back financially. This is unfortunate because, with a little bit of planning and preparation, all the aggravation could be avoided. Do check the credentials and expertise of the professional you hire, and when in doubt, get a second, maybe even a third opinion.

### IRAs - TEN BASIC ERRORS

There are several mistakes you can make when it comes to handling IRAs. The ten listed below are the most common:

1. Not checking Beneficiary Designations periodically, and
2. Not checking the Custodial Agreement at all.

Both these documents should be checked periodically to make sure that they reflect your current personal situation and current tax laws. Make sure your beneficiaries are properly named and you are comfortable with the defaults established by your IRA account custodian. Most IRA owners have never reviewed the custodial agreement, assuming that the professional who set up the account for them has. In almost all cases, that assumption is entirely wrong. So please review the document and make sure you are comfortable with the defaults established by the custodian, especially those pertaining to how the account would be handled if you died without naming any beneficiaries for your IRA.

3. Assuming that, exceptions that apply to your company retirement plans also apply to IRAs, or vice versa. The 10% early withdrawal penalty exception for education, the first time home buyers and health insurance for the unemployed apply only to IRAs, whereas spousal waivers and the age 55 exception apply only to company plans.
4. Perhaps no other area is subject to misinterpretation and, therefore, penalties than the "60 Day Rule." Yes, you can withdraw money from your IRA prior to 59½ days as long as you re-deposit the funds within 60 days of withdrawal. BUT, you can only do so once a year AND the period for two successive withdrawals has got to exceed twelve months. A lot of IRA owners are unaware of the second requirement.
5. Not taking your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) by the required Beginning Date (RBD.) You HAVE to start taking the RMD from your IRA account no later than the RBD, which is "April 1 of the year following the year in which you reach 70½ years of age." In most cases, you are better off not waiting till that date as you may find yourself having to take two distributions that year and perhaps finding yourself in a higher tax bracket. To avoid that possibility, most IRA owners take their RMDs in the year they turn 70½. No matter what date you decide on, once you qualify, you have to remember to take those RMDs every year. If you forget, the penalty is 50% of the money that was supposed to have been withdrawn. That's not a typo - it is 50%! So far, the IRS has been willing



# BUSINESS

*Farokh Billimoria has over 25 years of experience in financial/investment advisory services. In 2001, Farokh merged his practice with Summit Wealth Management, Inc., a fee-only advisory firm with ten offices nationwide and over \$1.25 billion of assets under management. He currently*



*serves as Summit's Chief Investment Officer. He has an MBA in Finance from the University of Chicago, and is certified in public accounting (CPA) and financial planning (CFP®). He has also obtained the Personal Finance Specialist (PFS) designation awarded by the American Inst. of CPAs. In September, 2007 Farokh published a book, *On Golden Pond...or Up the Creek? Making the Right Choices for Your Retirement Security*. The book was a finalist for the Best Books of 2007 in the Business - Personal Finance category. Farokh and his wife Huty reside in Palatine, IL and have two grown sons. Farokh can be reached through the book's website [GoldenPondRetirement.com](http://GoldenPondRetirement.com)*

to listen to excuses (no matter how lame) from people who inadvertently forgot to take the RMDs and has waived the penalty but you cannot count on the IRS to be "kinder and gentler" indefinitely.

6. Not understanding the "Five Year Rule." the most misunderstood of all the rules pertaining to IRAs. In spite of all you have heard from well-meaning, but ill-informed, friends and relatives, just remember that the ONLY time this rule applies is when the IRA owner passes away without a designated beneficiary. A designated beneficiary is a named beneficiary with a specific life expectancy. A charity is not considered to be a designated beneficiary. If you die without a designated beneficiary for your IRA account, then the entire amount has to be withdrawn from the IRA within five years or be subject to a penalty of 50% of the amount that was not withdrawn.

7. Another area of much mis-information is that you can have a trust as the beneficiary of your IRA, especially if you are worried about spendthrift beneficiaries. It is acceptable to name the surviving spouse as your primary beneficiary and your revocable living trust as the contingent beneficiary. In such cases, the trust must be a "see-through" trust.

**A "see-through" trust is one that meets the following requirements:**

- a. Becomes irrevocable at death
- b. Beneficiaries are identifiable
- c. Valid under state law
- d. Copy of trust must be provided to the institution no later than October 31 of the year following the year of death.

8. Using the wrong Life Expectancy Tables. There are three tables:

- a. Uniform Lifetime Table are to be used by unmarried participants, married participants whose spouses are not more than 10 years younger, and married participants whose spouses are not the sole beneficiaries of their IRAs.
- b. Joint Life and Last Survivor Expectancy Table for use by participants whose spouses are more than 10 years younger AND are the sole beneficiaries of their IRAs.
- c. Single Lifetime Table for use by beneficiaries.

Most of the confusion arises when an IRA owner dies and the surviving spouse or other beneficiaries use the wrong table to calculate the RMDs.

9. Naming minor children as beneficiaries without making arrangements for guardianship or creating trusts to handle the IRA account in case of premature death. Most people believe in the "keeping my fingers crossed" strategy, i.e. hoping that they will not die before the children come of age. However, if you do die prematurely, the IRA could be frozen and off-limits to your children until they become adults (age 21 in most states.)

10. Forgetting the "basis" in your IRA account. If you have made contributions to your traditional IRA that were not deductible on your tax returns, then you have to keep track of such contributions by filing Form 8606 so that you will not be taxed on that amount (or portion thereof) when you withdraw the funds from the IRA. This problem is more prevalent when a beneficiary takes over a decedent's IRA, although some IRA owners do seem to forget to file the tax form or keep track of the non-deductible contributions made in the past.

So there you have it - the ten most common errors in the handling of IRAs. Hopefully, the knowledge gained from this article will enable you to avoid the pitfalls that lie in wait for the uninformed. The next article will deal with the proper handling of a decedent's IRA - an area that has severe financial ramifications for beneficiaries who do not comply with the complex rules established by Congress.

# BUSINESS

## Coming Together to Work Together Roundtable

**Jan 15, 2008, at Mancherji Joshi Hall of the Athornan Madressa,  
Dadar, Mumbai**

On January 15, 2008, over 50 people from USA/Canada, UK, Iran, Australia, and India came together at the third Round Table in Mumbai, at the Mancherji Joshi Hall, Dadar for discourse and action for a better tomorrow for our worldwide community.

Remembering the lesson of the "Barsom twigs" from our Yasna rituals (demonstrating strength in togetherness), we know we can accomplish much by working together.



The first "Coming Together Roundtable" [FEZANA Journal, Fall 2005] was held in London on June 28, 2005, at the Seventh World Congress. At this Roundtable, leaders of Zarathushti organizations collectively developed a vision, and a list of "Issues, Challenges and Projects". The Second Roundtable was held in Mumbai on January 8, 2007 [FEZANA Journal, Spring 2007 and Parsiana, August 21, 2007] to follow up on these and other items affecting our global community. At Roundtable 2008, the outcomes of Roundtable 2007, were discussed, new issues/projects, were discussed and action items and assignments were developed.



The purpose of these Roundtables is to "Come Together and Work Together" in the spirit of Hamazori. As a "Community Without Borders" in today's shrinking world, ease of travel and communication afford us opportunities to Come Together which were un-thought of in earlier ages.

The day opened with a Benediction and presentation on Hamazori by Er Dr Ramiyar Karanjia (with microphone in photo left) followed by opening remarks and background to the Coming Together and Working Together Roundtables by Rohinton Rivetna. (with microphone photo pg 92 top)

The following points, were discussed at the meeting:

1. Self-Introductions and General Comments by Participants
2. Global networking - Yazdi Tantra
3. World Congress RFP - Rustom Kevala

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4. Interfaith and UN Programs - Behram Pastakia
5. Coordination of Welfare Program - Dinshaw Tamboly
6. World Wide Service Program - Behram Pastakia
7. Follow up and coordination - Parsi Resource Group and Freyaz Shroff
8. Cultural Projects - Homi Dhalla
9. Zarathushti Pravasis, Duties, Rights and Privileges- Behram Pastakia
10. Network of Mobeds - Parsi Resource Group (PRG)
11. Network of Youth /Passing the Torch to the Next Generation - PRG
12. Infrastructure Breakdown/Rebuild - PRG
13. Interfaith Marriages
14. Cultivation of the Ethic of Collective Giving
15. Code of Civil Conduct/Civility
16. Establishing local mandals in Mumbai



Commitments were made from among the participants of the Roundtable, to fund one administrative staff person to handle Roundtable follow up work.. With matching sponsorship from Minoo Shroff., Chair BPP, enough funds were pledged to support one staff person for 2 years, to work on Roundtable and WZCC work. Yazdi Tantra (of On-Lyne Systems, Mumbai) has offered to set up a link to "Coming Together Roundtable" at [www.zoroastrians.net](http://www.zoroastrians.net) website, which he hosts.

It was gratifying to see the sense of cooperation expressed by all the participants. Thanks were expressed to Er. Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia and trustees of the Mancherji Joshi Hall of the Dadar Athornan Madressa for providing the excellent facilities of the Madressa, to Jimmy Mistry and his volunteers from PRG -- for their administrative help and taking notes. The presence of FEZANA president Dr. Rustom Kevala, (photo left below)) added value to the gathering.

A detailed report will appear in the SUMMER 2008 issue of the FEZANA Journal

*Source Rohinton Rivetna .*



# BUSINESS

## ANNUAL PRAVASI DIVAS- NEW DELHI,

JANUARY 7th to 9th 2008- Lord Karan Billimoria awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award.



Lord Karan Bilimoria, founder and Chairman of Cobra Beer received the renowned Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award, 2008 from President Pratibha Patil on the closing night of the Annual Pravasi Bhartiya Divas conference. (photo left)

The Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award, now in its 6th year, is given to notable overseas Indians who have made a significant impact in their respective fields and recognizes their international achievement and contributions towards strengthening India's foreign relations.

Past winners include the Right Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth (former Prime Minister of Mauritius), Bharrat Jagdeo (former President of Guyana), Lord Meghnad Desai (leading Economist and Labor politician) and Vikram Seth (the author).

Bilimoria is one of the youngest peers in the House of Lords and the first ever Zarathushti Parsi to sit in the House of Lords

Lord Billimoria, on receiving the award said "I am honored and delighted to receive this award. The list of past winners speaks for itself; they are the best of the best, and proof of something I have been saying for a long time that the Indian Diaspora is an amazing success story, with Indians reaching the top in virtually every field around the world.

Indian American astronaut Sunita Williams, and Prime Minister of Mauritius, Navinchandra Rangoolam also received the awards.

Source AsianImage, January 17, 2008



WZCC members were also represented at the PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS. In photo from left Dr Behram Pastakia, (Maryland)

Lord Karan Billimoria, (England) Bomy Boyce, (Ontario) Chair, WZCC, Firdosh Mehta, (Weatherford, TX), Chair WZCC, North Texas Chapter.



# On Golden Pond Or Up The Creek?

BOOKS  
&  
ARTS

**"Making the Right Choices for Your Retirement Security" by F. Bill Billimoria**

**Published by Synergy Books**

**Pages 184 Price \$21.95**

**Reviewed by Homi Gandhi**

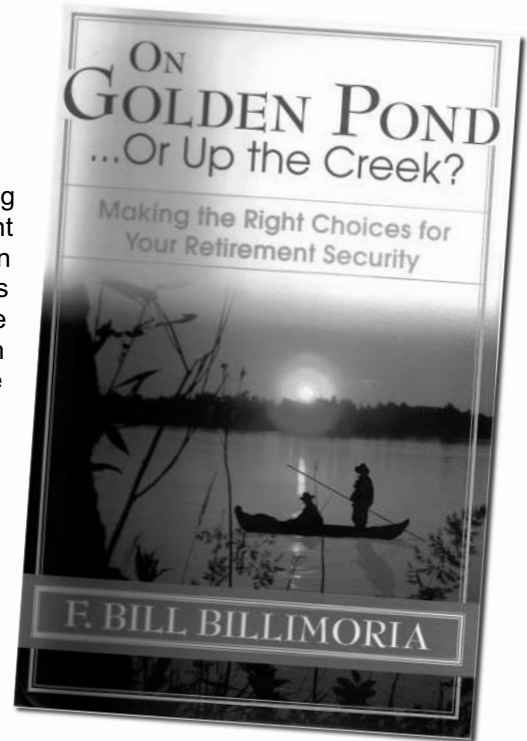
There is a large explosion in retirement planning literature in the last decade, especially with the constant use of Internet. There is not a single source where one can find all the retirement options or vehicles. However, this is one book that makes one think very seriously about the steps to pursue if one wishes to reach to the "Golden Pond". As the author so rightly points out, the alternative is "up the Creek!"

This book is indeed different from others in the sense that it does not give you all possible financial options. Nor does it preach "thou shall do this" or "thou shall not do this". And after disclosing the startling statistical fact that "only 4 % of all adults turning 65 are financially independent and secure", the author warns that this book is going to take "a sharp right-hand turn away from its predecessors".

The author walks the reader through "eight (8) great barriers" preventing 96 % of people from reaching Golden Pond. And he further describes 26 common pitfalls in investing for Golden Pond. If the reader reads carefully and follows through the steps described in these two chapters, the reader will be well on the way to the Golden Pond. That does not mean that other chapters have less importance in this book. Each of the other chapters brings an additional value to the process. And it is the process that is important. As the author rightly says the satisfaction is in "enjoying this journey". The author has articulated the process so well that one does not feel overwhelmed by the financial details and terminology.

While reading chapter 10 "Getting Professional Help", I noticed a little inaccuracy about the "Registered Representatives (RRs)" in the brokerage industry. Most of the differences between "financial advisor" and "investment advisor" as described by the author are accurate but while comparing the registration and continuing education requirements between the two, it is not correct to say that "no such education requirement exists in the brokerage industry". RRs are licensed after completing Series 7 tests. Additionally, there are also State licensing requirements. And there is a periodic continuing education program and, if it is not satisfied by the RRs, they may run into not earning their commission income.

I enjoyed reading the book not only because I work in the financial services industry but also because I used it as a back checking for myself as to how I had started my own retirement planning and how those barriers and pitfalls had affected my own performance at different stages in my life. However, I found the abrupt end in Chapter 11 "Conclusion" as a kind of "sudden death". This chapter of less than 200 words gave me a feeling of anti-climax. But then I thought that it might be what the author intended to do. May be the author wants the reader to begin or continue his/her journey to the Golden Pond from here!



*Homi Gandhi is a Principal Examiner in the Risk Oversight & Operations Regulation Department of Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) after working for 24 years in the Regulation Division of the New York Stock Exchange. Homi is a TATA scholar and a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales*

# Confessions to a Serial Womaniser: secrets of the world's inspirational women

BOOKS  
&  
ARTS

Author Zerbanoo Gifford

Copyright: 2007

Publisher PHACT in conjunction with Blacker Limited

Pages: 407 Price UK 12.99 pounds

ISBN: 9781897739310

Reviewed by Aban Rustomji

Ever since I was a child I have had a keen interest in biography, and as an adult I have been especially interested in biographies of women. Over the past twenty years, the evolving genre of feminist biography has produced a whole host of books and articles that highlight the personal and professional struggles of modern women viewed through the lens of women's historical struggle against discrimination and sexism.

So I am delighted to recommend *Confessions to a Serial Womaniser: secrets of the world's inspirational women* by Zerbanoo Gifford. In the first venture of its kind, the book contains the wisdom of over 200 of the world's most dynamic women who speak frankly about everything: their mothers, families, education, men, gurus, love, feminism, fairy stories, failures and successes. In an era that worships celebrity, this is a celebration of true celebrities - women who will leave a lasting legacy enriching the lives of future generations. The spirit of this book is aptly conveyed by its subtitle. The profiles in this book, two years in the research, display the astonishing variety and diversity of women - women who excelled whether it is in the world of business or government, the arts or science, academia or religion.

Zerbanoo Gifford's career as an author, social campaigner, and a champion of human rights of women and children is correspondingly diverse. Deciding which women should be included must have been a daunting and a time-consuming task. Rather than emphasize traditional markers of achievement, she focuses on how women define success themselves. The title of the book is attributed to Zerbanoo's husband who declared she must be exhausted meeting so many "inspirational women and was cautioned she would be become a serial womaniser if she didn't call a halt."

The profiles are arranged loosely in chapter headings such as *"Today's Heroines," "Just like Mother," "Life's Lessons Life" etc.* The format of the book is a visual treat. Each woman has her photograph on the left--four to eight on a page--and a corresponding short write up on the right side of the book. The short profiles are substantially based on information gathered in an interview setting. Quotes chosen from individuals echo the collective sensibility of women who have taken the world on and make things happen. An index at the end of the book entitled, "Galaxy of Stars," lists names and how many times they are featured in the book.

Zerbanoo Gifford clearly made an effort to display a variety of personal and professional backgrounds. At the beginning of each chapter, the author shares remarkable stories that have shaped the lives of these women. In one cluster "Working Girls," Gifford profiles sixty women who discuss their own careers and are trail blazers who have exploded the myth that certain jobs are naturally destined for men.

For example, the first one mentioned in the index "Galaxy of Stars" immediately caught my attention. Home town Quetta girl Aban Marker Kabraji, is a modern global leader in the field of conservation. She talks about her "implicit



and explicit support of her husband... that support meant not just that I went and did my own thing, but that he adapted his life to mine." In a later profile her focus is on how she motivates the unconventional leaders of tomorrow. "I look for leaders and potential leaders: usually these are the rebels, who are intellectually challenging and difficult." Her remarks are incisive, clear thinking and proactive. Later in the book I discovered Maja Daruwalla, Director of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, also born in Quetta and Sam Manekshaw's daughter who argues that the "real heroines are the unsung young women who left their families and traveled vast distances to work as domestic help in somebody else's home". Many of us know Glenda Jackson, an Oscar winning actress is also a Labour MP, but how many of us realize Barbara Follett, wife of the bestseller Ken Follett uses her energy and resources to offer training and funds to aspiring Labour Party women in search of winnable Parliamentary seats. And if you know anything about the Kurds, you'll have heard of Zakia Hakki, but few know that she was the first woman judge in the Middle East and is now a member of the Iraqi government. The magical presence of these women is captured, in a set of specially commissioned portrait by Jerroo Roy, *Women - a world of inspiration*. The painting was on view at the National Portrait Gallery in September 2007.

Buy, read, and gift this remarkable book and hope Zerbano Gifford is on track for an equally attractive volume 2 as there are a number of women in the US, Pakistan, S Africa--in fact all over the world--that are worthy of recognition.

Zerbano Gifford has authored numerous books, including *The Golden Thread*; *Asian Experiences in post-Raj Britain*; *Dadabhai Naoroji: Britain's first non-white Member of Parliament*; *Thomas Clarkson, and the Campaign against the Slave Trade*; *Asian Presence in Europe*; and *Celebrating India's 50 Year Anniversary*, which accompanied a television series. The proceeds from the sale of her latest book, *Confessions to Serial Womaniser*, will go to The ASHA Centre, a charity fostering greater peace and understanding amongst diverse communities, especially the young. The book can be purchased online at [www.asha-foundation.org](http://www.asha-foundation.org)

*Aban Rustomji, a Library Media Specialist, lives in Houston where she is currently involved in a library that houses books on Zarathushti religion, history, literature and culture at the Zoroastrian Association of Houston.*

## THE MOTHER AND OTHER SHORT STORIES

By Khorshed R. Javeri

A book of short stories that has caught the fancy of the reading public. The style is reminiscent of authors like Ruskin Bond and R.K. Narayan-simple but compelling; as are the commonplace characters and situations to which every reader can relate.

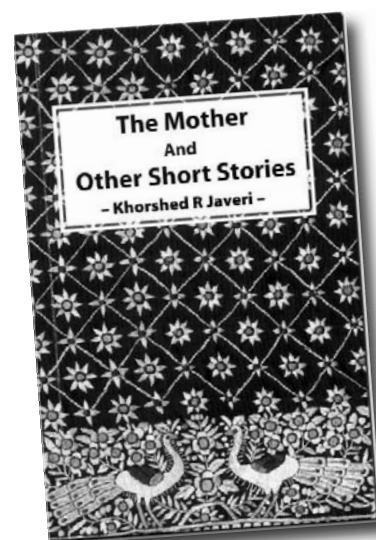
The stories have a delightful Parsi flavor. They satisfy in the older reader the yearning for old world values, which sadly today are disappearing before his or her eyes. The young, will by reading them discover the world of their parents and grand parents. A "must-read" that will delight both young and old.

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## Letters to the Editor

Thank you for the excellent FALL issue of the FEZANA Journal. The formatting and creative use of space was much appreciated, as you have packed the issue full of material! I have received a number of calls about the excellent production. The Journal production and artistic team as well should be congratulated.

We collected such a diverse set of materials on the Oral History Project - as we worked on it, reading through them was one thing, but to see them produced with pictures and bios, is entirely another. Well done! The photos of Armaity Patel's ancestors are beautifully reproduced. I could hardly believe it, since these are from the 1800s and early 1900s! I'd like to thank all the authors of the articles published, for their contributions, and taking time out of their busy lives to join in this effort.

While I was aware of some of the events going on, it is very enjoyable indeed to read in depth about events I could not attend, such as the Impact Conference. Such perspectives and commentary, such as your interview with eminent Zarathushtis "What would you like your grand-child to say about the community" are extremely useful and give us a sense of the vision of our leadership. If one wants "Taja Khabar" the Zoroastrian Associations (ZAGNY, ZAPANJ, ZAGBA etc) have very nice short newsletters. The issues of the Journal provide insight on varying topics and persons who are contributing to the community. As such, they are not magazines, they are keepers!

Many thanks for providing us with another beautiful and densely packed Issue.

Regards

*Nawaz Merchant, New York*

Happy New Year to the Editor and the entire crew members of FEZANA Journal - the most interesting and professional publication of all news journals I receive during the year. I absolutely adore the style and contents and look forward to the next issue every time.

Thank you very much for your hard and innovative efforts to inform the members of happenings in the community. Thank you very much. Please keep up with the good work you do. My prayers and best wishes are with you all.

*Pervez P. Patel, New York*



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ZOROASTRIAN DELEGATION TO DELIVER PANEL DISCUSSION AT UN HEADQUARTERS AS PART OF 52<sup>ND</sup>  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)**

***Technology and private sector bringing solutions in financing to impoverished communities***

**NEW YORK, Feb 15, 2008** – In 2001, the World Bank reported more than 2 billion people lived on less than \$2 per day. Why does extreme poverty of this nature still exist in spite of decades of immense international charitable work? The Zoroastrian delegation intends to address the crux of this question at this year's CSW on Friday, Feb. 29, from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. They will show that the key to this answer is the manner in which development work in impoverished communities has been taking place. The prevalent top-down approach of charity usually empowers the "givers," in most cases government bodies, as opposed to the individuals in need. The panel will present an example for an alternative approach, namely micro-financing, where the power imbalance is corrected and the true work of development, that is empowering individuals to re-build their own lives and communities, can begin.

The panel will consist of Afreed Mistry, Mantreh Atashband and Shekufeh Zonji (from Toronto, Canada). From cell phone technology to partnerships between the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the panel will discuss innovative ways in which empowering financial services have been and can be provided to rural communities. They will make a case for how the private sector can play a pivotal role in scaling up development endeavors given their vast access to resources. The panelists bring with them a breadth of experience and hope to contribute to the important discourse on resource allocation for gender equality and empowerment that will be taking place at this year's CSW.

The session is open to the public and will take place on the 10th floor of the UN Church Centre on 44th St. and 1st Avenue, New York, opposite United Nations Headquarters.

Zoroastrians have long served as effective bridge builders in interfaith dialogue as they see from their own faith, traditions of truth, righteousness, charity, beneficence and respect for creation reflected in traditions of the religions of both the occident and the orient. Zoroastrianism, founded circa 1500 BCE, is credited to be the oldest monotheistic religion, influencing post-exilic Judaism, which adopted some Zoroastrian beliefs such as the ultimate victory of good over evil and the resurrection of souls. These perceptions were then transmitted through Judaism to Christianity, and later to Islam. Zoroastrianism flourished as the imperial religion of three Persian empires, those of the Achaemenians, Parthians and Sasanians, and was the dominant religion from Turkey, and eastward to China during those times. North America's Zoroastrian community includes those who arrived from the Indian subcontinent, known as Parsis, and those who came directly from Iran seeking religious freedom.

**About FEZANA**

Founded in 1987, FEZANA serves as the coordinating body for 25 Zoroastrian associations throughout the United States and Canada. FEZANA promotes the study, understanding and practice of the Zoroastrian faith in North America, represents the interests of its member associations, and carries out philanthropic and charitable activities worldwide. The *FEZANA Journal*, FEZANA's publication of record, circulates to Zoroastrian households in more than 22 countries, as well as to scholars, academicians and religious organizations worldwide. For more information visit: [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org).



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