

# JOURNAL

Mehr – Avan – Adar 1380 AY (Fasli)

Ardebehesht – Khordad – Tir 1381 AY (Shenhai)

Khordad – Tir – Amordad 1381 AY (Kadimi)

## Communal Giving in North America

The Kamran Dar-e-Mehr under construction in  
Boys, Maryland



### Also Inside:



5th World Zoroastrian  
Youth Congress



ZSC's 7th Unity Cup  
Soccer Tournament



Young Mobeds Perform  
Interactive Jashan



Conservation of  
Zoroastrian Manuscripts



**Editor in Chief:** Dolly Dastoor  
editor@fezana.org

**Technical Assistant:** Coomi Gazdar

**Assistant to Editor:** Dinyar Patel

**Consultant Editor:** Lylah M. Alphonse,  
lmalphonse@gmail.com

**Graphic & Layout:** Shahrokh Khanizadeh,  
www.khanizadeh.info

**Cover design:** Feroza Fitch,  
ferozafitch@lexicongraphics.com

**Publications Chair:** Behram Pastakia

**Columnists:**  
H. Shroff: dunbarhoshang@gmail.com  
Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi :  
rabadis@hotmail.com  
Yezdi Godiwalla: godiwaly@uww.edu  
Behram Panthaki: behrampanthaki@hotmail.com  
Behram Pastakia: bpastakia@aol.com  
Mahrukh Motafram:  
maharukhm83@gmail.com

**Copy editors:** R Mehta, V Canteenwalla

**Subscription Managers:** Arnavaz Sethna:  
asethna@comcast.net;  
Kershaw Khumbatta  
journalsubscription@yahoo.com

**Winter 2011**  
**Contemporary Communal Issues**

**Spring 2012**  
**Transformation**  
**Guest Editor Kersi Shroff**

**Summer 2012**  
**25th Anniversary Souvenir Issue**



**Photo on cover:**  
Photo Credit  
Mark Fitch  
Cover design  
Lexicongraphics

## 2 Editorial

**Dolly Dastoor**

## 3 Message from the President

## 5 FEZANA Update

## 14 Financial Report

## 18 Communal Giving



## 50 Youth Congress



## 63 In The News

## 81 Interfaith /Interalia



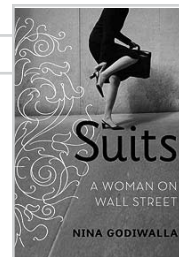
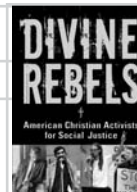
## 85 Personal Profiles

## 87 North American Mobeds' Council



## 89 Milestones

## 96 Between the Covers



Mehr- Avan – Adar 1380 AY (Fasli)  
Ardebehesht – Khordad – Tir 1381 AY (Shenhai)  
Khordad - Tir – Amordad 1381 AY (Kadimi)

*Opinions expressed in the FEZANA Journal do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA or members of this publication's editorial board. All submissions to FEZANA JOURNAL become property of FEZANA Journal and, as such may be reproduced in subsequent issues of FEZANA Journal, in articles referring to FEZANA Journal, or online electronically.*

Published at Regal Press, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada  
FEZANA Journal Vol 25, No 3 ISBN 1068-2376

(USPS 021-495) published quarterly by FEZANA 5750 S. Jackson St Hinsdale IL 60521-5109. Periodical postage rate is paid at Oakbrook, IL 60523 and at additional mailing offices. Annual subscription \$25 (US) ; \$25 (Canada) and \$50 (air) for other countries; details on subscription form.

POSTMASTER: send changes to Fezana Journal, 8787 W. Airport Blvd. Houston, TX 77071

## A word from the Editor

### It is giving that we receive our greatest gift

The cover story of the spring issue of the FEZANA Journal Vol 25 No 1 outlined the Role and Responsibility of Philanthropy, we talked of "constructive philanthropy" we talked of people living the *Yatha ahu variyo* in their daily lives and the Zarathushti ethos of "love of mankind"

And yet there was so much more to share with you, that we decided to dedicate the FALL issue to the *Culture of Communal Giving*, with John Hinnels writing on Zoroastrian Benevolence : Parsi Charities in the 19th and 20th Century, and Homi Dhalla giving us fresh perspectives on Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, the renaissance man, his pioneering efforts at institutional philanthropy, and on the Corporate social responsibility of the House of Tatas. But communal giving is not the prerogative of the rich only but in the nameless , everyday acts of kindness as brought to our attention by Rusi Sorabji, and by Dinaz Rogers in the story of her maternal grandmother. And yet again there are Zarathushtis all over the world who quietly do philanthropic acts year in and year out without any expectation of reward or recognition, Khodamorad Kamran of Bethesda for the Dar-e mehr (see cover) and communal burial lots, Eruch Munchi for maintenance of the Atashbehras in Udvarda, Navsari, Surat and Mumbai, Yasmin and Jamshed Ghadiali and Homai Kasad for supporting the B.D Petit .Parsee General Hospital, Fali and Pam Shroff, for supporting the Nassesalars , Godrej Billimoria, Mehru and Minu Patel (Vol 25 No1) Alayar Dabestani, Jerry and Celeste Kheradi (all of North America), Rustom Chothia, the Mancherji Joshi Memorial Trust, the WZO Trust of India, Pourchista Foundation of Yazd and the ASHA Centre organized by Zerbano Gifford of England. And we must not forget our young who are putting in practice the *Yatha ahu variyo* prayers, Ariane Khanizadeh and Tina Unwalla, in this issue

Timeless voluntary hours spent in organizing and participating in the 5th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Vancouver is also communal

giving, Zain Mavalwala and his team of dedicated volunteers need to be congratulated for a job well done . And the 13 young mobeds and one female mobedyar Dr Parva Namiranian from Iran also gave to the community in participating in the interactive jashan organized by Ervad Soli Dastur, This was a gift of knowledge bestowed on the community.



We all give in our own individual way but we need to cultivate an *ethic of collective giving* as suggested by Rohinton Rivetna, "Our faith encourages the accumulation of wealth as long as it is used for good and charitable purposes,...the more you give the more you receive." If each Zarathushti on this continent gave only \$20 annually how much would we be able to collect in one year to use for the growth and development of the community around the world.

Let me end with a quote from Khalil Gibran "You often say I would give to the deserving. The trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in your pasture. They give that they may live for to withhold is to perish" .

I wish you many happy hours of giving of your time, talent and money without being asked

*Soli Dastur*



## A Message from FEZANA President

As I prepare to attend the Global Working Group conference, with Rohinton Rivetna and Behram Pastakia representing FEZANA I would like to recall the joint press release whose positive tone explains the activities of the last meeting.

### **Global Working Group of Parsi/Irani Zoroastrians Meets in Mumbai, Hamazori Rekindled**

The Coming Together Round Table (CTR), a legacy of the 8th World Zoroastrian Congress (WZC) at London, now renamed the Global Working Group, met in Mumbai on January 8 and 9, with elected community members from Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE), Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) / Federation of Parsee Zoroastrian Anjumans of India (FPZAI) and representatives of United Arab Emirates (UAE), World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) and others, including special invitees. The meeting was a follow-up emanating from the 9th WZC held in Dubai in December 2009.



*It was unanimously agreed that the Parsi/Irani Zarathushti identity should be strengthened globally, by upholding our culture, traditions and religious beliefs. A power point presentation made on the issue of Parsi identity in North America, was thought-provoking and gave a new insight into the issue.*

*A Global Exchange Programme for teenagers, young adults and young professionals to be held annually, so that the Parsi/Irani identity is further strengthened.*

*An integrated community database be established via a universal Parsi/Irani Zarathushti portal. The participating bodies agreed to share the cost towards this important project.*

*An impetus to be offered in the area of education, with assistance toward admission into prominent Parsi schools, colleges and institutions.*

*It was decided to supplement the income of priests in order to encourage young boys to join the priestly schools, with the BPP and other well wishers making a commitment of additional resources. creating religious scholars for the next generation.*

In my opinion the representative and the leaders of world federations have understood and recognized the crux of our community problems which will be further discussed in details at the London 2011 meeting.

It is my sincere wish that all worldwide associations do come to the table and join the "Global Working Group" in future meetings, in the continuing spirit of Hamazori. I congratulate and thank Mr. Malcolm Deboo President of ZTFE for hosting the GWG conference.

In 2012 FEZANA will be celebrating its "Silver Jubilee". with special events including the 16th. North American Zoroastrian Congress in New York. FEZANA will propose at the London meeting that the next Global Working Group conference be held in New York 2012 prior to the congress.

FEZANA is now on Face book and on Twitter. Monthly FEZANA Bulletin is also available electronically to all. To get a copy, please update your personal information including your e-mail address in the North American Directory on [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org). Individuals from other countries can register your request with [admin@fezana.org](mailto:admin@fezana.org).

I invite you to send me your thoughts for the progress and betterment of our North American Zarathushti community and what role you would like to play to ensure a successful outcome.

**Best Wishes. Bomi**



## Death

The Dar-e-Mehr in Boyds, Maryland, pictured on the cover of the fall 2011 issue of the Journal spotlights the generosity of Mr. Khodamorad Kamran and his family. Such exemplary philanthropy inspires us as we continue to build the infrastructure required to sustain the future generations of Zarathushtis in North America. This brings to mind a story of another singular act of kindness by the same individual in the fall of 2004.

### ***Humanizing Our Grief***

Faced with the tragedy of losing his child, a father found the Parklawn Cemetery in Rockville, Maryland which he thought was very good not only for a family burial plot but as a communal resting place for Zarathushtis. Humanizing his grief, he channelized his actions into Giving. At his behest, when an appeal for funds went out to the community at large, Khodamorad Kamran stepped up to the plate with a large donation. We now have 101 plots for Zarathushti burials; not just for the local community, but for any Zarathushti in need. The only condition that the donor made was that while the local association could oversee the burial property, the elected trustees would NOT demand payment from the bereaved family - putting our Ashem Vohu prayer into practice! And what of the father who initiated this charitable giving? He continues to serve selflessly in managing the burial plots. For those who need these services, please contact Khodarahm Yazdanipour.



Death, by Zarathushti tradition is not an occasion to grieve but to celebrate - to celebrate the life of the one who has passed on and to share. The concept of giving in the days following the death of the dear departed is ritualized in the "Pai Mozd" ceremony (1). We pray, not for ourselves, but for others; for all those who have been born since the time of Gayomard to those who have yet to be born till the time of the Sashoyant. On this continent, we do not have Khandias and Nassledars. We have to volunteer to be our own Khandias and Nassledars. On a personal note, I can never forget the outpouring of support and help at the time of the untimely demise of my wife, Katie. Out of the ether came help - help to hold her in loving arms as she breathed her last, help to organize the funeral, to wash and clothe the body. Two Sikh friends from medical school days who lived in neighboring states were there early in the morning to vacuum the entire house. The school nurse from across the street brought her "four-eyed" dog for the Sagdeed ceremony; our volunteer priest turned up at odd hours as decreed by our customs for prayers at home and at the funeral. It was a transformative experience.

Death is a reminder of our own mortality. It has traditionally been an occasion for Zarathushtis as an opportunity to give. Make the best use of it. You will be glad you did.

Dated: 9/11/2011

Bethesda, Maryland.

(1) Days of Transition - The Parsi Death Rituals By Dorothea Lüddeckens and Ramiyar Karanjia. Arbetten Am Lichtenberg-Kolleg ISBN 978-3-8353-0837-4 Page 119 (2011)

---

**Behram Pastakia is Chair of the Publication Committee of FEZANA**



# FEZANA UPDATE



Ms. Shiraz Italia is the new incoming Assistant Secretary of FEZANA for 2011-12 being nominated by the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia . She has served her community as a member of the youth committee and Avesta Class teacher for the past seven years. Shiraz was the Secretary and Committee Chair for the 5th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress- Vancouver in July 2011. Shiraz is an educator by profession, teaching grade 5/6 in the public elementary school system. While at times this profession can be extremely challenging, the reward of making a difference in a child's life far outweighs the challenges.

Shiraz is very excited to be on the current FEZANA executive and is looking forward to serving the North American Zarathushti community.

## AN APPEAL FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

FEZANA Welfare committee has verified this to be a genuine appeal. FEZANA has supported this appeal.

I am a Parsi Zoroastrian, single parent aged 39 years, and the only breadwinner in the family, having a son aged 10. Presently I am jobless and am on the lookout for one.

My mother is 65 years old who is highly Diabetic and the monthly cost of medicine is Rs. 2000/- to 3000/-, and my father is 71 years old and retired and has indifferent health. Both my parents are dependent on me.

Some time ago I was diagnosed with breast disease.

The first operation of Lumpectomy cost me Rs. 2 lakhs, approximately and the second operation of Mastectomy (Removal of Breast) cost Rs. 3 lakhs at Hinduja Hospital. Third operation was performed on 20th October 2010 to insert Chemo port which has cost Rs.75000/- including first cycle of Chemotherapy. Fourth operation was performed on 7th November to remove the Chemo port which cost Rs. 50,000

Thereafter I will have to go through post operation medical treatment approximate cost of which is as follows.

1. F. E. C (Chemotherapy) approximately Rs. 2 lakhs.
2. Chemotherapy plus Taxol approximately Rs. 2 lakhs.

3. Taxol plus Herceptin, approximately Rs. 8 to 10 lakhs as the treatment will be for a period of one and a half years.

4. Radiation will cost approximately Rs. 1.5 lakhs.

Total approximate cost Rs. 2575000/- + Doctor's fees, administration of medicine charges, blood test C.B.C and 2D Echo, and other miscellaneous charges.

As it is not possible for me to bear this huge financial burden, I humbly appeal to your good selves to come to my aid and help me financially in whatever way you can for which I shall remain grateful for ever .

**Thanking you.**

**Yours truly,**

**(Phiroza S. Chimbaiwala.)**

You may kindly forward the cross & order cheque drawn in favour of Phiroza S. Chimbaiwala directly to her or to Homi N. Dalal K4/64 Merwanjee Cama Park, Cama Road, Andheri West Mumbai 400058 . Please Help. Even a cheque of Rs 1000/- will be blessed.

Bills for the expenses presently incurred . (Original Bills surrendered to insurance company) certificate from Dr. Sachin Almél. Copy of yearly and monthly salary, copy of prescription,. can be presented on request.



## INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

### Ava Lala

The Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey (ZAPANJ) is building a cultural center for our community. We have set up a separate legal entity, called the Zarathushti Cultural Center (ZACUCE) of Delaware Valley, Inc., specifically for the building effort. Our mission is to build a center that will bring our local community closer together, provide a sense of belonging, and enhance the lives of future generations.

I've been involved with the organization for over seven years and have been a trustee for four. As anyone who has been involved in similar efforts can attest, it's hard work. My fellow board members, along with a handful of other dedicated volunteers, have seen countless properties over the years. We've organized several fundraising galas, auctions, raffles, fashion shows, and so on. We've persuaded peers to donate and have spent countless hours in meetings. In addition to the time and effort, I'll admit that it can be downright frustrating at times. Our monthly mid-morning meetings can be chaotic, contentious and, of course, loud. And there have been times where we made more progress finishing the dhansak lunch than our to-do list.

So, given the challenges, why do I remain involved?

First, I feel blessed that I grew up with a great Zarathushti community in Michigan. Granted, in my younger days, it was as much about the sleepovers as the religious instruction, but the community feeling helped to not only cement friendships that continue to this day, but also to cultivate shared values and a sense of identity. When I moved to Philadelphia after graduating from college, I barely knew anyone. It was the ZAPANJ community that helped me develop a new sense of home and belonging. Both these groups have played a role in shaping who I am, and I want to do what I can to ensure that others have the same sense of community that I've experienced.

You don't need a Darbe Mehr to have a thriving and engaged community; ZAOM and ZAPANJ have proven that. However, I do think it can strengthen a community by providing a place to call home. A quiet place to say prayers that feels more spiritual than a tiny divo at home. Heck, even a consistent place for the "pana parties" (card games).

The second reason I remain committed is because I view this as an investment in the future of the Zarathushti community. I don't know how long I'll be in

Pennsylvania, and it's likely that I'll move at some point. Some may think that the money and time I've put in would be a waste. But the way I look at it, every center that's built in the U.S. increases my chances that I'll end up in a community that has one or that my children will have a place for themselves one day. I look at my own personal example: my parents were one of the founding donors of the Darbe Mehr in Chicago, but moved prior to the center's completion. It wasn't until 20-plus years later that my brother moved to Chicago and could take advantage of its services.

After all these years, we are tantalizingly close to seeing our dream turn into reality. In March 2010, we purchased a 1.66-acre property in Mt. Laurel, NJ. We finalized our building design a few months ago, which was done by Cyrus Rivetna of Rivetna Architects, who graciously agreed to provide his consultation and design at no cost to us. Our meetings with the township have gone well.

However, we've now reached a crucial point: we need to raise \$800,000 in cash or pledges by the end of this year, otherwise we may be forced to put this project on hold. I'd like to ask you to please support our efforts and donate generously. Please visit our website, [www.zacuce.com](http://www.zacuce.com) where you can learn more about the proposed center and download a donation form.

This project is about preserving our faith, reinforcing the family and community values that were handed down to us and investing in our future. I hope you'll join me in making an investment.

**Ava Lala** currently resides in the suburbs of Philadelphia, PA. Ava works at SEI, a global financial services firm, where she leads a team responsible for global marketing and sales support for one of the company's five business divisions.







# FEZANA UPDATE

## DARAIUS BHARUCHA ELECTED PRESIDENT OF ZOROASTRIAN SOCIETY OF ONTARIO (ZSO)

The Fortieth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Members of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) was held on Sunday, July 31st 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at the Dar e Mehr in Toronto. At this meeting Mr. Daraius M. Bharucha was elected as President for a term of two years. Congratulations Daraius!.

Daraius M. Bharucha has been the member of ZSO since 1994 and has held several leadership positions in the Society serving as Executive Officer in 2008. He has been the Chair of the Religious Education Committee since 2000, chair of the Inter-Faith Committee since 2008 and of the 2012 North American Z- Games. Since 2008 he has been the Chairperson of FEZANA North American Congress Committee. In addition, Daraius has served the Zoroastrian community in Ontario and North America in numerous roles and capacities over the last decade and a half.

Daraius has a B.A. Specialized Honours in Religious Studies (Summa Cum Laude and Dean's Honour Roll) as well as a Bachelor of Education degree. On graduation he was the recipient of the prestigious Governor General of Canada's Silver Medal for Academic Excellence, was a Millennium Scholar and the recipient of the Eva Halward Prize in Religious Studies, the George Hopton Award in Religious Studies, and the Harry S. Crowe Award in History, the York University Faculty of Education Outstanding Achievement Award and numerous other academic awards and scholarships. He has also been recognized and honoured for his volunteer services by the Province of Ontario and the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario. In May 2007 Daraius was the recipient of the 'Shining Star' award from York University in recognition of his volunteer work on behalf of the university. He is currently a High School History teacher with the York Region District School.

In addition Daraius is a qualified Master Mariner and had a successful career in the merchant marine for 12 years.

Daraius has co-authored and co-edited two publications on Zoroastrianism and is a regular contributor and panel expert on "Insight" a Miracle Channel television network show that examines current issues from a religious and cultural perspective. He



serves as a resource expert on Zoroastrianism with school boards in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA),

He has been a lecturer and teacher of religion for 17 years and has taught and lectured widely to audiences ranging from young children to adults, in locales such as universities, schools and community centers.

### OBJECTIVES

During his term of office Daraius would like to successfully complete the new Darbe Mehr project, host a successful Z-Games for Zoroastrian youth in 2012, continue to promote greater harmony, amity and cooperation within our community in the GTA by being a bridge builder and goodwill ambassador, continue to focus on the progress made with regard to youth involvement and leadership in the community, especially in the areas of religious education and cultural identity, continue to work on, and further enhance, the progress made in enhancing the profile of the Zoroastrian community in the GTA, Ontario, Canada and North America.

He lives in Ajax with his wife Dilnaaz and children Kaipa and Pahlav.

Daraius has his work cut out for him for the next two years and the Journal wishes him lots of luck, and energy in fulfilling his mandate.

### THE ZSO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2011 – 2012

<i>Mr. Daraius M. Bharucha;</i>	President (by Election)
<i>Mrs. Mehroo Chothia;</i>	Vice President (by Election)
<i>Mrs. Mehar Irani;</i>	Secretary (by acclamation)
<i>Mr. Jamshed Kershaw;</i>	Assistant Treasurer (by acclamation)
<i>Mr. Khushru Chothia;</i>	Executive Officer (by acclamation)

The following Executive Committee Members remain on the Committee until 2012:

<i>Mr. Kevin Mancherjee</i>	Executive Vice President
<i>Mr. Fram Sethna</i>	Treasurer
<i>Ms. Anahita Ogra</i>	Assistant Secretary
<i>Mr. Sam M. Vesuna</i>	Past President



## SAM VESUNA, PRESIDENT ZSO, 2000-2011 leaves behind a legacy of achievements

A grateful community wishes to place on record the accomplishments of Sam Vesuna in his years and years of dedicated service as President of ZSO, the largest association in North America. Sam Vesuna was elected President of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario on July 30th 2000 and has been re-elected continuously for 5 terms since then.

In 1979 he was appointed Trustee of the Rustom Guiv Foundation by Arbab Rustoim Guiv. He had been the President in 1980 when the opening ceremony of the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr was performed and made the application for the Wintario Grant for ZSO. Even before 2000 Sam held the post of the treasurer, was on the executive and also served as the President. He was the President in 1990 when the First Zoroastrian Scout troop '100 Toronto' was formed with ZSO as sponsor. In 21 years since then, the Scout Troop has grown and flourished.

Sam has worked tirelessly and put in countless hours of hard work and voluntary service for the betterment of the Zoroastrian community in Ontario and the whole of North America through FEZANA. He is the ZSO representative on the Toronto Area Interfaith Committee (TAIC) as well as on MOSAIC raising awareness of the Zoroastrian Religion and Community amongst the other ethnic communities. In this he has been ably assisted by late Ervd. Yazdi Antia, Ervd. Jehan Bagli, Daraius Bharucha, Freddy Mirza and Keki Shroff.

The newly elected president Daraius is the Chair of the ZSO Interfaith Sub-Committee and Sam has helped him on numerous occasions when bus loads of school children visited the Darbe Mehr during week days, by giving tours and explaining in brief the main tenets of our religion.

During his tenure of 10 years as President of the ZSO he assisted the various sub-committees in organizing activities. The religious sub-committee looks after various religious activities like the Muktads,

Gambars, Jashans. Sam's support was always very crucial in the observances of the Muktads which are now in their 29th year. He was instrumental in buying a scattering ground and reserving some Burial plots for the Zarathushtis of Ontario.

As an active member of the long term planning committee of ZSO and the chair of the Investment Committee for many years, his prudent investments has enabled ZSO to be in a sound financial position. During the annual audit period, Sam spent a lot of time assisting the Treasurer with the preparation of the ZSO annual Financial Statements and also during the course of the audit.

In 2003 during the 3000th Anniversary celebrations of the Zarathushti faith, tradition and culture, Sam was instrumental in assisting the co-chairs Zarine Chenoy and Freddy Mirza in making arrangements for the events at Markham Centre for the Performing Arts as well as at the Royal Ontario Museum. In 2003 he also assisted Co-Chairs Afreed Mistry and Armaiti Bamji with the North American Youth Congress.

In 2005, Sam Vesuna along with Mr. Dhun Bhaya was appointed Co-Chair of the building project committee with the mandate to rebuild the new Darbe Mehr at the present site. Since then he has worked diligently and put in countless hours working with the Architect, Consultants, and city department officials.

In 2007 he assisted the chair Phee Vania, Vice-co-chairs Zarine Chenoy and Mehroo Chotia and Program Chair Daraius Bharucha during the North American Zoroastrian Congress. He was a great host who always helped pick up out of town speakers from the airport, providing them hospitality and accommodation.

Sam has been involved with FEZANA since May 1986 when he represented Ontario in the core group of





# FEZANA UPDATE

nine Associations that met at a Constitutional Convention in Chicago, to review the first draft of the FEZANA Constitution and was an active contributor in the discussions that led to the finalization of the Constitution and subsequent registration of FEZANA on June 2, 1987. Sam has probably attended every FEZANA AGM, over the last 25 years, and has lent his wisdom, experience and commitment to the Zarathushti cause through various contentious issues and in setting future direction for Zarathushtis in North America. He participated actively in the "Coming Together RoundTable" (now called the "Global Working Group") and supports the concept of leaders of world Zarathushti regions coming together in a common forum for joint action on matters of global import.

Sam Vesuna will continue to be part of the executive committee for the year 2011-2012 as the past president. The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario would like to take this opportunity to thank Sam for his dedication, sincerity and honesty in serving the Zoroastrian Community in Ontario and all of North America.

*Tribute prepared by Putli Mirza.*

*with input from Mehroo Chothia, Roshan Rivetna and Freddy Mirza.*

## ZSC's 7th UNITY CUP SOCCER TOURNAMENT



**Pedrom Farsi**

friendly smile and hand shake. It is not that we were not treated as outsiders, but that we were treated like family that made it so rewarding.

The actual soccer tournament was fun as well. There were 10 adult teams separated into two different divisions with varying playing styles. It was extremely competitive with everyone trying to defeat the three time defending champion Old Hogs United. While all the teams gave it their best effort to defeat *Old Hogs United*, (photo page10) it was all for naught. Behind their leading goal scorer and tournament MVP, *Shahin Jamshidi*, the Old Hogs just would not be denied. They defeated the *Bawa-Gees* 5-2 in the final match to win their fourth straight championship. The team that came in third place in the tournament was the San Jose team who played hard, but was defeated by Old Hogs United in the semifinals. Also, *Katiana Shahbahrami* was ultimately awarded the trophy for Sportsmanship. Even though she was the only female player in the tournament, she showed true character and strength by playing just as tough as anyone from any other teams. Therefore, she was rightfully the unanimous choice to receive the Sportsmanship Award.

As someone born and raised in Idaho and who does not speak Farsi fluently, I was a bit nervous about attending the **Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC) 7th Unity Cup Soccer Tournament in Redondo Beach, CA** on September 3 and 4, 2011. I feared that I would feel like an outsider in such a close-knit group. However, from the moment I first arrived at Aviation Park, those fears were gone. Everyone welcomed my brother and I into the community with open arms. Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds were all on display as everyone introduced themselves with a

Despite the resulting champion being the same as in the previous three competitions, there were definitely challenges along the way for them with many quality teams in the tournament trying to beat them. Overall, the actual play in the tournament was very entertaining from the perspective of both a participant and a spectator. There was also a youth tournament divided into two different groups. The Youth Division I, which





# FEZANA UPDATE



was ages 6 to 9, was won by *Z Kids United*. (photo right). Youth Division II, ages 10-14, was won by Northern California, who defeated Goal Rush in a well-played final. Even though there was a declared "champion" for the Youth tournaments, those games were much more for the young kids. They were all winners because of the bonds they were forming with each other for the future. By observing those my age who, unlike me, grew up together in the Zarathushti community doing events like the *Unity Cup* as well as the *Z Games*, I can see the unbreakable bond that would not have formed without that upbringing. Though the kids themselves may not realize it at this point, it is very promising to see the seeds of friendship planted and blossoming for the future.

Another thing on display, just as the name implies, was *UNITY*. With a combination of roughly 500 participants and spectators (139 competing athletes) from *California, New Jersey, Nevada, Idaho, Arizona, and India*, the event was most certainly a diverse gathering. It is so important for all members of a community to come together, especially when that community has such relatively small numbers. The fact that people came from places as far as India speaks volumes about how unifying the event was. Participants from all different walks of life celebrating

the same cause regardless of where they were born or their financial standing was something that made me very proud to be a part of it.

Overall, the event was very well organized and very enjoyable. It is so important for someone like myself, who was born in Idaho and who has never been back to Iran to be able to get in touch with my culture. Being able to do so while also taking part in something as fun as a soccer tournament made it even better. I was treated like a king for the three days I was in Los Angeles, and



am so grateful for the event organizers for the fabulous job they did, as well as the entire Zarathushti community who were shining examples of kindness and generosity. I would recommend everyone to take part in future ZSC events, even if it is just for camaraderie.

***Pedrom Farsi*** graduated of *Arizona State University* in 2009 and is head coach of a boys high school soccer team.

Photo credits Shahram Moobed of Asha Photography.



## ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON CELEBRATES SHAHENSHAHI NAVROZE

*Yasmin Medhora and the ZAH Entertainment Committee*



Kaemerz Dotiwalla (center-left) and Vehishta Kaikobad (left) present the Manijeh Pherozechaw Dotiwalla Community Service award for the year 2011 to Homi (center-right) and Nergish Davier (right).

Zarathushtis throughout Houston prepared for the Navroze celebrations over a period of several days, starting with the Muktab Prayers, which were conducted at the **Zarathushti Heritage & Cultural Center (ZHCC)** in the mornings as well as in the evenings for ten days. All families who attended the Muktab Prayers were treated to a feast organized by various volunteers. *Ervad Peshotan Unwalla* held the Paathli Raat (late night) prayer on Friday, August 9th morning at 4:00 a.m., followed by a beautiful Hambundagi and Maachi later on that evening by *Ervads Noshir Khumbatta, Shapur Pavri, and Bomanshaw Sanjana*. ZAH is proud of all the young Ervads who prayed at the various prayers

On the evening of Saturday August 9, *Percy Katrak, Co-MC for the Shahenshahi Navroze Function*, welcomed the enthused crowd of 355 attendees and started the function with a benediction recited by *Yazad Sidhwa*. The evening was packed with a lot of activities.

*Darius Tamboli, Co-MC from the Youth group*, gave a presentation of the Vancouver Youth Congress attended by 33 youth from the vibrant community of Houston (of which six were Ervads). The youth enjoyed the informative sessions, interacting with other Zarathusti youth, and loved the fun outings and the gala.

**Several awards were given out that evening viz for Sports, high school graduates, the Eleven Boy Scouts who had achieved the rank of Eagle Scout and one Gold Rank Girl Scout. WZC2000 Legacy Awards**

*Kaemerz Dotiwalla* presented the **Manijeh Pherozechaw Dotiwalla Community Service award**

for the year 2011 to **Homi and Nergish Davier**. Homi had been instrumental in developing ZAH's new directory, which was presented the same evening.

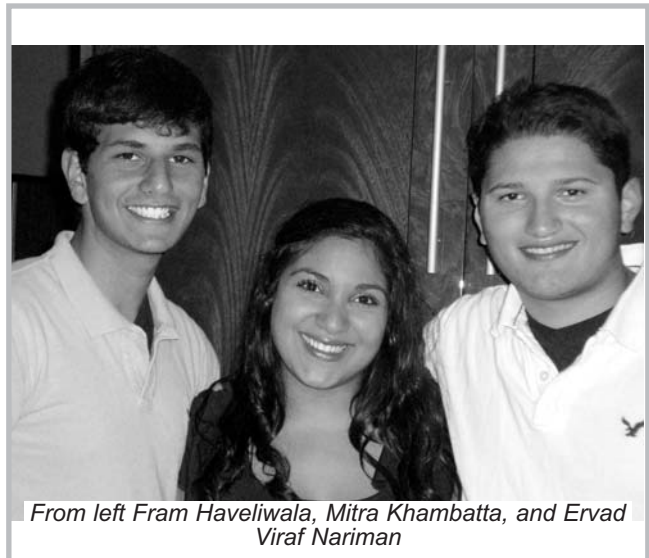
**Josh Blake**, the representative of Congressman Pete Olson, read out a special proclamation issued by his office.

Indian-Chinese food was catered from Ahling's Restaurant and the dessert from Cillie's.. Houstonians danced until the wee hours of the morning to the fun-filled music provided by youth volunteer *DJ Ervad Noshir Khumbatta*.

### WZC2000 LEGACY AWARD PROGRAM

This award was established as a result of the funds from the success of the **WZC2000 (World Zarathushti Congress 2000)** held in Houston over ten years ago. Prof Farrokh Mistree described the selection process for the winners of the WZC2000 Legacy Award program.

**Mitra Khumbatta and Ervad Viraf Nariman** were the co-recipients of the WZC2000 Legacy Outstanding Student Award each receiving \$1500. **Fram Haveliwala**, the recipient of the WZC2000 Legacy Cyrus Rohinton Desai Award for Freshman college student, received \$3000. This award has been named



From left Fram Haveliwala, Mitra Khambatta, and Ervad Viraf Nariman

after Cyrus Desai whose life was cut short by cancer before he could fulfill his dream of going to college.

*Photo Credits – Yezdi Engineer*





## CONSERVATION and RE-BINDING of Zoroastrian manuscripts

**T54 (AY 692 / 1323CE) Yasna - Gatha Manuscript and the**

**E1/ F4 (AY 970 / 1601 CE) Khordeh Avesta Manuscript**

**At the The Royal Library, Copenhagen University Library, Denmark**

Dolly Dastoor

Over the millennia, the Zarathushti religion has lost a large portion of the religious literature. Being aware of this loss, it is our sacred duty to spare no efforts to preserve what little we have left. Presently in India many of our most important books and manuscripts between 200-400 years old are at two institutions, the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai founded in 1916 and the First Dastur Meherjirana Library in Navsari established in 1872.

The Meherjirana Library in Navsari was established when the extensive collection of the Dasturji Erachji Meherjirana was given a permanent home in the form of a library. This library houses, a priceless collection of manuscripts, documents and records of critical importance in understanding the Zarathushti deen and Indian Iranian history. However the library has fallen into serious disrepair and many, nay most of our precious heritage is in danger of being irrevocably lost for future generations of religious scholars and laity interested in the history of the religion.

The Meherjirana family did their best to preserve the treasury of books and manuscripts, however the lack of human, financial and technical resources took their toll on the condition of the priceless literature housed there. Stacks of manuscripts lined the windowsills and floors, sprayed with DDT powder to keep the termites away, the wooden structure was unprepared for fire, and the humidity caused by the tropical climate in Navsari did not help. Even though PARZOR microfilmed the most important documents, outfitted the library with fire extinguishers, installed air-conditioners, but still many of the original documents and manuscripts were disintegrating beyond repair.



The book boxes with printed titles on the spine to match the bindings inside. The Afarganyu symbol is blind tooled.

### The first Dastur Meherjirana library, Navsari, India



Conservation in Copenhagen, Denmark and was executed between 2008 and 2011. When the manuscripts arrived in Copenhagen, they had very severe insect damage. The manuscripts had been fumigated in India to combat the damage. One of the first steps of the conservation process was to place the manuscript pages under a fume hood for 6 weeks to disperse the chemical residue. Next, to repair the insect-damaged pages, a conservator carefully mended each area of insect damage by individually placing strips of a very thin Japanese paper to the damaged parts. Also, many pages had broken loose from their bindings. They too, were carefully

At the North American Zoroastrian Congress in Chicago on 4th July 2002 Malcolm Deboo (now President of ZTFE) made a presentation to inform our coreligionist of the dire condition of Zoroastrian manuscripts at the First Dastur Meherjirana Library in Navsari. Firdosh Mehta who was then the FEZANA President was able to obtain some funds, as well as from others including Mr Tahantan Aresh, which allowed Malcolm to go to India to examine the situation further and borrow a few manuscripts for restoration in the West. At the FEZANA AGM in Boston, Malcolm was again invited to make a presentation on one of the manuscripts he had borrowed from the Meherjirana Library, titled T54 which was a Yasna Gatha manuscript. The condition of the manuscript left all aghast and in despair. Somehow restoration had to be done.

With the initial financial and moral support of FEZANA, the restoration project commenced, under the project leadership of Malcolm Deboo.

The entire conservation process was conducted in a workshop at The Royal Library Department of





# FEZANA UPDATE



T 54 before restoration and rebinding.

rejoined with strips of Japanese paper. The pages were sewn back together and compounds were applied to prevent further insect attacks.

The title of T 54 was gilded on the spine in a gilding press. The folio is pure 22 carat gold in order to prevent tarnishing or oxidation.

To finish the decoration of the cover, traditional Zoroastrian patterns and symbols were blind tooled on spine and boards. The press is used with brass clichés for the Afarganyu. This creates a detailed and deep imprint in the leather. Finally, the manuscripts were professionally hand rebound, complete with book boxes lined with cotton flannel, the spine covered in the same leather as the MS. and the lid and sides dressed with a book binders cloth in a matching red colour. The restored manuscripts will be returned to their home in the First Dastur Meherjirana Library a fitting end to their long journey. Nearly a decade later, the two handwritten manuscripts have been painstakingly and professionally restored.

It is history in the making as it is the first Zoroastrian manuscript in the world to be fully restored in Europe. The community owes deep gratitude to Malcolm Deboo, for his perseverance and diligence to see this monumental project through.

FEZANA and FEZANA JOURNAL hopes the community will find financial resources to restore and preserve other manuscripts for posterity.

## FUTURE STEPS.

Through FIRES FEZANA is requesting The First Meherjirana Library to grant permission to Malcolm Deboo to visit Houston and other interested cities in the United States and Canada to exhibit the restored manuscripts, before they are permanently returned to the Library in Navsari. Malcolm Deboo, as leader of this 10-year effort at restoration, will make a presentation detailing the restoration process, along with the display of the manuscripts.

## PROPOSAL

To organize a traveling exhibition of the manuscripts in North America, before they are returned to Navsari.

## BENEFITS

1. The Zarathushti community in North America will be provided with a unique opportunity to view these rare manuscripts.
2. The exhibition will provide an opportunity for the Zarathushti youth to learn about their ancient history.
3. The exhibition will raise awareness about the physical conditions under which our precious manuscripts are being kept, and perhaps elicit a greater effort to promote their restoration and preservation.
- The exhibition will bring **The First Meherjirana Library in Navsari**, and other libraries, to prominence and help increase tourism to these sites.

*Article compiled by materials from FEZANA Journal Vo 21, No 4 and the powerpoint of the Royal Library Copenhagen in the restoration of the manuscripts provided by Malcolm Deboo.*



The pages of T54 are meticulously separated from each other. Old damage from insects have stuck the pages together.



REFER TO FEZANA JOURNAL VOL 21 NO 4 WINTER 2007 FOR PRESERVING OUR BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS PAGES 18-40



At the 2011 AGM, the stage was set for the next 10-year Plan for FEZANA. The Plan gives specific responsibilities to various committees, including the Funds & Finance committee. Please write to me at [rjkevala@aol.com](mailto:rjkevala@aol.com) or call me at 813-484-8333 if you would like to work on this committee.

#### **SEEKING CANADIAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

FEZANA Members include five large Canadian Associations and a small group in the Maritime Provinces. FEZANA provides benefits to Canadian Zarathushtis and charities. But since FEZANA is registered in the USA, it is difficult for Canadian donors to get tax benefits for donations to FEZANA. US citizens cannot get US tax benefits if they want to donate to a Canadian charity unless it is also registered in the USA. In a recent case, a US family wanted to make a large donation to the building fund of a

Canadian Association. The family cannot get any tax benefit from the donation. This case is currently under review by tax lawyers in Canada. To ensure proper accounting and benefits to all our donors, FEZANA is seeking Funds & Finance committee members from Canada who are familiar with Canadian tax codes.

#### **CONSIDER A GIFT ANNUITY FUND**

A gift annuity is an irrevocable agreement in which a donor transfers assets (such as securities or cash) to FEZANA in return for lifetime annual income of a fixed amount. The annual income is determined by rate tables developed by the American Council on Gift Annuities. Thereafter, the remaining principal benefits the FEZANA fund designated by the donor. The beauty of the "Gift Annuity" is that the donor is entitled to a charitable deduction for the gift portion on his/her tax return; and a portion of the annual payments may also be tax-free until actuarial life expectancy is reached. The "Gift Annuity Fund" has to be prudently invested by a Trust Bank or Certified Financial planner to produce the annual return to the donor. Please contact me at [rjkevala@aol.com](mailto:rjkevala@aol.com) or call me at 813-484-8333 if you would like to know how to set up a Gift Annuity Fund.

#### **AND IN CLOSING**

FEZANA accepts donations of cash, securities, books, historically important documents and art objects as well as real estate. Businesses are also encouraged to donate useful furniture and equipment. All inquiries should be directed to the undersigned.

***Rustom Kevala, Ph.D.***

***Chair, FEZANA Funds & Finance Committee***  
***[rjkevala@aol.com](mailto:rjkevala@aol.com)***



**Air One Tech**  
**Heating & Air Conditioning Company.**  
**Specialty: Air Conditioning, Heating,**  
**Refrigeration, Sales, Service.**  
**Website: [www.aironetech.com](http://www.aironetech.com)**  
**Phone: (703) 966-2257**  
**Fax: (703) 337-6511**  
**email: [dj@aironetech.com](mailto:dj@aironetech.com)**  
**[info@aironetech.com](mailto:info@aironetech.com)**



# FEZANA UPDATE

LIST OF DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM JANUARY 1, 2011 TO JUNE 30, 2011

## FEZANA GENERAL FUND

Nirvana Anooosheh, Los Gatos, CA	\$ 1,300
Zarthosti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC)	700
Farokh & Maneck Contractor, Kenner, LA	250
Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman (TMZA)	150
Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation (OZCF)	130
Tehemton Mirza, London, ON	130
Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC)	101
Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF)	101
Aspi & Nergish Bharucha, Cincinnati, OH	100
Farokh Cooper, Fair Oaks, CA	100
Kaiyomarz Mohta, Fremont, CA	100
Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania & New Jersey, Inc (ZAPANJ)	100
Sarosh Sukhia, Hopewell, VA	75
Daulat P. Engineer, Glen Ellyn, IL	55
Homi Patel, Lake Forest, IL	55
iGive.com	51
Behram Shroff, McLean, VA	50
Minocher Reporter, Corvallis, OR	50
Perry Unwalla, St. Augustine, FL	50
Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area (ZAGBA)	50
Zoroastrian Society of British Colombia (ZSBC)	34
Cyrus Daboo, Ormond Beach, FL	31
Russy K. Sumariwalla, Medford, OR	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,788</b>

## WORLD ZOROASTRIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Significance Foundation - Mehraboon and Kamal Irani Family Public Charity	1,000
Darius Randeria, Kingwood, TX	50
Rishag Alikhan, Houston TX	50
Khershed Cooper, Fairfax, VA	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,125</b>

## NAVAR SPONSORSHIP

Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF)	<b>1,112</b>
--	--------------

## WORLD ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH CONGRESS

Soli Dastur, University Park, FL	<b>501</b>
----------------------------------	------------

## YOUNG RATHESTARS

Zarthosti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC)	<b>2,300</b>
---	--------------

**TOTAL FEZANA GENERAL FUND 8,826**

## FEZANA WELFARE FUND

Porus F. Austin, Stockton, CA	1,000
Anonymous	501
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,501</b>

## JAPAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND

Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC)	\$ 500
Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF)	300
Roshan Malva, Downey, CA	101
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>901</b>

**TOTAL FEZANA WELFARE FUND 2,402**

## FEZANA CRITICAL ASSISTANCE FUND

Siavosh Noruziaan, Kanata, ON	755
Anonymous	501
Adil Daruwala, Winnetka, IL	100
Firozi D. Alercia, Belville, NC	100
Mehbad Dastur, Toronto, ON	100
Adil Eduljee, Redondo Beach, CA	75
Noshir and Rhoda Lakdawalla, Valencia, CA	55
Behram P. Shroff, Mc Lean VA	50
Homi Italia, Burnaby, BC	50
Soli Tavarria, Schuylkill Haven, PA	30
Jal Guzder, Sugar Land, TX	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,841</b>

## FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Sorab M. Panday, Herndon, VA	500
Bucky Amaria, Lone Tree, CO	150
Gooloo Wunderlich, Annandale, VA	100
Ron Tata, Myrtle Beach, SC	100
Behram Panthaki, Falls Church, VA	55

Meheraban Dinyarian, San Antonio, TX	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>935</b>

## CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

Sorab M. Panday, Herndon, VA	<b>500</b>
------------------------------	------------

## FEZANA JOURNAL

Alayar Dabestani, Marysville, WA	130
Vakhshoori Foundation	100
Rohinton Shroff, Richmond, BC	60
Yasmin Cumming, Santa Rosa, CA	50
Behram K. Irani, Plano, TX	30
Farokh Mistree, Purcell, OK	30

Prochy Sethna, San Jose, CA	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>430</b>

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FUND

Adi J. Unwalla, Marlton, NJ	30
John Menken, Santa Fe, NM	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>

**GRAND TOTAL \$ 14,989**

Continued .....





# Calendar of Festivals

Calendar of Festivities September 2011 to March 2012

<b>Fravardian Jashan</b> <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin</i>	Sunday, August 7 (K) Tuesday, September 6 (S)
<b>Maidyozarem Gahambar</b> <i>Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher</i>	Monday, August 29 -Friday, Sept 02 (K) Wednesday, Sept 28 - Sunday, Oct 02 (S)
<b>Paitishem Gahambar</b> <i>Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad Aneran</i>	Monday, Sept 12- Friday, Sept 16 (F)
<b>Jashne-Mehergan</b> <i>Mah Meher, Roz Meher</i>	Sunday, October 02 (F)
<b>Ayathrem Gahambar</b> <i>Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>	Wednesday, Oct 12- Sunday, Oct 16 (F)
<b>Jashne-Avangan(Avan Ardivisur Parab)</b> <i>Mah Avan, Roz Avan</i>	Wednesday, October 26 (F)
<b>Maidyoshem Gahambar</b> <i>Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher</i>	Friday, Oct 28 - Tuesday, Nov. 01 (K) Sunday, Nov 27- Thursday, Dec 01 (S)
<b>Jashne-Adargan</b> <i>Mah Adar, Roz Adar</i>	Thursday, November 24 (F)
<b>Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra</b> <i>Mah Dae, Roz Khorshed</i>	Tuesday, April 26 (K) Thursday, May 26 (S) Monday, December 26 (F)
<b>Maidhyarem Gahambar</b> <i>Mah Dae, Roz Meher-Bahram</i>	Saturday, Dec 31-Wednesday, Jan 04 (F)
<b>Jashne Daegan</b> <i>Mah Dae, Roz Daepdin</i>	Saturday, January 07 (F)
<b>Jashne Bahmangan</b> <i>Mah Bahman, Roz Bahman</i>	Monday, January 16 (F)
<b>Paitishem Gahambar</b> <i>Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>	Wednesday, Jan 11 - Sunday, Jan 15 (K) Friday, Feb 10 - Tuesday, Feb 14 (S)
<b>Jashne Sadeh</b> <i>Mah Bhman, Roz Aban</i>	Tuesday, January 24 (F)
<b>Ayatherem Gahambar</b> <i>Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>	Friday, Feb 10 - Tuesday, Feb 14 (K) Sunday, March 11 - Thursday, March 15 (S)
<b>Fravardegan/Panjeh/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar</b> <i>Five Gatha days</i>	Thursday, March 15 - Monday, March 19 (F)
<b>Char-Shanbe-Soori (Heralding the New Year)</b> <i>Tuesday Prior to NauRooz</i>	Tuesday March 20 (F)
<b>NauRooz or Jamshedi NauRooz (New Year)</b> <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd</i>	Wednesday, March 21 (F)

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



## COMING EVENTS

**NOVEMBER 2011** Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism (SSZ) conference November 12-13 **Zoroastrian Connection with Christians and Jews** at Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr, Chicago [www.s-s-z.org](http://www.s-s-z.org)

**NOVEMBER 19-22, 2011 Annual Meeting, American Academy of Religions** San Francisco, California, Moscone Center & Surrounding Hotels [http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting/Current\\_Meeting/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/default.asp)

**FEBRUARY 2012, 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women** February 27- March 9, UN, New York. Theme: The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges, Contact UN-NGO co-chairs Afreed Mistry [afreed.mistry@gmail.com](mailto:afreed.mistry@gmail.com), Homi F Gandhi [Homidgandhi@gmail.com](mailto:Homidgandhi@gmail.com), Behram Pastakia [bpastakia@aol.com](mailto:bpastakia@aol.com),

**JULY 2012 13th ZOROASTRIAN GAMES**, July 4, hosted by Zoroastrian Society of Ontario.

**AUGUST 2012, SIXTEENTH NORTH AMERICAN Z CONGRESS NEW YORK**, August 1-5, 2012. Zarathushti Existence in the Contemporary World [www.zagny.org](http://www.zagny.org)

**9/11 Unity Walk on 9/09/2012**, Embassy Row, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm Begins at Washington Hebrew Congregation and concludes at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial, Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington DC [www.911unitywalk.org](http://www.911unitywalk.org)

**2012 FEZANA SILVER JUBILEE**

### KERSHAW K. KHUMBATTA, P.C. Certified Public Accountants

Business and Individual Tax Planning,  
Accounting and Tax Preparations,  
Federal and State Payroll Processing & Tax Audits,

Kershaw K. Khumbatta, CPA  
Nazneen K. Khumbatta, Office Manager.

1455 HIGHWAY 6 SOUTH  
Sugar Land, Texas 77478

Tel: 281-313-8006  
Fax: 281-313-8036

[cpa@khumbattapc.com](mailto:cpa@khumbattapc.com)



# Communal giving



**The following piece consists of two excerpts from a larger article of the same title published in the volume *Papers in Honour of Mary Boyce* (Leiden, 1985). In the full article, John Hinnells, the noted historian of the Parsis, provides extensive analysis and documentation of the different types of philanthropic activities engaged in by members of the community. He has kindly agreed to let us publish these excerpts here. As Professor Hinnells notes, Parsi charity has been prolific but relatively little has been written about it in community histories. Even less has been written about charity within the Iranian Zoroastrian community (Mary Boyce has written a little about individual acts of charity in chapter three of her book *A Persian Stronghold of Zoroastrianism*). Charity has always been an essential component of Zoroastrianism and we have ample historical evidence of pious endowments and foundations from the ancient Persian empires. Hopefully this article will inspire interest amongst readers to trace charity and philanthropy within their own family histories.**

**Dinyar Patel**

## THE FLOWERING OF ZOROASTRIAN BENEVOLENCE: PARSI CHARITIES IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

JOHN R. HINNELLS

Zoroastrianism has always stressed the religious duty of benevolence. In his vision of heaven the righteous Viraz saw the souls of the liberal elevated above all other souls in splendour. One text declares that *"the greatest good work is liberality."* In Zoroastrian thought, unlike some other religions, there is no idea that there is anything evil in wealth, provided it is gained with honesty, and dispensed with charitable generosity. Indeed, if one practices many duties and meritorious deeds, but does not give anything to the poor, then it is said not to be possible for one's soul to be redeemed. "The perfect desire" is said to be "the desire to amass worldly goods as much as to further righteousness thereby."

European travelers to India have frequently commented on the magnificent liberality displayed by Parsis both towards members of their own community and to others. James Ovington in the 17th century commented:

*... they show a firm Affection to all of their own Sentiments in Religion, assist the Poor, and are very ready to provide for the Sustenance and Comfort of such as want it. Their universal Kindness, either in employing such as are Needy and able to work, or bestowing a seasonable bounteous Charity to such as are Infirm and Miserable, leave no Man destitute of Relief, nor suffer a Beggar in all their Tribe...*

Numerous other such accounts might be cited. A typical nineteenth century comment is that of Mrs. Postans:

*They are an enterprising and public spirited people, devoting their riches to worthy and beneficial purposes. To the most influential of this class, the Presidency (of*

*Bombay) is indebted for its greatest improvements; and the liberality of the Parsee merchants is conspicuous, when public subscription is required for any object, tending to promote the common good.*

It has not only been western travelers who have commented on Parsi charity; the host nation has also commented. So, for example, Gandhi in a speech at Rajkotwalla Baug in Karachi on 1 April 1931 said:

*The Parsi community is such a marvel that it does not need the protection of anyone. It finds its way and protection by its wisdom, intelligence and ability. Their charities are so famed in the country that it has no parallel, that is their protection.*

Because Parsi charity has been so evident and widespread it has been argued that it is an important factor in the acceptance of the community in India. This is one reason given to explain why Parsis' economic success has not provoked the Asiatic equivalent of anti-Semitism.

A common saying both among the Parsis and non-Parsis in Bombay is "charity thy name is Parsi." It is a part of the Parsi image often noted in the Press. Given this magnitude and importance of Parsi charity it is, perhaps, rather surprising that no systematic study of the subject has been undertaken. It does not form even the subject of a chapter in the general histories of the community.

The reason for this silence is in fact not hard to see, it is the very vastness of the subject. There are accounts of the work of individuals and of certain specific foundations or institutions, notably the Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Parsee Benevolent Institution, the Tata Charities and above all the Bombay Parsi Panchayet. These represent but a tiny tip of the iceberg. In 1961 the BPP administered approximately one thousand foundations. A further problem for any study of Parsi charities is that many were not made public, but were simply private kindly acts. Numerous obituaries refer to the private charities of noted





# Communal giving



individuals. The first Parsi charity to present an annual report was the N. M. Wadia charities on 21 March 1914. Details earlier than that are extremely difficult to obtain. There was no legal registration of Parsi charities until 1935 and even later charity works of large proportions are not always well documented. Almost the only source of information available is the columns of the *Parsi Prakash*.

Despite the various limitations of the sources which have been commented on, it is possible to obtain a reasonable general perspective on Parsi public charities, and some trends can be noted. In the 19th century religious buildings such as temples and dakhmas proliferated, whereas housing has been the primary object of building funds in the 20th century. Perhaps the overriding concern of this 20th century charity has been community preservation. Educational and medical charities have flourished throughout both centuries. The 19th century witnessed not only a vast increase in Parsi wealth but also in the charitable donations concerned with the underprivileged, widows, orphans, the disabled and the poor. In the 20th century the concern has been to organize charities, though it must be said that is an aim which has met with limited success.

The causes to which charity has generally been given accord with traditional Zoroastrian values and priorities, the religion, the welfare of fellow men, health, education and the home. Given the importance attached to animals in Zoroastrianism it is, perhaps, slightly surprising that more was not donated to animal charities. The only family to make a number of large bequests for animals was the Petits between 1892 and 1896. It is, however, in accord with Zoroastrianism that priority should be given to mankind.

Different Parsi families are often linked with particular types of charity and at different periods. Foremost in charitable work in the mid 19th century were the Jijibhoys whose concerns were strikingly diverse: communal charities (e.g. 5 temples, three dakhmas, and the many schools of the Parsi Benevolent Institution); to all victims of disasters in India and sometimes overseas and notably to major projects for the welfare of Indians (such as hospitals and colleges). Sir J. J. was a considerable pioneer in various fields. But the main Jijibhoy charities are in the 19th century and largely the work of the early holders of the baronetcy when the family was at its wealthiest. In contrast Tata charities are mostly 20th century acts and though they include communal concerns, and donations to their family home of Navsari, they are particularly associated with universities, industrial and scientific research and medicine.

In between these two examples, which stand at either end of the period, other leading families are the Camas who, apart from the London based D. P. Cama, gave mostly to communal charities (two fire temples, burial

ground, priestly institute, housing, schools); the Readymoneys, most of whose donations were to large scale public works, (e.g. university buildings); and the Petits who, especially around the turn of the century, were prominent in both communal work (orphanages, four fire temples, housing) and inter-communal concerns, notably medicine. The family name to appear most frequently throughout the period under review in all types of charity is the Wadias who were concerned with some 22 temples, and 37 large medical projects; with such communal interests as housing, funds for poor, disabled or widowed Parsis, Parsi schools and gymkhanas, as well as with hospitals and victims of disasters overseas, with churches and institutes of higher education in India. But perhaps the most impressive feature of [Parsi philanthropy] is the many hundreds of families involved in Parsi public charities. Between 1901 and 1941 the Parsi population of India totaled 94,190 and 114,890 respectively. It is impossible to calculate accurately how many families that represents, but it is clear that a very high proportion of families were actively involved in public charities, especially in Bombay where the middle and upper class Parsis were mainly to be found. Many studies of Parsi history have concluded that in the sphere of politics it was not the community as a whole which was active, but rather distinguished individuals who were often isolated from their Parsi contemporaries. Evidently this was not so in charitable work where a broad spectrum of society, wealthy and not so wealthy, orthodox and liberal, sethias and intelligentsia, women as well as men were actively involved.

The ideals of the religion noted at the start of this paper have been implemented on a scale perhaps unequalled in any other community. Charity has mainly been given where the need is evident, close and visible, but it has been dispensed with generosity wherever a pressing need has been seen. In the 17th century Ovington commented on Parsi charity to "all of their own Sentiments in Religion"; in the 19th century Mrs. Postans referred to the liberality of Parsis to fellow communities in Bombay. Doubtless Parsis hope it will continue to be the protection Gandhi said. Despite the ostentatious nature of some acts those who have enjoyed Parsi hospitality for themselves will have little doubt that idealism lies behind the bulk of Parsi charity.

---

<sup>1</sup> The following abbreviations are used throughout the article (in order of use): P.P. for *The Parsi Prakash*, eds. B. B. Patell and R. B. Paymaster, Bombay 1860—in seven volumes; PP for Parsi Panchayet (BPP for the Bombay Parsi Panchayet); DiM for Dar-i-Mihr; Sir J. J. for Sir Jamsetji Jijibhoy; PBI for Parsi Benevolent Institution; PCA for Parsi Central Association; Ps for Parsis; Z'ians for Zoroastrians.

The format of bibliographical references to the *Prakash* has to vary. Until 1901 each of the two volumes is paginated continuously throughout. After that each year



# Communal giving



is separately paginated, sometimes consecutive years are successively paginated. If the reader wishes to follow up references given in this article the important guide is not the volume number, but the year and then page reference.

**The author wishes to express his sincere thanks to his wife, Marianne, for many hours of help with the filing of information collected and to Mrs. Jeanne Lockett for her help with typing. Further, in particular, to Manchester University for generously funding research visits to Bombay.**

Arda Viraz Namag 12:1-6 (H. Jamasp Asa and M. Haug, Bombay and London, 1872), 160f.

Menog i Khrad 4:3 E.T. E.W. West, Sacred Books of the East, XXIV, 26; Dinkard 3:41 J. de Menasce, Le Troisième Livre du Denkart, Paris, 1973, 53f. Menog i Khrad 15:11.

Pursišniha Zoroastrian Catechism, 44. E.T. by K.M. JamaspAsa and H. Humbach, Part I, Wiesbaden, 1971, 67.

Dinkard M.97, 9-11 E.T. R.C. Zaehner, Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism, London, 1961, 279.

A Voyage to Suratt in the year 1689, ed. H.G. Rawlinson, London, 1929, p. 218.

Numerous other examples might be cited.

Western India in 1838, London, 1839, 111 f. P.P. VII.9.

See, for example, the cartoons in the Hindi Punch, March 1906, 25; September 1907, 81 f.; March 1908, 25; September 1911, 76 and 81; September 1912, 83; September 1921, 74; August 1926, 71; September 1927, 70. Voice of India, 1 February 1888. Indian Spectator, 7 September 1890; 22 February 1891; 1 March 1891; 8 March 1891. I am indebted to my ex-student D. Mellor for the references to the last named sources. been undertaken. It does not form even the subject of a chapter in the general histories of the community.

J.R.P. Mody, Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, Bombay, 1859, especially chs. 12-14, 17-23 and

App. 3; J.C. Jehangir, Life of Sir Cowasjee Jehanger Readymoney, Bombay, 1890 esp. 8-72; R.P. Masani, N.M. Wadia and His Foundation, Bombay 1961 chs. 10, 14 and Appendix; F. Harris, J. N. Tata: A Chronicle of His Life, Bombay, 1958, especially ch. 12; A. N. Joshi, Life and Times of Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw, Bombay, 1939, especially ch. 11.

For example Alexandra Girls Institution, Centenary Souvenir, 1863-1963; B.D.

Petit, Parsee General Hospital Diamond Jubilee Year, 1972; N. M. Kelkar, Story of the Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, 1957; H. B. Dhalla, "The M. F. Cama Athornan Institute: 51 years of Service" in 151st Anniversary of the Installation of the Sacred Atash Bahram in Memory of Seth Dadabhai Naoshirvanji Modi at Surat, 118-24, Ed. N. E. Ture1, Surat (n.d. c. 1976); Golden Jubilee Souvenir of Bai Dhunmai & Cowasji Dadabhai dar-e Meher, Bangalore, Bangalore, 1976; P.J. Schroff, "A Note on the History and the Activities of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute" in K. R. Cama Oriental Institute Golden Jubilee Volume, The

Virbaijeeite Centenary Volume, ed.

B.S.H.J. Rustomji, Karachi, 1959; The Golden Jubilee Volume of the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsee Charitable Inst., Bombay, 1941; V. K. Irani, The Jamshedji Nusserwanji Petit Parsi Orphanage Golden Jubilee Memorial Volume (1888-1938), Bombay, 1939.

See The Centenary Volume edited by J.H. Wadia, Bombay, 1950.

R.M. Lala, The Creation of Wealth, Bombay, 1981, ch. 12 and Appendix C.

P.P. 21 March 1914, p. 6. The reports for the early years came out rather sporadically.

See S. F. Desai, History of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, 1860-1960, Bombay, 1982, ch. 14 regarding registration, P.P. 13 August 1938 (44) notes the Tata Trusts had given Rs 2,463,815 in charity 1933-37, details are unavailable.

4 July 1892 (P.P. III, 410) D.M. Petit donated Rs. 8,000 to a Petit hospital for animals; 21 September 1892 (P.p. 111, 410), Dinbai, N. M. Petit donated Rs. 7,000 to the above hospital; 10 January 1892 (P.P. III, 411), D. M. Petit donated Rs. 25,000 to Calcutta hospital for animals; 5 April 1893 (PP. III, 422) D. M. Petit donated Rs. 5,000 to Bombay Panjrapole for fodder; 14 January 1895 (PP. III, 516) D. M. Petit donated Rs. 10,000 to Nasik Animal Hospital; 28 December 1896 (P.P. III, 607) D. M. Petit donated Rs. 1,000 to protect cattle in Sholapur District; 4 June 1898 (P.P. III, 694) widow of J.N. Wadia Rs. 5,000 for animal water tank; 21 January 1908 (page 3) C.D. Patel donated proceeds of dramatic productions for cattle in Hyderabad; 18 March 1910 (84) M. Dhumbhoora gave Rs. 3,000 to Bulsar Veterinary Institute; 29 November 1910 (100) N.M. Wadia Trustees allocate Rs. 15,000 annually for domestic animal welfare; 1 June 1915 (85) M.D. Dhumbhoora donated Rs. 5,322 to Animal hospital; 2 March 1924 (147) R.C. Rasoya donated Rs. 5,000 for animal dispensary, Navsari; 6 October 1933 (138)

M.N. Mehta built Poona Veterinary Hospital; Annual Report, 1937 D. Petit built operation ward Nasik Animal Hospital.

**Dinyar Patel** is a Ph.d Candidate in the Department of Modern Indian History at Harvard University. His doctoral dissertation is on Dadabhai Naoroji

**John Hinnells** is Emeritus Professor, Liverpool Hope University and Honorary Research Professor SOAS, Senior Member Robinson College and Life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge. He has researched and authored several books on Zoroastrians and the Zoroastrian Diaspora.



# Communal giving



## CULTIVATING AN ETHIC OF COLLECTIVE GIVING

We are followers of Prophet Zarathushtra, living the “Good Life” – purposeful and useful, in the service of our fellowmen, which is service to Ahura Mazda. Renunciation, ascetism, punishing the body or propitiating Ahura Mazda is not our style. The Self is diminutised; the plural form is advanced over the singular, and togetherness is promoted, at least that has been the experience of this author, a near octogenarian. We work in the service of Ahura Mazda to move His Creation forward to a blissful state that we call Frasho Kereti. That is our moral compass.

### IMPERATIVES OF THE ZARATHUSHTI FAITH

Like in any society over time the message gets paler and the instruments that deliver the message get stronger. We see this phenomenon occurring in our own society where the message has become weaker and at times almost inaudible to the practitioner. If we were to examine some of the Zarathushti imperatives and relate those imperatives to the aspect of giving we may draw astounding conclusions, and bring home the realization that we need to change our outlook to giving as a society.

The three cardinal prayers that we recite several times a day, emphasize the virtues of Giving and Service:

- **Ashem Vohu:** happiness unto him who gives happiness to others.
- **Yatha Ahuvariyo:** service to humanity.
- **Yenghe Hatam:** reverence of the righteous that have preceded us.

The two concepts that are constantly in front of us emphasize our connectedness:

- **Fravashi: the “Divinity within Humanity”** that gives us our connectedness with each other
- **Barsam: “Strength in Togetherness”** -- the ritual that symbolically binds us together.

Our faith encourages accumulation of wealth as long as it is used for good and charitable purposes; and proclaims awareness of the Natural Law – the more you give the more you receive.

These and other principles of the Zarathushti faith have impelled Zarathushtis to contribute beyond measure, toward philanthropic causes: building institutions of learning, building hospitals, building schools, colleges and the list goes on. Observe that Zarathushtis have not indulged in building large monuments to propitiate or appease God – that aspect is mostly absent from the Zarathushti theology.

Note that Zarathushti giving in the past has not been only for Zarathushtis, but for the benefit of all humanity,

which has earned the community the nomenclature: **“Parsi Thy Name is Charity.”** Giving within our own community has contributed to the welfare, well-being and prosperity of our community – and gained the respect of the broader communities.

Much of this has been possible through the Zarathushti entrepreneurial spirit. Zarathushtis entered uncharted areas of business and commerce, and prospered. This entrepreneurial spirit has ebbed in the last half century, which WZCC (the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce) is attempting to rekindle and re-energize and consequently it is hoped that as entrepreneurship grows and prospers in our community worldwide, so will our community prosper as has been amply demonstrated a century ago.

Today we have to ask ourselves if we are living up to those imperatives -- not as individuals which I have no doubt we do, but collectively as a society, as a group. Are we building those institutions of learning? Are we building those hospitals? Are we building those temples? Are we giving succor to the needy? As for this latter question, I believe we do. We do give succor to the needy like no other, for our community is compassionate beyond measure. But as for the other acts of giving and service, I shall leave you to formulate your own opinions. The question may draw the ire of some who are engaged and committed in this activity, and for others it may be a reminder. This is a question that each group has to examine for themselves and draw conclusions. This author has no credentials to sit in judgment. The purpose is to invoke awareness and each group unto itself must examine and take the needed actions.

### MOVING FROM ENTITLEMENT TO ENLIGHTENMENT

As was said earlier Zarathushtis have been acclaimed for their philanthropy, notably in India/Pakistan and Iran, but times have changed. The Zarathushti entrepreneurial spirit hallowed by our forefathers has ebbed in the last half century. Moreover, in harsh economic times, with commensurate lesser rewards, lesser amounts may be available for charitable causes, making us draw from the charitable pool, nourished by our predecessors, more than we may subscribe.

The fears of entitlement and dependence have been raised. In whatever charitable work we do we must keep at bay the horrible attendant demon of dependency, loss of self-respect and incentive and preserve human dignity. (Note that WZCC was formed with the sole purpose of rekindling and re-energizing the Zarathushti entrepreneurial spirit)..

These and other factors are compelling reasons for the community to look inwardly and examine if it is not





# Communal giving



time to develop a newer model of sustainable giving. While individual giving will continue as the hallmark of our Zarathushti community, as an imperative of our faith, we need to perhaps supplement giving by individuals with the development of an ethic of collective giving within our community, where every Zarathushti contributes according to his/her means. The power of collective giving, no burden to each individual, needs to be harnessed and put to use. Side benefits of developing such an ethic of collective giving within our community may be many, not the least of which could be the kindling of pride in ourselves.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CULTIVATING AN ETHIC OF COLLECTIVE GIVING

There are several models of giving in other faiths, all of which are forms of moral taxation and in this author's opinion do not fit the Zarathushti mold of creative individualism. Christians have the Tithe or a tenth of one's earnings which is considered to belong to God and must be returned to God. The Jewish faith has the Tzedakh also a tenth to give to charity, and Islam's Fourth pillar is Zakat interpreted to be two and one half of one's net earnings. Zarathushtis have never had such stipulations and yet we have had large charities, more so than other denominations. That alone speaks volumes. And further it is unrealistic to introduce such concepts.

We simply need to make our community become aware of our needs and once there is awareness there is always an adequate response. It therefore behooves us to bring awareness of the ease and benefits of collective giving and develop over several generations a culture of giving.

- Associations/Anjumans must first bring awareness of the needs of a community to its members and demonstrate to them the ease and benefits of a voluntary process that would not be burdensome to anyone. Every member ought to be encouraged to give according to his/her means to a Zarathushti cause worldwide annually, and further also encourage giving to other public causes in the broader community.
- Each Zarathushti community organization could be creative in setting up a process for implementing collective giving. Zarathushti innovation needs to be let loose and then after comparing notes with one another there may bloom a flower whose petals spread to all the rest.
- Children of Associations/Anjumans may be encouraged to raise funds or set aside from their allowance a small portion for collection for a public cause. Children's classes run by our associations must find a way to introduce to the children the power and the value of

collective giving, each according to their situation.

Consider for a moment the value collective giving could bring. If each one of us -- all 25,000 in North America were to give to FEZANA a mere \$20 annually it translates to a half a million dollars, a tidy sum without being a burden to anyone, and further multiply this amount by 25 years! That is the power of collective giving. This, together with large individual donors can and will transform our community.

As President Reagan said: "We have a rendezvous with destiny if we rediscover ourselves and as long as we believe in our first principles and believe in ourselves the future will be ours!" Cultural changes do not happen overnight. It takes a generation or two to take root, but we do need to take the first steps NOW!



**Rohinton M. Rivetna**, the  
First President of FEZANA and  
the WZCC,

Loving, Married  
Zoroastrian Couple  
Seeks  
PARSEE / ZARATHUSHTI  
*Egg Donor*  
Our Gratitude & Remuneration  
Please inquire at  
RZ@diamondinstitute.com  
From Robyn, Registered Nurse,  
Egg Donation Program Manager  
The Diamond Institute  
973-761-5600  
www.ZoroastrianEggDonor.com  
PRIVACY ASSURED



# Communal giving



## OUTSTRETCHED HANDS AND HEARTS

In a small hand – written letter in Gujarati, 9 inches by 7 inches in size, dated 15th August 1861 by Seth Muncherji Hormusji Cama, the founding father of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) exemplified communal giving by saying

"...each person could give according to his means for religious and charitable purposes. This would enable them not only to perform good deeds but also to live in harmony with one another in good and bad times."

### COMMUNALGIVING FROM COAST TO COAST IN NORTH AMERICA

Since 1984, on the first Sunday of every October **Eruch Munshi of ZAGNY** (Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York) holds the Annual *Udvada Atashbehram* Luncheon. This is for the specific purpose for raising funds to help financially needy mobeds, dasturs, the sick, the physically challenged, the poor and to provide financial support for the maintenance of the Atashbehram and agiaries in Udvada, Navsari, Surat and Mumbai. In the past 27 years the Zarathushtis of North America, under the auspices of ZAGNY have raised and remitted \$398,493., an equivalent of Rs 1.9 crores to India. This includes a special donation of \$22,000 from the family of **Neville Golvalla**, to be distributed amongst retired mobeds all over India. Another special donation of \$7000 was also received to be distributed equally amongst the 8 Atashbehras and for an agiary in Surat. If any donor wishes to donate a specific amount in memory of a family member they may do so with specific instructions.

In 1984, the first year of the fund-raiser, \$2,916 was raised which has grown to \$33,600 in 2009.

Eruch Munshi is ably assisted in his fund-raising efforts by **Mehro and Lovji Cama, Pervez and Katie Patel, Kamal and Virasp Davar, Meher and Dinyar Hodiwala, Dixie and Kaizad Cama.**

**YASMIN AND JAMSHED GHADIALI OF NEW YORK** have been collecting funds since the past 25 years for the *B.D Petit Parsee General Hospital, Mumbai* and till December 31, 2010 \$433, 342 have been collected and sent. Till date in 2011 only, \$44,000 has been collected. About 200 families donate every year. The funds are raised through a solicitation letter to all Zarathushtis across USA and Canada, and by hosting a jashan and dinner at their house.

Each family has their own favorite charity or a cause which they wish to support, for the Ghadialis it was Parsi General Hospital, as Yasmin had promised her father who was there for an operation that she would help the hospital. And she has kept her promise many times over!!

**HOMAI KASAD OF CALIFORNIA** One day sitting around their dining table, Homai Kasad and her husband of California were discussing ways to do a good deed for the

community. Homai, a physician, and had done a residency at the *B.D Petit Parsee General Hospital* and had seen how the poor patients benefited there, and so decided to send a donation to the hospital. Her husband *Arvand* who is a culinary chef, had a better idea: he suggested that he would cater a dinner, the Kasads would invite all the community members, and raise much more money for the hospital. It was a very elegant and classy dinner with china and silverware, good linen and flowers. Every penny that was collected was sent to the hospital. There was no deduction even for cost.

So began in 1986 the annual charity dinner. Over the years, people looked forward to this yearly event where they could dress up and have a good time. But age creeps up on all, Arvand stopped catering because of old age, and the dinners are not hosted anymore. However donations are collected, and to date approximately \$250,000 is sent to the hospital. The donations are marked specifically for providing free medicine and supplies to the free patients of the hospital.

In addition to the monetary help, Homai has been able to obtain several cardiac monitors from the hospital she works in and send them to B.D. Petit Parsee General Hospital of Bombay, as well as to the Parsee General Hospital of Karachi.

### RUSTOM C CHOTHIA OF MUMBAI WRITES

The **Dadar Matunga Parsi Zoroastrian Association** was established by **Late Seth Mancherji Edulji Joshi**, the founder of the *Dadar Parsi Colony*, which houses the single largest Parsi population in the world. The Association was started in 1925 mainly with the purpose of organizing social/religious/cultural activities and having liaisons with government organizations -Municipality, Roads, Water, Drainage, Gardens etc. The Association even opened a grain shop for the use of the Colony residents. Thereafter the Association seeing the need to help the less fortunate members of our community started collecting donations and providing poverty relief. Mr Chothia joined the Association as a volunteer during the fifties and since 1999 is its President. As of today they have helped more than 200 of our more unfortunate community members providing financial and medical relief. Most of them are old (over 70) and unable to do any work. Several of our beneficiaries are widows with no children, or children who have deserted them or even having physically or mentally challenged children. We also help poor students with their fees, books and tuitions. We organize an annual exhibition sale to encourage small home entrepreneurs where they can showcase their wares.

They are a registered Charitable Trust, and upon request can furnish the latest Balance Sheet and financial statements. The Trust has no office expenses, salaries or



# Communal giving



overhead expenses. All such costs are absorbed by the Trustees personally. All donations received go for the benefit of the poor. We are desperately in need of funds to continue our activity.

educational aid, a food scheme supplying free meals to the poor and needy of our community, Religious classes for children and summer camps for the young are some of the activities.

**Contact person Ms. Mithoo Jimi Jesia. Jesia Building - Jame Jamshed Road,- Parsi Colony, Dadar.**

**MANCHERJI JOSHI MEMORIAL EDUCATION FUND.** (Established in 1969) is a registered Trust whose sole activity is to give educational aid to poor deserving Parsi Zarathushti children.

**Contact person Ms Zarin Jimmy Engineer, Marker Mansion, - Lady Jehangir Road, - Parsi Colony, - Dadar.**



86 year old lady selling mops and kitchen cleaners made by blind and handicapped children



Electrician gentleman comes from Navsari to sell lamps with holy pictures on them

The photos below are from the ANNUAL EXHIBITION CUM SALE at Sohrab Palamkot Hall Dadar, on August 6th and 7th, 2011. This annual event of Exhibition cum Sale is organized to enable Parsi ladies and gents to work from home and make a living. Some of them in their eighties are still toiling for a living.

## MANCHERJI E. JOSHI MEMORIAL TRUST.

Founded in 1980 - Public Registered Trust - It was started with a view to combat the wave of commercialization that had swept over the Dadar Matunga Area in the eighties and to preserve the restrictive covenant in the Dadar Parsi Colony. Today the charitable objects of the Trust include poverty relief, medical and

**J.N.Petit Library, Dadar.** established since 1929 caters to the needs of the Parsi residents in the locality. The Library has around 450 members, and offers 6 daily, 8-10 weekly and fortnightly newspapers, magazines and publications. There are around 10000 books in English and Gujarati for the members to read, many of them rare and several on Zarathushti Religion and History. However, in this age of TV and Computers there is a shortage of funds for the Library.

**"WE make a LIVING by what we GET, but we make a LIFE by what we GIVE"**

**Sir Winston Churchill**



**COLDWELL  
BANKER  
COMMERCIAL**

**NRT**

**Dinyar Hodiwala**

Broker Associate



**T (732) 398-2731**  
e- [hodi@cbmoves.com](mailto:hodi@cbmoves.com)



**For all your Real Estate needs**

**Residential** (Estate Homes, Farm-Houses, Custom-Homes)

**Commercial** (Hotels, Office Space, Retail, Shopping-Centers)

**Investment Properties** (Land, Multi-Family, Office Condos)

Within USA & Internationally



**Coldwell Banker**

3228 Route 27 .  
Kendall Park . NJ 08824 . USA







## Communal giving



### THOSE WHO CARRY US TO OUR LAST RESTING PLACE DESERVE OUR GRATITUDE ---OUR NASSESALARS

There is a saying, "*Parsi Thy Name Is Charity*" and how very true and sweet it is when every year since 2004 when I started this charity, I have had overwhelming support of my fellow Zarthushtis with checks coming in dollars both US and Canadian, Pounds, Francs, Rupees as well as in kind via provisions for our **Nassesalars**, folks who bathe the *Ruvans* (the dead body) and the entire support staff at Dungarwadi in Mumbai. Individuals of FEZANA as well as ZAGNY have contributed a handsome amount each and every year as well. I thank you all very much.

Your contributions in the past has consistently met or exceeded my goals and target. In 2004, I was able to collect US \$ 2,400.00 and every subsequent year the collections have increased. Last year we collected \$ 9000. My goal for 2011/2012 is \$10,000 again with the help of FEZANA and ZAGNY.

Our Nassesalars are doing an outstanding job in performing their duties to our dearly departed family members and friends and humbly doing what is required of them. They are doing a job which no other member of our community cares to perform.

However the way the community treats these men leaves much to be desired. No modern day Pall-Bearer's position is worse than that in our society. Even in 2011, the treatment given to our Nassesalars is disgusting, repulsive and leaves a lot to be desired amongst some of our elite, affluent, high society, educated Parsis, Irani Zarthushtis.

In 2007 when I was at Dungarwadi distributing their envelopes, a very elegantly dressed aristocratic lady seeing the crowd at the Dungarwadi Office, came inside and inquired as to what was the crowd all about. They all pointed to me saying that "Fali" has come from America



with support money for us. The aristocratic lady looked at me and snapped saying, "*why are you giving them EXTRA Monies, they don't deserve this when all they will be doing is get drunk on the job and make a nuisance of themselves.*" I responded to her by saying, "*I have yet to see a drunken Nassesalar on duty*" and besides the gory job that they do, a glass or two of drinks after their duty was none of her business." I then challenged her by saying, "*If today the Nassesalars all went on vacation would she step into their shoes and do their job.*" She high tailed out of the office so fast I had no time to call her "Speedy Gonzalez".

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS** Some of you might say that the Nassesalars and support staff in Dungarwadi do get assisted living quarters and some monetary support from Bombay Parsi Panchayet (BPP), but their socio-economic standard is at the very bottom of the totem pole. They can only enter the agiary or atashbehran after taking a "nahn". Some live in cheap housing in the suburbs. Some reside at Dungarwadi where BPP has provided them free or subsidized accommodation. They are not integrated into the community, they are made to live quite apart from the rest of our community, in whose eyes they are the most abject of beings. They accept this job because of poverty. They marry within their own ranks. They are born, marry and die, perfect strangers to ALL except their own class, passing through the streets and Dungarwadi only to fetch the dead and carry them inside our "Tower Of Silence". Even to be near one of them is degradation and TABOO. This way of life is traumatic for their children. Think about what their children must be feeling as to why the rest of the Zarthushtis are shunning them, why they cannot advance in life and be friends with the other kids within the Zarthushti community?. Many of them write to me about the costs of medical and educational help for their children. The donations received help with the schooling and medical care of the families.

Every year I visit Dungarwadi, shake hands with ALL OUR Nassesalars, support Staff and hand over their share of monies collected in an envelope, make them count their share and obtain their signature. A month before I leave for Mumbai, ZAGNY Treasurer sends the TOTAL collected for the Nassesalars to *Mr. Dinshaw Tamboly*. Mr Tamboly then deducts 3% of the TOTAL received as CHARITY Tax (which is handed over to the charity commissioner and informs me of the balance after conversion rate and tax deducted). I then give him the Names of ALL individuals and the amounts that each will receive. WZO Trust Funds then write the checks.



## Communal giving

A total of 52 people at Dungerwadi are given varying amounts. 17 Nassesalars, 6 Ladies/Gents (folks who bathe the corpse), 1 Sagdi Mobed (very old priest performing prayers at the top of the hill near the dokhma), 2 Mehtajis (assistant priests), 3 Hearse Drivers (they receive the largest share of Rupees every year.) Rest of the folks received varying amounts.

In 2010, each of the 52 Members of the Dungerwadi staff received varying amounts of money, with the Nassesalars receiving around Rs. 15,000.00 each.

In 2009 each of the staff member who received his share had to deposit 50% of their share in Zoroastrian Bank 3 year CDs from which only the quarterly interest could be cashed and the CD to stay in place for the entire 3 years

The distribution list is open for inspection upon request to [fali\\_shroff@yahoo.com](mailto:fali_shroff@yahoo.com)

It must be stated that it is only in Mumbai that there are so many pursuing this vocation. In cities of Gujarat, it is mainly volunteers or family members who act as nassesalars whenever a death occurs in a family.

If you wish to donate towards the welfare of the Nassesalars please make out a check to **ZAGNY** and in the Memo line at the bottom write "*Critical Assistance - Nassesalars*" and mail to

*Fali D. Shroff; 39 Crescent Avenue, Waldwick, New Jersey 07463. USA*

ALL checks received are documented and sent to the ZAGNY Treasurer.

**FALI SHROFF** joined the Training Ship "Dufferin", after high school and graduated with an Extra First Class and was awarded "Runners-Up To the President Of India's Gold Medal". He served at sea for over 18 years and held various ranks including Master (Captain) of various ships. In 1989 he immigrated to Canada and later to USA and had a career change from shipping to High Tech. Currently he is a High-Tech Solar Designer and Consultant <http://www.givemesolarpanels.com>

Fali has volunteered his services and served on the ZAGNY Board as Vice President, and is a Trustee on the Board of DMZT (Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple in Pomona NY). He is Senior Member of "CERT" Team (Community Emergency Response Team) in the Town of Waldwick.

Fali with wife Pam is now exploring avenues of helping in the villages of Gujarat where a "Shroff cottage" is being constructed to help a needy family.

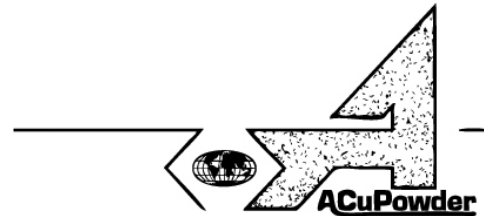
### **ACuPowder International, LLC**

901 Lehigh Ave, Union, NJ 07083  
908-851-4500 : Fax 908-851-4597

### **ACuPowder TN, Inc.**

6621 Hwy 411 So, Greenback TN 37742  
865-856-3021 : Fax 865-856-3083

email: [daver@acupowder.com](mailto:daver@acupowder.com)  
web: [www.acupowder.com](http://www.acupowder.com)



## **ACuPowder**

AND

## **ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE  
IRANIAN ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION

INVITES YOU TO

## **XVI NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI CONGRESS**

AUGUST 02 - 05 2012

HILTON RYE TOWN, NEW YORK



THEME:

## **ZARATHUSHTI EXISTENCE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**



# Communal giving



## POURCHISTA FOUNDATION IN YAZD

The Pourchista foundation in Yazd was started initially though funds provided by the Behkradina family and friends, It teaches skills to young Zarathushti ladies to earn or save money – Amongst the many diverse skills which are taught (e.g silk flower making, dressmaking/tailoring, sweets making, computer skills, sculpture, hairdressing, table cloth sewing, cooking, calligraphy, etc) some are more and some less effective in providing incomes. In addition more traditional skills like sedreh sewing, koshti weaving, prayer hats making, Zarathushti dolls making, etc are also taught.

Then based on the great success of this venture the foundation moved onto starting a Senior Citizens Day Centre to provide a venue for our lonely seniors to enjoy life with medical check ups, meals, excursions, exercises etc.

When people heard and saw the positive results of the work done by this foundation in Yazd, donations started coming in, not only in cash but also in, houses bequeathed. Money is also made from selling the products produced by these young ladies at any Zarathushti function they can attend. WZO then made serious efforts to find support funds. Items will go on line shortly;

Mr. Mehrban Zartoshty and his late brother Feridon amongst many other charitable activities in Iran have paid for the establishment of the first Zarathushti retirement center in Tehran, a mutli-story building for limited full time residents. They have also paid for the establishment of the first of its kind Zarathushti day center for retired people in Yazd.

Mr. Parviz Varjavand from his own resources has bought old houses from Zarathushti families in Yazd's Zarathushsti quarter and restored them for the future generations to get a sense of the past.

### MOBED FIROUZGARY OF IRAN WRITES

On the whole our Local Community welfare affairs, including the maintenance of our Holy places like the Fire Temples and other Pilgrimage places are looked after by local or related Anjumans/ Associations. As for example the welfare of Iranian Mobeds is the responsibility of the Anjuma e Mobedan. Every Fire Temple, places of pilgrimage, places of burials, community schools, community welfare centers including the Tehran Senior Citizens Center and that of Yazd are entrusted to some

Anjuman or Authorized Association like the *Fravahar / Amordad Publications, Youths / Women Associations* etc.

These Anjumans have their Trust funds and regular individual supports from donors who choose to pay into the Bank Accounts that are listed at the central association and public notice boards, anonymously or under specific names and objectives, like in the memory of a deceased / thanksgiving over grant of a wish etc. For the past 12 years, the Islamic Government of Iran contributes, annually, fair sums towards the cultural and welfare expenses of the three recognized minority religions of Iran i.e the Zartoshtis, Christians (+Assyrians) and Jews. For the Zartoshtis, this sum is distributed between the Anjumans depending on their activities and annual expenses.

Even though we have charitable centers which are founded by philanthropists like **Arbab Rostam Giev, the Zartoshti Brothers and Arbab Fereidoon / Arbab Mehraban Zartoshti**, individually, and others, whereas they have their appointed Trustees, the final decisions are left to the local Anjuman / Association which manage these centres

## Zoroastrian Studies Projects International

-  **Zoroastrian Artefacts, Books**
-  **CDs, DVDs**
-  **Sudra & Kasti**
-  **Sukhar, Loban, Vehr**
-  **Diva na glass, Kakra**
-  **Gift Items**
-  **T Shirts**



**And much more ...**

Available @  
8 Lacoste Blvd., Brampton, On L6P 2K4  
Call: Khushru & Pearl Chothia  
(416) 677-7555 (416) 917-7402





# Communal giving

## DREAMING TO CREATE REALITY AMIDST THE SAHYADRI MOUNTAINS.

### The realization of the College of Nursing at Bel-Air



**Kamalrukh Katrak Karkaria**

"You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. You can't get there by bus, only by hard work and risk and not quite knowing what you're doing." This was the message by Alan Alda during the 1980 Commencement address at Connecticut College. Out of the 20th and into the 21st century – this process of achievement, this message of do not avoid that which is hard, nothing comes easy, still holds true.

The success of Bel-Air – initially as a TB sanatorium, morphing into a center for HIV/ AIDS and growing to house a school of nursing is the epitome of this very sentiment and drive.



The graduating class with their Director Fr Tomy K and Principal Sr Martha

This drive of not avoiding that which is hard, as well as the passion to be great educators of life as well as the passion to absorb and impart knowledge, allowed the hosting of the graduation ceremony of the Bel Air College of Nursing on March 19, 2011. This is a facility that has been envisioned to raise the standard of nursing through advanced degrees, achieved by exchanging faculty & students between collaborating facilities and institutions - most of which were represented in the list of invited guests.

It was a day that brought together the abilities and dreams of educators and students alike. It was a day that marked the achievement of not just the students of the first class to graduate from the College of Nursing at Bel-Air getting their Bachelorette degrees but also of the visionaries in the guise of the Red Cross, The mission, University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Nursing (UIC - CON), the principal of the college, the different hospitals that supported the practical dispensing of the knowledge and most of all the fruition of an idea in the mind of **Dr Mehroo Patel and Prof Minu Patel**, who with the assistance of the late **Dr. Beverly Mc Elmurry, Director of International Nursing Office of the World Health Organization**, worked on making the school of nursing and the first class of graduating



From left Dr Jamkar Vice Chancellor Maharashtra University of Health Sciences; Prof, Dr Mi Ja Kim, Executive Director, Global Health Leadership Office, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA; presenting a graduation certificate



students, a reality. Dr McElmurry passed onto eternal life in May 2010 but had heard of the celebration of this achievement before her death.

This occasion held at M.R.A. Centre Auditorium, Panchgani, was also a celebration of the Annual Day 2010-11 and was graced by *Honorable Chief guest Professor Dr. Jamkar, M.s. Ph.D, Honorable Vice Chancellor, Maharashtra University of Health Sciences ; Honorable Col. Ajit Palekar, Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences University, Karad; Prof. Dr Mi Ja Kim, Ph.D, R.N. FRCN, FAAN, Executive Director, Global Health Leadership Office, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA- the guest of Honor; Chairman Mr Kersi Gherda Indian Red Cross Society, Maharashtra State Branch; Honorary Secretary, Mrs Homai Modi Indian Red Cross Society, Maharashtra State Branch.* The entire effort was put together by members of Bel Air Committee, Bel-Air Director Fr. Tomy and College of Nursing Principal Sr Martha, Faculty, staff and students, including the new graduates.



## Communal giving



The Program involved a unique procession followed by the lighting of the Lamp a tradition followed in India – which signifies knowledge. It was especially significant on this occasion since the activities being honored were governed by the light of knowledge – intention being, through knowledge - ignorance, darkness and suffering can be dispelled.

The Red Cross and the Mission including the Principal of the college thanked the visionaries for all their help and support. However, nothing was more rewarding than watching the young students lining up to collect their graduating certificates with untamed energy as well as listening to a student representative, *Ms Alena Joseph*, of the graduating class coming up to the microphone and in words walked the audience thru the past 4 years...



Ms Alena Joseph

.. Of their young lives,  
 ..of the lessons they learnt from Bel-Air as students,  
 .. of their small beginnings and their big visions,  
 .. of a life leading to a new profession and future,  
 .. of the hopes and the anxieties,  
 .. of the growing of Bel-Air staff and students to becoming their families,  
 .. of the meaning of the healing touch,  
 .. of the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional development to provide the selfless service,  
 .. of the words of the Bel-Air Family and Fr. Tomy that enforced the importance of dreaming, visualizing and planning,  
 .. of role models being their teachers and the principal– not having a senior year ahead of them,  
 .. of the learning to spread the light of humanity through their hands specially to people who seem to be deprived of the same,

This was all followed by amazing performances by the students of the college of nursing showcasing the diversity of talent in the student group.

It was exciting and energizing to hear the chief guest, *Professor Dr. Jamkar* talking about monetary funding and interest free loans that could be made available for these and M.Sc. program at the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences studies. *Honorable Col. Ajit Palekar* emphasized the worth of the practical experience and the multiple opportunities that have been provided for the students through collaboration with Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences, which is a unique quality of the program. *Dr Mi Ja Kim of UIC* stressed on quality of this program and enforced the need to keep up the cross- cultural program element. The importance of organizing thoughts and information and constantly striving to better one's self, was vocalized by *Dr Mehroo and Prof. Minu Patel*. Dr Mehroo Patel under the umbrella of Bel Air Benefit Foundation (B.A.B.F.) also provided an incentive to promote further graduate studies, as in Masters of Science in Nursing, as well as encourage the young graduates to travel to learn from "cross cultures". This scheme as they saw it was to have a graduate program that would raise the standard of the knowledge dispensing process even beyond that which was set for the Bachelors of Science in nursing degree.

Guests were encouraged to tour the beautiful grounds of Bel-Air, walk through the corridors of the College of Nursing and then sit to enjoy a meal that was lovingly prepared on the grounds.

As the sun set over the *Sahyadri Mountain Ranges*, we had just been given a wonderful tour of the library and college - one couldn't help but wonder what was brewing in the minds of the benevolent persons that had made all this happen - just then the *Principal, Sr Martha*, mentioned how they were working at creating more awareness of this institution and building a dormitory for resident students.

All in all one ended the day with Robert Frost's sentiment - *I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.*

How are these visions and dreams funded ..... that would be part of another story and another addition.



**Kamalrukh Katrak Karkaria**  
 was born in Bombay, India. She presently lives in Pune, India practicing Architecture and Zoroastrianism using a global approach with both.



# Communal giving



## FROM CHARITY TO PHILANTHROPY

[Author's Note: The contents of this article are India centric]

Let me begin by quoting Lewis Carroll:

*"The time has come, the Walrus said,  
To talk of many things,  
Of shoes and ships and sealing-wax,  
Of cabbages and kings,  
And why the sea is boiling hot,  
And whether pigs have wings?"*

For the greater good of the community in India, the time is opportune to introduce into public domain, vital issues that need to be deliberated upon objectively and dispassionately. In my estimation one such important issue that needs to be deliberated and reviewed is the manner in which charity funds are disbursed by community Trusts / Funds.

The traditional concept of community charity in India has over the ages been to provide financial support to those who are economically challenged. A plethora of Trusts have over the years been disbursing substantial amounts to beneficiaries within the community.

Many of our community Trusts depend only on information provided by prospective beneficiaries in their applications or on the data that is filled on forms issued by them. Very few Trusts undertake an 'on site' investigation of applications by visiting the prospective beneficiaries and conducting in-depth interviews. This results in some beneficiaries receiving largess far in excess of their requirement. Many a times, able bodied individuals, buoyed by such largesse, focus all their talents and energies into generating income from various Trusts through appeals and applications rather than pursuing gainful professions.

The end result of such a casually administered overdose of charity, that many in the community have now begun to look upon as their inherent right, has over the years, made such beneficiaries and their family members dependent on charity, blunted their competitive edge, and severely compromised the possibility of they or their family members ever achieving anything worthy of note.

It is the common lament of many within the community that for quite some time now the community has not produced an iconic individual; that hardly any from our community holds important positions in elite services such as armed forces, administrative services and so on. However, whilst we lament such an insipid scenario, we

**Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly**

do not feel it essential to analyze the reasons that have brought us to such a sorry pass.

We appear to have forgotten that we live in a world that has metamorphosed beyond comprehension, where competitiveness in all areas of human endeavor has become the rule; that today's world belongs to and caters to the successful, whilst all others are relegated to the backwaters of economic bondage.

It is not that what has been mentioned above is something that we have not been aware of. What is unfortunate is that everyone is aware of the malaise but hardly anyone is willing to collectively address and solve the problem.

As early as in 1931, Sir Ratan Tata Charities had invited *Mr. S. F. Markham, a distinguished graduate of Wadham College, Oxford*, associated with many renowned institutions such as Carnegie Corporation and others, to undertake a study and to report on "The Problems Affecting the Parsi Community".

The *Hon. Sir Phiroze Sethna* in his 'Foreword' to the report has mentioned: "We often hear it said the Parsi community is very charitably inclined and it has large funds at its disposal for the benefit of the poor and the needy, but it is also said and with greater emphasis that because there is no co-ordination amongst these Trusts but much overlapping, that charity is dispensed by them indiscriminately and perhaps the intention of the donors frustrated. Complaint is likewise made that by the system of doles given to the poor of the community we deprive them from becoming self-reliant and it is therefore urged that the needs and wants of the community should be properly studied and help afforded accordingly".

It will be relevant to reproduce a few pertinent quotes from Mr. S. F. Markham's report: -

•*"The majority of the Parsi Charities, however, seem to revel in mystery. No audited accounts are published by many of them, still less Annual Reports. There is much wisdom in the motto 'Do good by stealth' but many of these Charities are at the moment doing positive harm by stealth".*

•*"At the present time an applicant either for relief or educational assistance may go from one Trust to another, getting a little or a lot from each. There has been practically no check on the activities of the 'professional applicant'".*

•*"How many years of so-called 'philanthropy' has it taken to produce this class of 'professional beggars'?"*





# Communal giving



Those 'charitable' persons who by their lack of common sense have helped to sap the spirit of self-reliance in the community cannot be regarded in any sense of the word as benefactors".

•"I have spoken strongly about the Parsi Charitable Trusts – I wish I could write still more strongly – that my pen could be steeped in vitriol and my words burn themselves into the hearts of trustees, for of all the evils that the community suffers from, this indiscriminate, unscientific, beggar-producing 'charity' is the worst".

•"It should be possible to compile a 'family register' for certain areas or sections, which in the course of the year or two would show up very clearly those families who might be described as 'professional applicants' to the various charities. But in this it is essential that all charities combine. It is obvious of the greatest importance that the children of those receiving charity should not grow up in turn with the 'application complex'".

•"Further, since no Parsi charitable institution has ever made an inquiry into the case or distribution of poverty in the community, it may be that not only much charitable effort is going to the less worthy and needful but also that others more deserving of assistance who will not confess their troubles or distress are neglected".

•"But may I in conclusion point out that it is useless having reports and inquires unless someone has the courage to act on the conclusions and recommendations".

•"I have been impressed by the way in which Parsis of different types have each had their own ideas of meeting various problems. This independence of outlook, admirably in many ways, has, however, the corresponding defects that, as Dr. N. A. F. Moos has pointedly said, "There is not a single major issue in which our community has acted as one man or spoken with one voice. This canker in us is the root cause of all our troubles, not to speak of the steady fall of the prestige of the community." Some communities placed in somewhat similar circumstance, such as the Jews in various countries, the Dutch in South Africa, or indeed the British in Kenya, where they form a mere 17,000 out of millions, have generally acted publicly, whatever their private differences, with a unity and a steadfastness that has served them in good stead. Other communities, in which dissension has ruled, have been swallowed up and have ceased to exist altogether. It is, therefore, imperative that the community should devise some means of unified self-expression, for in unity there is strength".

The quotes from Mr. S. F. Markham's report clearly establish that the community was cautioned, as far back in 1932, about the damage, albeit unintentional, that our charities were causing our own people.

The report of Mr. S. F. Markham was published 80 years earlier. Unfortunately, there has hardly been any appreciable shift between the way Trusts were administered 8 decades earlier and now. **Except for very few Trusts**, all others have chosen to ignore the conclusions that Mr. S. F. Markham handed to us on a platter. We as a community appear to have forgotten, that those who do not learn from the lessons of history condemn themselves to repeat it.

Our community is the only one in India plagued by a negative growth rate. It is therefore important that we should not only retain but substantially enhance our economic health. The standing of our ancestors as leaders of society, motivators of men and matters, acknowledged nation builders, all stemmed from the fact that they had an excellent combination of heads and hearts firmly fixed in the right places alongside economic stability and strength.

Planet Earth of the 21st century has evolved into a world radically different from earlier times in all respects. Our community, insignificant in numbers, needs to offset the numerical disadvantage by being significant in quality and content.

To be significant in quality and content is easier said than done, more so for a community that has been traditionally pampered, literally from the cradle to the grave. To survive in the present genre we will have to revive values that develop and strengthen our mental frame, look beyond the relief provided by doles that so many of our community members traditionally expect and depend on.

**Dispensation of doles, except to economically challenged elders, infirm, and totally handicapped, is a curse that not only makes the able bodied dependent on charity but deprives them of their self-respect and dignity.**

Discipline always percolates from the top downwards, be it in a nation, community, institution or family. It is very vital that the administrators of various Trusts, who have impressive resources available, not only recognize existing facts and circumstances, but also display the courage and wisdom to redefine their agenda for strengthening the rank and file of the community.



## Communal giving



Called for is a dispassionate analysis of the situation that presently prevails, creation of a road map that would enable the taking of sensible decisions that sustain and

enhance the economic strength of the community and propel it forward.

**If the community is to flourish, the thrust of the plethora of community trusts will require to revitalize themselves, redefine their priorities and shift the main focus from dispensation of doles to providing support which would encourage the spark lying latent in our people to grow into a flame, bringing about the resurgence and redevelopment of Zoroastrians as a community of professionals, merchants, entrepreneurs and industrialists.**

The strengths and weaknesses of a nation, community or institution are entirely dependent on the quality of human beings who lead. Success or failure can be either a crown to wear or a cross to carry.

The time has arrived for the administrators of our trusts, big and small, to reassess their programs and policies. Wisdom and vision to foresee the future, restructuring old policies and keeping in tune with the times, is what we all need to address. The presence or otherwise, of these qualities will alone ascertain if our community will prosper or flounder.

It is now time to change the focus of administering charity in its present form and shift towards embracing and

implementing the concept of Philanthropy as it is really meant to be.

### HAPPINESS IS AGELESS:

A report about the work of the World Zoroastrian Organization Trust Funds with healthy adult aging Parsis in Navsari, Gujarat State in India

<http://zoroastrians.net/2011/07/18/happiness-is-ageless/>

Donations can be made on line at [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org)

***Dinshaw Tamboly** has been actively associated in public welfare activities over the last 27 years (1983 onwards). He has been a founding Trustee of the three WZO Trusts in India and spearheads their welfare activities. Dinshaw was a Trustee of Bombay Parsi Punchayet from November 1996 to September 2008. He is a Trustee in 10 other institutions comprising Trusts, hospitals and an Agyari.*

*By profession, Dinshaw is 'corporate counsellor' to various leading Indian corporations, advises them in developing and promoting exports to the sophisticated markets on the continents of North America & Europe. He provides management and counselling services to foreign brands entering Indian markets and plans business strategies for joint ventures, acquisitions & mergers between companies in India & other countries.*

## 2010 SYNOPSIS OF THE MULTIFARIOUS WELFARE ACTIVITIES IN INDIA OF THE WZO TRUST FUNDS

&

### THE WORLD ZARATHUSHTI ORGANISATION TRUST

The WZO Trust Funds and The World Zarathushti Organisation Trust are proud to present before their esteemed donors and community members all over the world, a synopsis of the major welfare activities undertaken in India, during the course of the calendar year 2010.

It is a known fact that all our activities are undertaken from funds raised towards various projects executed by us. It is therefore fitting that first and foremost we acknowledge with sincere gratitude the contributions made by various donors from all over the world.

Whilst we extend our sincere appreciation to all our donors big and small for their munificent support and co-operation we must especially acknowledge our immense gratitude to the continuous and extremely generous support received in 2010 for our multifarious activities from:

1. **Zarathushti Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton & Macao.**

2. **Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund, Mumbai.**
3. **Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai.**
4. **Navajbai Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai.**
5. **World Zoroastrian Organisation, London for raising funds from Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation of UK.**
6. **FEZANA – Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America.**
7. **Mancherji E. Joshi Memorial Trust, Mumbai.**
8. **Executors of the Estate of Late Jehangir Burjor Marshall, Mumbai.**

They have truly been the main pillars of encouragement, motivation and support towards the multifarious welfare projects that were undertaken during the course of 2010.

It was possible for us to execute a major part of our welfare programmes only due to the munificence of the



# Communal giving



above named donors, whose donations have enabled us to provide not only a helping hand to our beneficiaries, but also facilitated many of them to transit from abject poverty to relevant prosperity and return back into the mainstream of society.

Synopsis of our welfare activities during the course of the calendar year 2010 are as under:

## REHABILITATION OF ZARATHUSHTI FARMERS

The rehabilitation of 15 Zarathushti farmers in 12 villages was initiated. The inputs provided have been sinking tube wells, providing submersible pump sets, levelling fields, providing pipelines, seeds & fertilisers, establishing brick kiln, prawn farm etc. A total of Rs. 2,277,251 was disbursed during the year under review.

This project was launched by us in August 1990; we have during the period August 1990 – December 2010 (20 years) undertaken the exercise of rehabilitating 419 families in 176 villages, at the cost of Rs.53,683,651. Principal donor for this activity has been **Navajbai Ratan Tata Trust**

## RURAL HOUSING

By the end of 2009 we had converted 118 huts into cottages. During the year 2010, we undertook the replacement of another 18 huts into cottages bringing the total to 136. The cost of replacement of one hut into a cottage is around Rs.300,000.

## SELF EMPLOYMENT (MICRO CREDIT).

50 Zarathushtis located at 13 different urban, semi urban & rural centres have been supported towards their self employment endeavours in diverse disciplines such as:

- plying of autorickshaws,
- establishing a share sub-broking business,
- starting a studio gymnasium,
- setting up a bone-marrow registry,
- establishing a photography studio,
- trading in textile auxiliaries,
- establishing a dealership in tyres,
- Establishing a provision cum grocery store, etc.

Rs.10,888,000 were disbursed towards these initiatives from the funds recycled from repayments received from earlier beneficiaries.

Between 1995 and 2010 by disbursing a total of Rs.110,948,5431 we have supported 731 Zarathushtis spread over 98 urban, semi urban, rural locations, in their pursuit of being self-employed

## EDUCATION

107 students were supported in their pursuit of education for which Rs. 2,116,750 was disbursed.

## MEDICAL

294 individuals were supported to the tune of Rs. 9,784,634 for meeting their medical expenses.

Principal donors for this activity have been Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton & Macao.

## RELIEF FROM POVERTY

416 elderly / indigent Zarathushtis were supported through disbursement of payments totalling Rs.116,22,000 on a quarterly basis. Principal donors for this activity have been Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton & Macao.

## MOBED WELFARE

- a) Rs.100,000 was spent to meet the shortfall of the 'Athornan Mandal / WZO' full time Mobed support scheme.
- b) Rs.456,000 was spent towards extending financial support to 38 elderly full time Mobeds
- c) Navar ceremony of an Athravan child from an economically challenged priestly family was sponsored.

## ECONOMY HOUSING AT NAVSARI

Over the years, some residents of Navsari have been gifting their ancestral houses to us. We demolish the old buildings and from funds raised through donors we construct apartment buildings that are rented to deserving families on economic monthly license fees.

We have constructed seven such building, five of which were funded by *Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund*.

The construction of our 8th building at Aspar Street, Navsari, with an estimated cost of Rs.86,00,000 is proceeding as scheduled. *The Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund*.that installed the first house in 2010 are also funding this project

## SENIOR CITIZEN CENTRES AT NAVSARI

*Our Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Senior Citizens Centre and Dolat & Hormusji Vandrewala Senior Citizens Centre* that became operational at Navsari in January 1998 and December 2005 respectively, are much sought after very popular, vibrant institutions, where senior citizens live independently in happy surroundings, spending the rest of their lives with their peers, with self-respect and dignity.

Between March 2000 and March 2009 the generous support provided by *Sir Ratan Tata Trust* towards the day to day running of the institution, enabled us to provide quality services to our residents.

In 2004 *Mr. Dinshaw Dossabhoy Mehta of Pune* also donated a generous amount towards the upkeep of





## Communal giving



the institution. Many individuals, from time to time have also extended support.

In June 2008 we received a very generous corpus donation of Rs.300,00,000 (Rupees three crores) from the Trustees of Navajbai Ratan Tata Trust towards enhancing and sustaining operations of our Senior Citizens.

This munificent support enables us to provide the best possible services to our residents.

### SANATORIUM AT SANJAN

In 1997 the Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund provided funds to purchase a sprawling bungalow in dilapidated condition with 4.5 acres of land. Funds to purchase the property adjoining the 'Memorial Column' at Sanjan were made available with the intent of ensuring that the property remained within the community at Sanjan and was put to good use for the community. Thus from September 2001 the well-laid out *Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy – WZO Sanatorium* has been in existence.

Our Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Sanatorium at Sanjan is a popular, much sought after community resort having comfortable rooms and serving sumptuous meals at extremely reasonable rates, Rs.325/= per person per day for full board & lodge. It is a haven for those wishing to enjoy holidays in idyllic surroundings and a pollution free environment.

It is possible for us to provide quality services at such modest rates due to the generosity of the Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund who make good the deficit that is incurred in the running of this institution.

Ours is probably the first community Sanatorium in India where a rain water harvesting system to conserve this vital natural resource, was installed in 2010

In addition to the above:

- We have also extended financial assistance to a few indigent Zarathushtis, mainly elderly couples and widows in need of recuperation, and/or to go for holidays.
- We fund an annual gambhar from the income generated from the investment of a generous corpus amount that was donated to us in 1995 by late Muljibhai Narsi of Mumbai, who held our community in high esteem. Muljibhai was in his mid nineties when he made the donation, a year before he died in 1996.
- To encourage our youth, especially those in South Gujarat to excel in sports, we organize an annual athletic meet at Navsari. Over the years we have been sponsoring a youth cricket team from Navsari and encourage them to participate in various tournaments in Gujarat and Mumbai. Whilst the cricket team has already won quite a few trophies, it has been satisfying

to see the consistent improvement in the performance of the athletes from South Gujarat.

- Students doing well in their academic studies are encouraged by the holding a function where the top achieves are publicly felicitated. Zarathushti teachers who have been in the profession for 25 years and more are also periodically felicitated in these functions.

- On every Khordad-Sal day, we sponsor a function at Navsari where Zarathushti residents display their talents, participate in games and generally have a fun time.

It would not have been possible for us to undertake such extensive welfare programmes without support from our donors, whom we have already acknowledged and also our band of dedicated staff and volunteers. Before recommending support to our donors for any project we undertake a detailed investigation and evaluation of applications received. Whilst our staff at Mumbai, with a couple of volunteers, undertake investigation of all appeals received from Mumbai, volunteers at Navsari, Surat, Vadodara, Ahmedabad, Pune, Secunderabad undertake investigations of appeals received from their areas. For applications received from other centres we use our good offices with office bearers of local Anjumans and local prominent Zarathushtis for feedback. We are extremely grateful to our staff and volunteers for their hard work done with commitment and dedication.

We have always followed a policy of being open and transparent in all that we do, with full accountability being provided to all our donors at all times. This policy has endeared our Trusts to donors, who have willingly given generous donations on a regular basis.

Whilst we are proud of what we have done, we recognise the fact that very much more remains to be done. It is for this reason that we seek the continued support of our donors from all over the world to enable us to sustain and enhance our welfare activities.

Donations for any of our projects are very welcome and may be forwarded to us by way of cheque / draft.

### Donations may please be forwarded to: -

The World Zoroastrian Organisation Trust, Shanti, 5th floor, 6, Banaji Street, Fort, Mumbai 400 001.

The WZO Trust Funds, Shanti, 5th floor, 6, Banaji Street, Fort, Mumbai 400 001.

**Donors in India are eligible for exemption under section 80G of Income Tax Act 1961.**

**Both the Trusts are authorised to receive funds from overseas under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 1976.**

Dinshaw K Tamboly;



# Communal giving



## ASHA CENTRE - Transformation

Recently my adorable niece, Serene, who is only six, demonstrated instinctive philanthropy. We were at a Chinese restaurant with a group of family friends, and at the end of the meal, everyone was given a fortune cookie. The paper covers were ripped open and out fell one's fortune, written on a ribbon of paper. Mine said prophetically that my dream would come true. When Serene read her fortune, it said "You will have a wonderful life." She turned to one of ASHA's trustees, a former BBC journalist, and said, "*I already have a wonderful life. You have it.*" I was spell-bound. How many of us realise we have a wonderful life and are willing to share our good fortune with others.

**Surely philanthropy, if it is to truly bring joy, peace and enlightenment, must transform others' lives into something magical and meaningful.**

I am often asked what my motivation was in creating the ASHA Centre in the Royal Forest of Dean, in England. I can never answer that question because I never deliberately set out with a particular agenda. All I knew was that I wanted to bring people together across every boundary to see whether they could seize the moment to

Zarathushtis love the good life and beauty, and also understand how important it is to revere nature and the elements. We can't help seeing life as a battle between good and evil. We are conditioned to fight for justice (and the American way!). Our history books are stuffed with extraordinary Zarathushti individuals who have led the battle against poverty, illiteracy, degradation of women, disability, freedom, and the list goes on. For some, it has been central to their lives. One such person is my hero, *Dadabhai Naoroji*, who is a great motivation to me. Not just because he was the first non-white in 1892 to become a Member of Parliament in the British House of Commons, a dream that I've never fulfilled and which I now feel I have been spared from. He was a fighter for others' rights, whether it was for 250 million Indians who didn't have parliamentary representation, or the Irish who wanted Home Rule, to women who wanted an education and the right to vote. He saw the inter-connectedness of different struggles that led to people's empowerment and enlightenment.

I too see the inter-connectedness of life. That is why it is so difficult to tell people in a sound-bite what the ASHA CENTRE is about. If anything, it is about transformation. Everyone thinks about changing the world but as Leo Tolstoy, and then Gandhi, said, '*No-one thinks about changing themselves.*' Of course, changing myself will take more than a life-time, but I am determined to give others the opportunity to change themselves in this one!

At the ASHA CENTRE we champion the young. We don't tell them what to do. If you tell people that, they never do it. Instead, we give them time, personal attention, and I hope, the inspiration and confidence to realise their unique talents and change not only themselves but their world.

What seems to always work with the young and even those who are more mature is to allow them to talk about themselves. In that process of opening up and recalling their own histories they are able to decide what they really want to do with their precious lives. If people are to develop their own potential they have to be engaged in it themselves. It must make them feel good about who they are. I do not know a single person who does not want to do something worthwhile that they will be remembered by. Often all they need is to be given guidance on how they can impact positively on the world and then a little shove.

I could write a book about the many extraordinary philanthropists who have given their money, talent and time to make the ASHA CENTRE the unique place it is. We would not have our gallery, if it wasn't for *Kirsten Rausing*, the Swedish heiress of *Tetrapak* who saw a presentation of our Centre and rang the next day saying that a cheque would arrive from her Swiss bankers. Nor would we be able to fund our pioneering work with young Arabs and Jews, which has been praised in the Israeli



express their innate goodness for the benefit of the wider community. I wanted to offer a beautiful Georgian home, stuffed with antiques and my exquisite Chinese embroideries, a 'heavenly' place with gardens to delight the senses. Where people could explore both ancient and modern ways of protecting their environment - be it through conservation or biodynamic gardening. I wanted to see people enjoy themselves and understand how spirituality, personal development, leadership, biodynamic gardening, conservation, drama and the arts were interlinked. Everything I visualised is now being materialised. I have not been disappointed.

I am often told that I am the first Zarathushti that people have met and that they love *Freddie Mercury* and wish they had also met him. I am then asked about my religion and how it has impacted on my life. I can answer that question. I am a Zarathushti. It's in my DNA. Geneticists might have a problem with that comment but I am convinced that I could have been nothing else.





## Communal giving



media as a substantial contribution to the Middle East peace process, if it wasn't for the Jewish philanthropist and Hollywood film-maker, *Elaine Attias*. Our specially designed Herb Garden by the award-winning gardener to the American Embassy in Regent's Park was made possible by *Dr Kusoom Vadgama*, to celebrate her mother's hundredth birthday. We couldn't keep our training courses original and vibrant if it wasn't for individual trainers and guest speakers. Everyone has an extraordinary gift. One volunteer, the artist, *Jeroo Roy*, has offered her talent of drawing and painting to train groups

targeted connections, we also write letters of introduction and give references, when appropriate. So often, young people can never start on their career ladder because they do not possess the perfect CV for their job.

Last year we had an exceptional young German volunteer, Simon, who worked in our biodynamic gardens and dreamed of going into the German Foreign Service. He did not feel he had the background to even consider such a life option. I thought he was outstanding, hard-working, well motivated with all the qualities of a true diplomat, someone who would be an example of the best that their country offered. I wrote to the German Chancellor and received a letter a week later. Simon was to be considered for a career in the German Foreign Office. The Chancellor was grateful that I had taken the time to explain the qualities of this young German who had impressed not only his international peers but also myself, someone who had spent over thirty years in British public life.

One of the many joys of the ASHA CENTRE is to see people who would normally not mix because of religious or political reasons, or their elders' prejudice and unhappy history, actually enjoying each other's company. I was moved to see Kosovars and Serbs, who were youth leaders in their respective communities and had never been able to meet, sitting together in the ASHA Rose Garden talking about a new Balkans.

I still remember tears coming to my eyes when I saw young Palestinians who insisted that Jews only wanted to humiliate them join in with the Jewish Sabbath celebrated at the ASHA CENTRE after they had worked together creating a play to take back to Israel.

I also recall one midnight joining young South Africans from the townships sitting around our large firepit, which had been created for our Zarathushti Dastooors to pray. On this occasion they sat drumming around the fire and were joined by Cyprian, a Kenyan, whom ASHA had funded through his maths degree at university in Britain. Although the South Africans and Kenyan spoke different languages, they communicated in English and were able to appreciate their own community music and songs even though they were not able to understand the meaning of the words. What they understood was that they were having a wonderful time away from the disappointments of their past. They were being empowered to create lasting friendships across artificial divides, and were encouraged to strive for a better life. One of them, Kessington, returned to ASHA to play *Othello*, in a professional cast, even though he had never experienced Shakespeare before. The accolades he received were a springboard for him to be given a scholarship in Johannesburg to read law. He dreams of becoming the president of South Africa some day. He knows what it's like to be brought up by a poor, single mother, to be taken into care and to be



of young people who come from all over the world to have the 'ASHA experience'. Most have never had the opportunity to express themselves artistically. Last, but not least, volunteers who give their professional time freely, such as my husband Richard, who checks our accounts and legal documents and supervises building projects.

At ASHA we spend a lot of time mentoring the young. People think mentoring is telling people what to do and guiding them but it's often listening to them and letting them do what they want to do and then be there for them. One of the main tasks of mentoring is to help people make connections. We hear endlessly about networking, which has now become a multi-million dollar business. No longer do people introduce each other unless they are paid or are going to benefit. At ASHA we not only train our young people in leadership skills and help them with well







## Communal giving



stranded on friends' floors without his own bed and anyone to share his dreams.

I know as a mother and a former politician, that most of our problems boil down to young people having too little attention. So many children are brought into the world who are not wanted. Many are brought up by somebody else because their families are too busy. For millions of children around the world they are destined to a life of misery because of the poverty that surrounds them. For millions of richer children, they are surrounded by the poverty of mind that thinks that they can be satisfied with temporary and destructive toys.

Young people need individual care, to be surrounded by beauty, and to be given the confidence that they are

capable of great things, and then challenged to make it happen. At the end of the day we will be judged. We will have the opportunity to see a blockbuster movie of our lives. We will see all the unhappiness we have caused and we will feel the suffering imposed on others by ourselves. We will also experience the joy we have brought to others. I hope in the years to come that there will be many people who will see the ASHA Centre in their life movies as the place where they experienced great joy and which was the catalyst for their personal transformation.

**Zerbanoo Gifford** is an author, human rights campaigner and founding director of the ASHA Foundation and the ASHA Centre she actively promotes philanthropy and peace worldwide. In 2010 to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of American Suffrage she was honoured by the Sewall-Belmont Museum in Washington DC in an exhibition commemorating key women who advanced women's rights. In 2006 she was given International Woman of the Year Award for her humanitarian work, which spans over thirty years of grassroots and global activism. In 1989, Zerbanoo was presented with the Nehru Centenary Award for her work championing the rights of women, children and minorities. [www.ashacentre.org](http://www.ashacentre.org)



## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE BENEVOLENT HOUSE OF TATAS

Dr. Homi Dhalla

In this brief presentation, I shall attempt to outline the central role corporate social responsibility (CSR) plays in the ethos of the House of Tatas.

If we wish to trace the roots of CSR in the Tata Group, it takes us back to the founder, Jamsetji N. Tata. He had emphasized that *"In a free enterprise, the community is not just another stakeholder in business but is, in fact, the very purpose of its existence"*. Ratan Tata, the present Group Chairman has echoed similar views: *"The philosophy of corporate social responsibility as practiced by the Tata Group is a legacy of this organization's founders, most prominently Jamsetji Tata. Jamsetji Tata saw disciplines such as medicine and science and industries such as energy and steel as building blocks in the emergence of a brave and bright new country. His doctrine of social responsibility was the central theme of the Tata way of business"*.

He further states that *"Jamsetji Tata and those who followed in his immediate wake set the mandate for the Group: to look beyond the generation of products and profits to serving the communities in which Tata companies functioned. Jamsetji Tata's desire to uplift India, to see his country improve and prosper was*

*reflected in the host of endeavours he diligently pursued and, more importantly, in the value systems that have come to define the Group's operations. His sons and, subsequently, JRD Tata embodied the same values in their corporate actions. This is something that has to happen...by giving back to the people of the community what has been taken from them. The reasons have to be right; they have to be honest and sincere. I would like to think this is what the Tata Group stands for"*.

Furthermore, Ratan Tata adds that *"Social responsibilities must be viewed holistically. There is no single element that is more important than any other. The environment is important and we must be responsive to it, we have to be concerned about employee relations, doing the right thing in matters of corporate governance is critical, and enriching the wider community is vital"*.

Moreover, corporate governance in the Tata Group rests on the twin pillars of trust and integrity. In an interview in 2002, Ratan Tata had said: *"Business as I have seen it, places one great demand on you: it leads you to self-impose a framework of ethics, values, fairness and objectivity on your self at all times"*. JRD Tata who was Chairman of the Tata Group from 1938 to 1991 had



## Communal giving



also stated that *"An ethical life is part of an economic life" and he further asserted that "What is good for India is good for Tatas"*.

### JAMSETJI TATA – "One-man Planning Commission" Jawarhalal Nehru

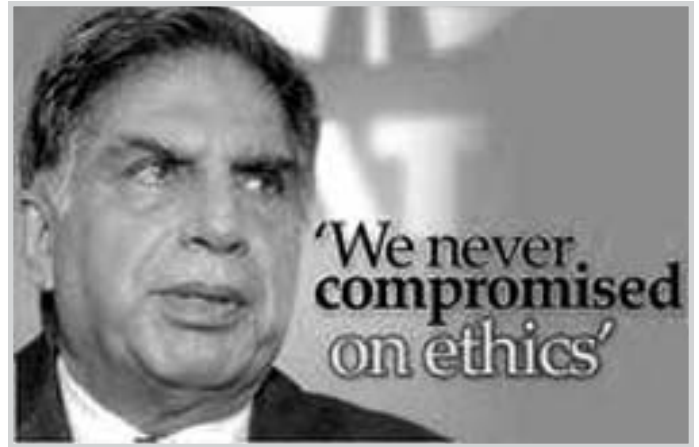
He was an extraordinary visionary who laid the foundation of Indian industry. No less a person than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister in his *Discovery of India* wrote *"The three fundamental requirements of India, if she is to develop industrially and otherwise are: a heavy engineering and machine-making industry, scientific research institutes and electric power. These must be the foundations of all planning"*. And since Jamsetji had provided India with all three enterprises, Nehru had observed that *"he was a one-man planning commission"*. He had launched the Tata Iron and Steel works at Jamshedpur, hydro-electric power at Lonavla and the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore.

It is pertinent to note that his interpretation of philanthropy was quite innovative. He stated that *"There is one kind of charity common enough among us...It is that patchwork philanthropy which clothes the ragged, feeds the poor, and heals the sick. I am far from decrying the noble spirit which seeks to help a poor or suffering fellow being. (However) what advances a nation or a community is not so much to prop up its weakest and most helpless members, but to lift up the best and the most gifted, so as to make them of the greatest service to the country"*.

Realizing the fact that Indians should learn to govern themselves, the *J. N. Tata Endowment Scheme* for higher education was launched by him in 1892. His objective was that Indians should learn to govern themselves and for which he established this scheme for Tata scholars. Illustrious J. N. Tata Endowment scholars include former *President of India K. R. Narayanan* and renowned scientist *Raja Ramanna*. Thousands of scholars have benefited by this venture. Moreover, to establish the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore in September 1898, he pledged half his personal wealth, a sum of Rs 30 lacs (then £ 200,000) - this was to make his dream of a "university or institute of research" a reality.

Although, he was involved with titanic projects of national magnitude, his compassion extended even to animals. A very touching example of this trait came to light in late 2007. In 1900, due to famine, millions were affected. In the small village of Chharodi (35 kms. from Ahmedabad) in Gujarat state, a large number of animals were starving to death; Jamsetji had sent a donation to save these animals. This came to light only through a marble plaque that was found on the land that his great grandson, Ratan Tata has now been given by the Government of Gujarat to set up the Nano plant in order to manufacture the world's cheapest car.

His catholic spirit is evident in a letter he wrote to his son from abroad in 1902, five years before the site of the steel plant was finally located:



*"Be sure there is plenty of space for lawns, playgrounds...and parks. Earmark areas for Hindu temples, Mohammedan mosques and Christian churches"*.

### RATAN TATA – Chip off the Old Block

Ratan is the great grandson of Jamsetji Tata who joined the Tata Group in December 1962. He worked at Tata Steel's Jamshedpur steel plant with other blue collar employees at the blast furnace and gradually rose to the highest office. After he took over as Chairman in 1991, his dynamism led the Group revenues to soar 25 times. Presently, the Group has 114 firms, operating in 85 countries, employing 363,039 people worldwide, with a total turnover of \$ 71 bn (Rs. 325,500 cr). Ratan made his visionary ideas a reality by successfully making the 'Nano', the cheapest car in the world. He had given an assurance to the nation that the car would cost only Rs. 1 lac. Thus, when the car was launched he said, "A promise is a promise, is a promise", thus reflecting his moral commitment. Moreover, when Mumbai suffered a savage terrorist attack on 26/11/2008, Ratan immediately came to the rescue of all those who had suffered by offering them and their families total medical aid and educational facilities. This was a glowing example of his benevolence to the suffering, irrespective of their caste or religion.

*Jamshed Irani* who was Managing Director of Tata Steel recounts a story where he and Ratan Tata had met the then *Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao* about 20 years ago, together with other industrialists. *"The Prime Minister proposed that business people set aside 1% of our net profit for community development projects. Mr. Tata and I looked at each other. Later we drew up a chart where over a 10 year period Tata Steel had been dedicating between 3 and 20 % of its profits to social development causes"*.



# Communal giving



## THE TATA IDEAL OF NATION BUILDING

To strengthen the fabric of India and to help Indians, the Tatas created great temples of learning and research, knowledge and intellectual capital. Among these bastions of Indian excellence were the *Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the JRD Tata Ecotechnology Centre, the Tata Memorial Centre for Cancer Research and Treatment, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Sir Dorabji Tata Centre for Research in Tropical Diseases and the National Centre for Performing Arts.*

Tatas have crafted and sustained a tradition of bequeathing much of their wealth to the many Trusts they have created for the greater good of India and its people. The Tata Trusts have come to control 65.8% of the shares of Tata Sons, the holding company of the Group. The wealth that accrues from this asset supports several causes, institutions and individuals. The Trusteeship principle governs the way the Group functions: capitalistic by definition but socialistic by character.

## BEQUEATHING PERSONAL WEALTH FOR INDIA AND ITS PEOPLE

Dorab and Ratan were the two sons of Jamsetji Tata who implemented the mammoth projects of their father. Sir Dorab was the quintessential entrepreneur working tirelessly to make his father's visionary ideas a reality. A few months before his death in 1932, he bequeathed most of his personal wealth then estimated at Rs. 1 crore to the newly registered Sir Dorabji Tata Trust.

Sir Ratan was a connoisseur of arts and a passionate votary of social development. *He gave a grant to support Mahatma Gandhi's work in South Africa and for Gopal Krishna Gokhale's nationalist activities in India.* He also funded the first archaeological excavation at Pataliputra which resulted in the discovery of the 100-pillar Mauryan throne room of Ashoka's palace. He donated resources to the London School of Economics where the bright young man named *Clement Attlee* studied – later to become

British Prime Minister who gave India its independence. He died in 1918 at a young age of 47. Besides donating his unparalleled art collection, especially of Chinese jade, to the Prince of Wales Museum in Mumbai, he left directives in his Will for his personal wealth to be used for basic and advanced education, primary and preventive health, rural livelihood and communities, art and culture, for all Indians at a time when almost all trusts were communal in nature.

On February 8, 1911, Sir Dorab Tata laid the foundation stone of the Lonavla dam and thus commenced the hydroelectric project. On this occasion he recalled the lofty aims of his father by saying: *"To my father, the acquisition of wealth was only a secondary object in life; it was always subordinate to the constant desire in his heart to improve the industrial and intellectual condition of the people of this country".*

It is this spirit that continues to this day in various parts of India. Tatas provide medical treatment for tribals, nurture homeless mentally ill women, teach adult illiterates, look after children with learning difficulties, help under trial prisoners as well as soldiers of the Kargil war, offer relief to victims of the Gujarat earthquake, support forestry and other environmental movements, employ people with disabilities etc.

**And finally a relevant question comes to mind: which business house not only in India but in the world has done so much, for so many, for so long?**

*Dr. Homi Dhalla is the Founder-President of the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation. He has contributed significantly to our culture through the Sanjan excavations, conservation of Bahrot caves, installation of the solar concentrators etc. He promotes Zoroastrianism globally through the interfaith movement.*



"Good People Doing the Right Thing!"

**PERSIS BEHRAMSHA**  
REALTOR®



4543 Post Oak Place  
Houston, TX 77027

Phone: (713) 294-7747  
Fax: (281) 598-5710

[persis.realtor@gmail.com](mailto:persis.realtor@gmail.com)  
[www.har.com/persis](http://www.har.com/persis)





# Communal giving



**SIR JAMSETJEE JEJEEBHoy:**

## FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON HIS MULTIDIMENSIONAL LIFE

**Dr. Homi Dhalla**

It is difficult to imagine how a grief-stricken orphan boy rose to be the first Indian knight and baronet and also a standard-bearer of catholic charities. Unable to afford the priceless boon of early education, in later life, however, he became a pioneer in female education by endowing schools for boys and girls. His father Jejeebhoy Vatcha who was an ordinary weaver had married Jeevibai. They were blessed with five children, of whom Jamsetjee was the youngest. He was born in Navsari on July 15, 1783 (some of his biographers state that he was born in Mumbai). Little is known about his youth except that he had to face devastating tragedies at a very young age. In 1799, he lost his beloved mother when he was only 16 – this was followed by the death of his father within the next six months. Thus, circumstances forced him to leave

generosity – he gave back to society what he had earned. And the more he gave, more was given unto him. This merchant-prince endowed schools, colleges, hospitals, dharamshalas, waterworks and more.

The East India Company appreciated his immense contribution to India and recommended his name for knighthood. Thus on May 25, 1842, he became the first Indian to be presented the *Patent of Knighthood*. Furthermore, as a token of appreciation for his munificence, public spirit and patriotism, he was once again honored in the evening of his life. *In her Birthday Honors List of May 24, 1857, Queen Victoria graciously conferred baronetcy on the first Indian knight.* Having lived an eventful and noble life, on April 15, 1859, Jamsetjee passed away at the age of 74. To this day, his legacy is being continued by Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, Eighth Baronet, through various institutions.

The above are only a few snippets from the life of this renowned Zarathushti. By and large, Jamsetjee is remembered merely for his philanthropy. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to throw light on some of the lesser known aspects of his multifaceted personality.

### I. PATRON OF EDUCATION

Jamsetjee was a renaissance man. India passed through a dark age in education till 1820. Thereafter, a few attempts were made to launch some basic educational institutes. It was only from 1827 that Jamsetjee began to take an active interest in education. Being a patron of education, he donated generously to set up educational institutes in various parts of India. He charted a new course in the realm of education by sponsoring the *Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Parsi Benevolent Institution (SJJPBI)*. This was a pioneering effort in institutional philanthropy. By endowing a huge amount of



Navsari for Bombay in 1799. Devoid of any formal education, he joined his maternal uncle, Framji Batliwala, who was in the business of selling empty bottles. But this soulless task would never quench the fire of adventure that had ignited his spirit. He embarked on trade with China in spite of several adversities. Through dint of hard work, integrity and foresight, he amassed a large fortune. But what distinguished him from others was his unbound





# Communal giving



Rs. 4,40,000/- a Deed of Settlement was signed on January 9, 1849. Initially this Institute was meant only for boys, as the Trustees were hesitant to open its doors for girls due to the prevailing prejudice against educating girls. But it was the indomitable spirit of Jamsetjee, which prevailed over the decision of the Trustees by opening two schools for girls in 1850.

When the University of Bombay was established on February 21, 1857, Jamsetjee was appointed one of the five Indian fellows. Once again his pioneering spirit drove him to open the floodgates of creativity – he wanted Indians to be trained in art, drawing, painting, sculpture, diamond cutting, wood engraving etc. He, therefore, offered a princely sum of Rs. 1 Lac to the government to set up a school of art. Hence, on March 2, 1857, when the *Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy School of Art* was launched, it was another signal contribution to the cultural life of India. (photo pg 40) He was the first non-European colonial subject to introduce the concept of huge charitable projects in 'partnership' with the British. This meant that the British acted as equal co-financiers and trustees of the charity.

## II. POLITICAL AWAKENING AND FURTHERING THE CAUSE OF INDIA

The Bombay Presidency experienced the first glimmer of political activity on August 26, 1852 when a meeting



was convened to form a political organization. It was named the Bombay Association and Jamsetjee was elected the Hon. President of this Association. The main purpose of this organization was to inform the rulers about the grievances of the people.

Moreover, Jamsetjee would always seek opportunities to promote the larger cause of India. He would subtly prepare the ground for socio-political bridge-building when he met British aristocrats who would be invited to his lavish parties. We are provided a clear insight into this concern when in the course of a speech addressed to Lord Keane, he clearly stated, *"I trust...that he will bear in*

*mind the cause of India, and by watching over the interests of its inhabitants, still add to our debt of gratitude".*

## III. HIS SECULAR CREDENTIALS

Since Jamsetjee hailed from a clerical family, Zarathushti values were deeply embedded in his psyche. He was truly a protector of the poor and in doing so, he left his signature on the concept of philanthropy – this being a significant Zarathushti virtue.

Whether it was the famine of Ireland (1822), the floods in France (1856) or the fire, which ravaged both Bombay (1803) and Surat (1837), this beacon of altruism gave graciously to one and all without discriminating on the basis of caste or creed. At the end of the day, he had donated more towards cosmopolitan charities and public works than for his own community. The figures speak for themselves. ***Whilst he donated Rs. 11,75,015/- for communal charities, his donations for cosmopolitan and public works amounted to Rs. 12,84,721/-.***

Moreover, for many years, his father-in-law, Framji Batliwala was his partner. This prospering partnership ended when Framji expired on September 17, 1818. Thereafter, he introduced two new partners, Motichand Amichand and Mahomedali Rogay. The fact that he accepted a Hindu and a Muslim as partners in his own business proved his secular credentials – he had transcended the communal divide, which was quite unusual about 200 years back.

## IV. LEADERSHIP MEANS SERVICE

His life was a hymn of service and a paean of duty to the Parsi community as well as to all other communities of India. Being a towering personality who possessed character, competence and conviction, it was a great asset for the Parsi Panchayat when he became a Trustee. He was only forty, when he joined as one of the four Trustees in 1823. He served as a Trustee for 35 years till 1859. He soon became a principal voice and came to grips with the problems of the Panchayat. (Photo left The famous JJ Hospital, Mumbai)

To his amazement he found that the Panchayat was mismanaged, run inefficiently and there was apathy in running its affairs. He stood for morality and accountability in public life. He, therefore, tried his best to see that the donations that were received by the Panchayat were invested carefully and which in the long run proved effective.

In 1843, Jamsetjee published his *Kholaseh-i-Panchayat* in which he was very critical about many issues facing the community. This in turn also made him unpopular. He constructively criticized the clergy for their ignorance and rapacity as well as the laity for their narrow-mindedness and credulity. He was against the policy of giving doles to able-bodied men. In 1843, he appealed to



# Communal giving



both the Panchayat and the people to take greater interest in the affairs of the community. He had left his imprint on the working of the Panchayat when he left it in 1859.

## V. AN ADVOCATE OF NON-VIOLENCE

His roots lay in Zarathushti values. And one of the principles of this ancient religion is *nidhaasnaithishem*, non-violence. A firm belief in this principle always formed the cornerstone of all his activities.

In 1855, under royal patronage, the Patriotic Fund was launched to aid the wounded soldiers and widows of those who had died in the Russo-Turkish war. Jamsetjee donated Rs. 5,000/- for this cause. But some remarks from his speech on this occasion are most significant: *"Of none of the great evils which afflict our race do we form such inadequate conceptions as of the evils of war. War is exhibited to us in the dazzling dress of poetry, fiction, and history, where its horrors are carefully concealed beneath its gaudy trappings; or we see, perhaps, its plumes and epaulettes, and harlequin finery, we hear of the magnificence of the apparatus, the bravery of the troops, the glory of the victors, but the story of the wholesale miseries and wretchedness and wrongs which follow in its train is untold...What nation is not groaning under war-debts, the greatest of national burdens..."*

His non-violent attitude or positively put, his loving kindness, extended also to the animal kingdom. His benign and compassionate nature would not allow any form of cruelty towards animals. The East India Company introduced a rule *"for the annual destruction of dogs in Bombay island, and a considerable number were from time to time destroyed, in spite of frequent petitions from the public"*. This mass dog killing led to a serious riot. To alleviate this suffering, Jamsetjee together with others founded *Panjrapol* on October 18, 1834. Today, *Panjrapol* has six branches in Mumbai which nurture 1500 stray animals.

## VI. BENEFACITOR OF JOURNALISM

Due to his broad horizon, he realized the importance of journalism. Even in this field, he had been a significant benefactor by encouraging various newspapers. When *Furdoonji Marzban*, pioneer of Indian journalism founded the *Bombay Samachar* in July 1822, Jamsetjee gave a substantial donation. The *Bombay Times* was launched in 1838 by a syndicate of persons, which included Sir Jamsetjee. In 1861, it was renamed *The Times of India*. Jamsetjee also donated handsomely to the *Jam-e-*

*Jamshed Press* when it was founded in 1859. Besides this, he had supported the publication of religious texts and other books.

## VII. PIONEER IN WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND IN GRANTING THEM FREEDOM

Jamsetjee was at the cusp of making history when it came to women's education. At a time when few thought of educating women, it is heartening to note that his daughter, *Pirojbai* was one of the first Parsi women to speak English.

He was also the first Parsi and Indian to grant freedom to women. It was a defining movement when on March 9, 1840, it was for the first time that ladies from his family were seen in public amongst men of other communities. This was on the occasion when Jamsetjee held a banquet to celebrate the marriage of Queen Victoria with Prince Albert. At this function, he introduced Lady Jejeebhoy and his sons' wives to the guest of honor, *Sir James Rivett-Carnac, Governor of Bombay* and others. This landmark event took place when *Dadabhai Naoroji* was nine, *Sorabji Bengallee* was nine and *Behramji Malbari* was not even born. It is pertinent to note that the latter three were some of the most prominent social reformers of India.

Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Parsi Benevolent Institution was launched in 1849. On August 17, 1850, he opened two schools for girls – one of these was located in the Fort area and the other at *Alhaibaug*. When Jamsetjee passed away in 1859, there were nineteen schools run by the Institution: five of them were in Bombay (two for boys and three for girls) and fourteen in the various towns of Gujarat (eleven for boys and three for girls). By spearheading this movement, he would certainly be remembered as one of the pioneers of women's education in India.

Although he left us 150 years ago, the legacy of this icon has been kept alive by his dynamic successors through his various educational institutions, hospitals etc. – this has rightfully earned him a significant niche in history.



**Dr. Homi Dhalla** is the Founder-President of the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation. He has contributed significantly to our culture through the Sanjan excavations, conservation of Bahrot caves, installation of the solar concentrators etc. He promotes Zoroastrianism globally through the interfaith movement





# Communal giving



## THE BEST PORTION OF A GOOD PERSON'S LIFE: THOSE LITTLE, NAMELESS, UNREMEMBERED GIFTS

### & ACTS OF KINDNESS & LOVE..."

### OR COMMUNITY GIVING

Rusi Sorabji

Once in awhile a person or persons touches our lives or the community, with deeds of kindness so special, that they change us forever. These are people who extend our vision and inspire us to higher levels of community service, call it voluntarism or community giving. We see them as heroes committed to life's noble values. With today's creeping cynicism and irreverence, the model of the hero becomes more important than ever. They are no less heroes than the Fire-fighters and the NY Police on that fateful morning of September 11th in New York, or the Bill Gates, or Warren Buffet, or Tatas, or Godrej, or even Jameshedji Jejeebhoy of old.

One does not have to be a billionaire or someone with surplus wealth for Community Giving. Real Community Giving comes from the heart. And here are two accounts I'd like to share with you.

The **FIRST**, a very religious lady. A Zarathushti whose love and commitment to the spiritual life and community welfare seemed planted by unknown forces, nourished by complex reasons that eluded our understanding. Today, we cannot help but gratefully appreciate her pursuit of Good thoughts, Good Words & Good Deeds.

This mother of two, enjoyed entering into friendly conversation even with strangers who would inevitably become her friends. Many of these, she later helped out in many ways. The more she learnt about giving back to the human-kind, the more she wanted to and enjoyed giving.

These included:-

Counseling, young American students for the first time away from home, on Fulbright Scholarships at the U.S. Educational Foundation, New Delhi; talking about the importance of Family Planning to the local dhobi woman, the ayahs, (maid servants), the ironing woman, the milk woman, the vegetable seller; to the Zarathushtis in U.A.E seeking employment or business opportunities, advising them and getting them good posts; though herself being in the early 30's, she became a mother to young newly married Parsi wives away from home in the newly formed United Arab Emirates; advising people with health problems; helping out the Community Organizations. Where-ever possible, she volunteered to educate people, and left them with valuable advice and gifts that helped them immensely resolve their problems.

In 1977 an American-Canadian Zarathushti new to Sharjah, U.A.E was invited to a Parsi Dinner.

*"Won't you like to meet the Purchase Manager of one of the largest Air-conditioning and Building Services*

*Company in the Emirate"?* That finally saw the establishment of Arcomet International Ltd., of Switzerland, as a main supplier of Suspension Systems in the U.A.E. for 20 years.

Strange as it may sound, but in an Arab owned, European managed professional company with originally one Zarathushti at mid management level, you'd find names like the following, quickly adding up in numbers and being given important employee positions/ vendor connections to it.-

Homi K, Dr Armity D, Dr Soli. D. L, Yezdi. A, Bobby.K, Vispi.B, Daisy.I, and Major Vendors & Insurance Agents named Cyrus.Z, Adil.C, Rustom P, Khursighara, R Baria, Sanjana, Cooper, Yasmin N, Pollard, Daji, Tehruna P, and others whose name elude me as I write.

When the newly married, young Y A was employed at GECCO in 1977, his former employer and a powerful Zarathushti leading businessman with powerful connections with the Rulers of Dubai objected to his employment and threatened legal action and deportation, he was put at ease when he was politely told that it was a Zarathushti "*Faraj*" (duty) to help a community member in distress.

In 1979 when hundreds of Zarathushtis who were displaced by the Iranian Revolution and had landed in Dubai, many with just a suitcase, she helped them all. Some were helped even with guarantees, personal loans for home furnishings and medical procedures. In 1985 she started her own business; her staff in Sharjah, Dubai and Abu Dhabi were 90 % Zarathushtis.

*"Would you like a powered wheel chair?"* at an IPF seminar at Stanford, U.S.A she asks a lady on oxygen who was walking with what must have been excruciating pain. When the powered wheel chair was collected a few days later by this hither-to complete stranger, the look of gracious thanks of the recipient's face was worth the effort of arranging and handing the \$ 4,000 wheel chair.

On a cold day she'd ask friends *"Would you like a scarf & what color?"* And a few days later they would have it.

In Assisi, Italy, somewhere I had read, *"For it is in the giving that we receive"* and someone also said, *"what you give out comes back to you"*. And it is amazing how satisfying & comforting one feels when the circle of giving completes itself.



# Communal giving



The Fulbright grantees and one of their mothers, from nearly 40 years ago, still thankfully recall the kindness, valuable advices and help they received as kids.

Today in Yellowstone National Park there are six giant pines or Sequoia trees that bear her name, planted there by the lady who received the powered wheel –chair!! And in the Hills of Santa Cruz, California, at camp Cheeseborough, the grateful Boy Scouts troop 330 has built an open air place of worship seating over 80 people, in memory of this grand-mother who once was also a Girl Guide.

One is touched reading the “Thank you” letters posted on the Internet, a quarter century later, by a belated grateful Zarathushti, who after a near death accident, was kind of helped with a job.

Towards the end of her days, this charitable heart donated her mortal remains to research and her re-usable organs to save another person’s life, or help to regain a bodily function.

Somewhere, someone today is able to see with her eyes, someone is hearing little better with her ear-bones, or someone is enjoying an extended life with the help of her useable organ or skin grafts.

Her name was Villy.

At her memorial celebrations scores of peoples were wearing the scarves she had knitted.

The **SECOND** is about three Delhi Parsi heroes that rendered a rare community service for 40 years. They were *Framroze Patel, Phiroze Vania & Ruttonshaw Sorabji*.

Whenever a Parsi died these three were the first to console the family, and help them with the preparations, arrange for a Dastur, transport the remains to the cemetery, prepare the body in accordance with the religious requirements and help in the funeral rituals, till the casket was lowered into the grave. Sometimes they stayed with the body all through the night, reciting prayers in the absence of a dastur or until the funeral the next day.

Many a times and especially at the height of summer, message would be received that the body of a tourist or upcountry resident was being brought to Delhi by train or bus. This trio would be the first at the railway station to receive the remains, get police clearance, arrange for slabs of ice to preserve the body and transport it to the Aramgah at Prithviraj Road.

I remember when *Noshir Bankwalla*, was murdered in his school in Mussorie, Ruttonshaw rushed there and did not come back till two days later. He went there, not because the boy’s father *Edul Bankwalla* was his colleague in the N.W.Railway but because there was no one else more experienced in such matters.

Another time, when the famous politician *Vir Nariman* suddenly died in Delhi immediately after the Country’s Independence, who but Ruttonshaw was ready to escort

the body to Bombay on a specially chartered Dakota.

While the spirit of volunteerism, of sharing and being good neighbors pervades this great community, and though the lending of a helping hand is understood to be the trait of all Zarathushtis, this extraordinary dedicated ‘communal giving’ by these three for several decades, is no less in importance than the huge donations of the Bombay Zarathushtis of old.. I have heard residents of old, praise their volunteering zeal in recalling their unique services to the community from the 1920s to 1960’s or more, but have not seen or heard of any recognition being bestowed on them.

These people lived in an age when bicycles, horse drawn Tongas and your own feet were the main modes of transportation; an age, when the nearest telephone was a mile or two away. Messages were relayed through people who had to mostly foot it out from one place to the nearest contact point. Public transport, except for the few irregular electric trams and three trolley buses during daytime, was non-existent in Delhi

What made them get involved in the way they did? I got the answer, late one summer night, when I was woken up from my sleep and requested to cycle down to the Tonga stand or the Tonga stable, to find a Tonga for the railway station while my father and others got dressed to make arrangements for receiving the mortal remains of a Bombay Zarathushti who died somewhere in the Punjab. I was 11 or 12 years old then,. annoyed, probably scared about the late night assignment, I asked my father, “*Why do you have to go every time?*”

The reply, “*Our community is so small, that all Zarathushtis are like family to us.*”

Almost 35 years later, I probed Phiroze Uncle with a similar question.

The reply. “*It is a Zarathushti’s duty.*”

## NOTHING, IS SO POTENT AS THE SILENT INFLUENCE OF A GOOD EXAMPLE

Many a times, the smallest gesture,  
A Smile, an act of Kindness, the Expression of Love.  
A helping Hand can bring Light  
In the Darkest of Places, in another’s Soul.  
So you be the Light, That you did not know you are

**Rusi Sorabji**, a young-at-heart, multi-talented and innovative personality, is a multiple award winning photographer, an avid traveler, with hobbies which include writing for pleasure, flying, trekking, music, chocolate making, gardening, building & flying Radio-Controlled Aircraft. Besides he was an all round sportsman, excelling in cricket, badminton, tennis and table tennis. He was the first Umpire in Sharjah & Dubai for International Cricket matches. Rusi lives in Campbell, CA



# Communal giving

## A TIME FOR GIVING



**Dinaz Rogers**

My maternal grandmother, Piroja Manekshaw Nanadaru (nee Gowadia), had a first cousin whom I shall call Pestonji for the sake of his family's privacy. During the 1930s and 1940s, some members of the family moved to Bombay from the villages of Sanjan and Nargol, and so did young Pestonji looking for a job. As he had no place to stay, his young, widowed cousin Piroja, who was raising three young daughters, took Pestonji in and gave him room and board.

She did so despite the fact that such an act of kindness in those days looked scandalous and was fodder for vicious gossip in the family and community. My grandmother was a proud woman and believed in the principles of righteousness. Since being widowed, she had been the recipient of much kindness from Parsi charities and understood what it was to be in need. Despite objections from family members, she was adamant and gave food and shelter to her young cousin.

Later on when things got tough for the young widow, she had to move from her spacious, high-rent flat to the nearby Gamadia Colony with smaller and cheaper accommodations. Pestonji remembered the kindness of his cousin and told one and all about not just the generosity but the chutzpah that Piroja showed. His five children, including my cousins Soli and Roda (pseudonyms), oft heard the tale.

My first summer break in the United States, when I had no place to go, Soli and his American wife invited me to spend the entire break with them in Huntington Beach, California. Not knowing much about America at that time, I presumed that all of Southern California was Los Angeles. I bought a Greyhound bus ticket from Bozeman, Montana, to Los Angeles, and Soli had to drive all the way up north to pick me up. He smilingly forgave my naiveté.

Later when I, with my husband and our baby daughter, moved to Southern California looking for a job, Soli and his wife took us into their home and hearts without question or stipulation until we were able to find an apartment. When we finally settled into our own place, they gave us some furniture and other household items. Soli's sister Roda, who was herself struggling financially, knew that we did not have much and every now and then would bring over food, saying, "Oops, I brought this by mistake so you might as well have it."

When I thanked Roda and Soli for all their generosity, they related the kindness my grandmother had shown to their

father many years ago. That was the first time I heard the story.

Roda told me that their father instilled in his children the value of charity, which I believe is a value of many of our Parsi community's stalwarts. "Whenever you earn money, you never earn just enough for yourself; somehow God gives us all just a little extra, a bit more than we need," Pestonji would say. "So look around you and share it with others, especially for religious education, hospitals, the needy and the unfortunate." With that, he would take a little money from each of his children's paychecks—not for rent, food or other necessities of life; these, he would state, were free for all his children living under his roof. That extra that God gave in his children's paychecks was anonymously and with great joy and gratitude deposited into the local fire temple's money box and given to other charitable organizations

*"Don't say this money is all mine; it is God's. You are the trustees of this world. Use it, don't abuse it; employ it for the next generation to come."*

Whether in cash or in kind, the children of Pestonji have followed their father's injunction. Roda told me that her sister Amy, who was unable to work due to crippling arthritis and constant pain, would tutor a Hindu girl in English. The girl was going to the U.S. as a bride and needed to at least have some rudimentary knowledge of the language. Amy felt that this was the least she could do. She tutored other girls as well when they asked her for help.

As individuals and as a community, we all try to live up to the simple, elegant principles of Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni: Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds. We are not perfect, but we try!

***"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."—Aesop***

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





Twenty-five years ago, when the Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy and I started our journey in the uncharted waters of the non-profit world, people, including close friends and relatives wondered what esoteric field of work this was. The term 'Philanthropy' was not so commonly used then. People knew about 'charity'. But what was this strange creature called 'philanthropy'? And, this was not just in India. Way back in the spring of 1990, when I was invited as a Fellow of the Center for the Study of Philanthropy, at the City University of New York, the emigration officer at JFK grilled me on what exactly philanthropy is supposed to be. I told him, it's to do with 'non-profits' and he said, "You mean you have come here to study how to make losses!"

Thankfully, much water has flowed under bridges built over the Hudson and, happily, a few months ago when I was in San Francisco for the Global Philanthropy Forum, the emigration officer gave me a wide grin and said, "Is Mr. Gates or Mr. Buffett going to be there?"

Yes, indeed, Gates & Buffett have, through their synergetic giving, not only leveraged the effectiveness of their 'giving', but, put philanthropy on the global map.

Warren Buffett and Bill Gates are together worth \$106 billion, but they don't want that wealth. Not for themselves, not for their children. Both lead by example. If Buffett is a role model on how to give, Gates is taking the lead to solve some of the biggest problems facing the world today. They have pledged to give away all their wealth, in their lifetimes, under their control. They have also taken it on themselves to coax corporate captains to do the same.

A generally-accepted comprehensive definition of philanthropy does not exist, and many leading scholars in the field doubt that one can be developed. Some scholars feel certain vagueness is inevitable and even desirable.

Contemporary philanthropy has come to be recognized as being broadly concerned with improving the quality of life for all members of society by promoting their welfare, happiness and culture. It usually focuses on interests and concerns of all income classes, such as protecting the environment, preventing diseases, improving education and recreational facilities, enhancing the arts, preserving historic landmarks, etc. Charity, on the other hand, has come to mean serving mainly, if not only, the poor, the disabled and the needy.

According to Paul Ylvisaker (former dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education), "*Philanthropy takes a more impersonal and dispassionate approach to bettering the human condition by institutionalizing 'giving', focusing beyond the immediate condition of people on root causes of human problems and systemic reform, recognizing a responsibility to the public interest and helping to effect societal change.*"

Dr. Robert L. Payton, former president of the Exxon Foundation and ex-U.S. ambassador to the Cameroons, defines philanthropy to include, "*voluntary giving, voluntary service and voluntary association, primarily for the benefit of others*". Dr. Payton calls philanthropy, the "Prudent sister" of charity.

Philanthropy, however, is not about giving of one's wealth alone. It includes giving of one's time, experience, expertise and labour. John D. Rockefeller believed, "*The most generous people in the world are the very poor, who assume each other's burdens in the crises which come so often to the hard-pressed. The mother in the tenement falls ill and the neighbour in the next room assumes her burdens. The father loses his work, and neighbours supply food to his children from their scanty store. How often one hears of cases where the orphans are taken over and brought up by the poor friend whose benefaction means great additional hardship! This sort of genuine service makes the most princely gift from superabundance look insignificant indeed.....It is only the spirit of giving that counts and the very poor give without any self-consciousness.*"

Benjamin Franklin was a man with a business sense and an eye on his community. For Franklin, doing good was not a private act between a bountiful giver and a grateful receiver; it was a prudent social act. A wise act of philanthropy would, sooner or later, benefit the giver, along with all other members of the community. While living in Philadelphia, Franklin developed philanthropic enterprises which included projects for establishing a city police, for the paving and the better cleaning and lighting of city streets, for a circulating library, for the American Philosophical Society for Useful Knowledge, for an Academy for the Education of Youth (origin of the University of Pennsylvania), for a debating society and for a volunteer fire department.

Few, if any, of Franklin's enterprises were primarily for the immediate relief of distress or misfortune. If an activity was required and was not yet performed by the Government, he thought it perfectly reasonable that individuals club together to do the job, not only to fill the gap, but also to prod or shame the Government into doing their part.

Julius Rosenwald considered the concept of "benevolent giver and grateful receiver" and the axiom that the "poor are always with you", as "sob-stuff" philanthropy. Rosenwald was not "hard-hearted", but merely "tough minded". He said, "*I do not like the 'sob-stuff' philanthropy. What I want to do is to try to cure the things that seem to be wrong. I do not underestimate the value of helping the underdog. That, however, is not my chief concern. I try to do the thing that will aid groups and masses rather than individuals.*"



# Communal giving



Ideas on philanthropy have varied with the customs of people, with changing needs and with the development of the human mind and man's desire to make life happier for others.

The world, as we know it today, has moved on from Charity to Philanthropy and now Venture Philanthropy.

*Venture philanthropy, also known as 'Philanthro-capitalism', takes concepts and techniques from venture capital finance and high technology business management and applies them to achieving philanthropic goals.*

## VENTURE PHILANTHROPY IS CHARACTERIZED BY

- *Willingness to experiment and try new approaches.*
- *Focus on measurable results - donors and grantees assess progress based on mutually determined benchmarks.*
- *Readiness to shift funds between organizations and goals based on tracking those measurable results.*
- *Giving financial, intellectual and human capital.*
- *Funding on a multi-year basis - typically a minimum of 3 years, on average 5-7 years.*
- *Focus on capacity building, instead of programs or general operating expenses.*
- *High involvement by donors with their grantees. For example, some donors will take positions on the boards of the non-profits they fund.*

There are **three models for engaging in venture philanthropy**. The first is **traditional foundations** practicing high-engagement grant making. The second is **organizations which are funded by individuals**, but, all engagement is done by professional staff. The third is the **partnership model**, in which partner investors both donate the financial capital and engage with the grantees. Most of these are pass-through funds, that is to say, they do not have an endowment, but rather grant out all the money they are given annually.

Philanthropist often see them selves as 'Social Investors' investing in 'Social Change'. Any wonder therefore that today we also have a 'Social Stock Market' where investors who care about social and economic returns, buy stocks and bonds of companies that have strong economic and social returns. Interestingly, in a social stock exchange, both not-for-profit and for-profit companies can participate. For-profit entities can either issue shares representing ownership in their companies or issue bonds. Meanwhile not-for-profit companies can utilise the stock exchange to issue bonds an action in itself that can bring operational accountability to the not-for-profit sector, as opposed to carte blanche donations from foundations.

There are already several Social Stock Exchanges in operation or in the works, albeit each uniquely different from one another. **BOVESPA in Brazil** was the first social stock exchange in the world. It was launched in 2003 with the objective of bringing together non-profit organisations and the social investors who are willing to support their programmes and projects. For BOVESPA investors, the return is solely in 'social profit,' where the investment brings about a more just society with opportunities for the poor and neglected. By providing capital for the non-profit organisations that list on this exchange and providing social value for the investors who participate in this exchange, BOVESPA aims to change the labelling of non-profit organisations to 'Social Profit Organisations'. So far about 43 Social Profit Organisations have raised capital through this exchange. However, trading of stock in this exchange is still a distant goal.

There is no doubting the fact that we are living in exciting times where philanthropy is concerned. The number of **High Net-worth Individuals (HNIs)**, especially in Asian countries, including India, is booming. The number of millionaires in India has surged to a record high of 1,53,000 in 2010, making the country's HNI population the 12th largest across the globe.

The increase in India's HNI population has also helped Asia-Pacific overtake Europe as the region with the second-highest number of millionaires, as per the annual World Wealth Report of Merrill Lynch Wealth Management and Capgemini.

However, the question remains does more wealth automatically lead to increased giving? Conventionally, this has been true. *Ford and Carnegie* 'gave' only because they had the wealth in the first place. Wanting to give is easy. But, giving wisely is challenging. Today, philanthropists are not just looking for the 'feel good factor'. They are looking for measurable impact and a sound return on their social investment. They are looking for innovation and willing to provide 'risk capital'. And, most important of all, they are looking for credible NGO partners. They are looking out for NGOs which have systems of accountability and transparency and governed on the basis of shared values.

**Noshir Dadrawala** is CEO of Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy (see Personal Profile page 86)



## FURTHER THOUGHTS ON PHILANTHROPY IN THE UNITED STATES TROUBLING TIMES AHEAD !

I closed my previous article on this topic for the Fezana Journal (Spring 2011 Vol 25 No1) with the ominous statement that the philanthropic sector in the U.S. faces a number of critical issues and challenges. I didn't realize then that I would be soon [7.13.11] writing about them. So here I am telling you about the dark clouds hanging over the sector.

The culprit this time is the sorry state of U.S. economy: 9.2 percent unemployment [the true figure may be as high as 20-25% when everything is accounted for]; \$14.3 trillion deficit resulting in battle between democrats and republicans in the Congress over raising "debt ceiling" and spending cuts; millions of homes "under water" in part because of fraudulent mortgage-lending practices and securitization of mortgages; and general feeling of despondency, uncertainty and lack of consumer and private sector confidence in the U.S. economy. As of this writing there is no agreement in sight between the President and the Congress. Unless an agreement is reached in time for the August 2 deadline there are absolute prospects for a global economic meltdown. This may seem like a little bit of exaggeration but it depends upon with whom you are speaking.

### WHY IS THIS CONDITION RELEVANT TO AMERICA'S NONPROFIT SECTOR?

While the demand for help and human services – but practically all services – are rising, the resources needed seem to be dwindling. Just to state one data point about 25 percent of America's children are living in poverty, entire families living in cheap motels, and children going to bed hungry. The result: "everything has to be on the table" is the current mantra in the American political discourse. That is to say, when it comes to cutting spending there are no "sacred cows", including "tax expenditures" like charitable deductions for the donor and tax exemption for the nonprofit organization. Same for revenue augmentation or indirectly tax increases. We don't know and can't predict exactly what shape this will take but it is critical for all nonprofits and philanthropy to contemplate a future with near zero or highly limited tax deduction for charitable contribution and tax exemption. Sooner or later this issue will raise its ugly head. This could potentially impact all nonprofits around the world – including of course Indian -- that receive funding from U.S. grantmakers. Let us try to look at the picture dispassionately.

Based on the "Giving USA" annual estimate of American Philanthropy, the June 30, 2011 issue of The Chronicle of Philanthropy reports:

The slow economic recovery could spell trouble for charity fund raising until at least 2016. Already, the bad economy has challenged fundraisers. Contributions rose just 2.1 percent in 2010 after two consecutive declines of 6.2 percent in 2009 and 7 percent in 2008, the deepest drops in the history of the 56-year-old study by Indiana University's Center on Philanthropy.

Second, among various proposals floated by the White House and some in Congress for revenue raising is one imposing new taxes on the amount the wealthy give to charity. Nobody has defined "wealthy" in this context but President Obama has suggested in the past that by wealthy he means those who make \$250,000 or more per year. In response, nonprofit sector leaders have raised a huge hue and cry. One prominent fund raising consultant, *Robert F. Sharpe Jr.*, writing in The Chronicle of Philanthropy [May 5, 2011] has observed, *"At no time in history could this be more harmful to the nation's nonprofits."* At the time of this writing nobody has a clue as to the final outcome of this debate.

Third, some states are taking matters in their own hands. For example, my State of Oregon approved legislation in May 2011 which would disqualify nonprofits that devote less than 30 percent of their expenses to programs from getting gifts eligible for state tax deductions. This may or may not have an impact because in the past the U.S. Supreme Court has declared regulating spending by charities unconstitutional. But it certainly indicates the temper of the times [Since writing this, the Oregon proposal has failed]. Furthermore, referring to a recent suit involving the Girl Scout organization, The Chronicle of Philanthropy noted:

*"Tax-exempt organizations are not immune from challenges to their nonprofit status. Congress, the courts, local tax assessors, the IRS [Internal Revenue Service], and state attorneys general are on constant watch to ensure that the privileges enjoyed by these entities are well deserved."*

Fourth, The State of Massachusetts is on the verge of passing a law prohibiting nonprofits from paying trustees or Board members for their service as a trustee. The fact is that the vast majority of nonprofits do not pay their trustees but some rich grantmaking organizations do.

Fifth and last, in June 2011, The IRS withdrew tax-exempt status of 275,000 previously exempt entities for failure to file required documents for three consecutive years.

Space limitations does not permit me to go into details but I cite the above examples as indicative of troubling times ahead for nonprofits in the near future. Certainly, a negative impact will be felt if tax deductibility is limited or





## Communal giving

[russanita@charter.net](mailto:russanita@charter.net)



even eliminated which I don't believe is likely. But one must recall that deduction of charitable contribution is an invention of the early 20th century U.S., while people have been giving to charities from times immemorial. Also, note that roughly 67 percent of the tax filers take "standard deduction" and do not itemize their deductions. Nobody really knows for sure how much, if any, these 67 percent of tax filers give to charities. Tax deductibility may be one motivation for some – especially the wealthy – but it is not the sole motivation. Even after the deduction it costs money out of pocket to the donor. The point is that the current very difficult economic climate calls for a thorough and complete overhaul of the U.S. tax code which means that tax deductibility for contributions has to be included in that effort. Again, there should not be any "sacred cows." Also, there are other issues on the horizon which may potentially have a negative impact on the sector's ability to provide needed services. But that's for another time.

Americans are a very generous people; they will continue to give regardless of changes in tax laws. Good, worthy organizations will continue to provide valuable services to the needy and will continue to thrive. In the final analysis, altruism will triumph over other motivations.

This article was originally published in the Center for Advancement of Philanthropy's newsletter, Mumbai, India

**Rusi Sumariwalla** Founder/President, *Global Philanthropy & Nonprofits*



**I will work with you,  
contact me...**

***Yasmin Kevala***

**Mobile: 813 380-0064**

**Office: 813 634-0933**

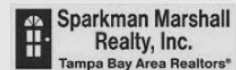
**[yasminhomes@verizon.net](mailto:yasminhomes@verizon.net)**

**[www.tampabayupscalehomes.com](http://www.tampabayupscalehomes.com)**

Tampa Bay area of Florida has **great home buying opportunities in all price ranges**, for every lifestyle: resort, retirement, or family living.



**Come and enjoy Florida,  
the Sunshine State with us!**



## WE'RE ALMOST THERE

## BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!



Help further our presence in North America while making the dreams of the Zarthushti community in the Washington, D.C., area come true.

Contribute to the Darbe Mehr project in the capital of the United States. *No contribution amount is too small.* To learn more about the project, contact **Dr. Rubina Patel** at [rubinajp@aol.com](mailto:rubinajp@aol.com).

To make a contribution, please mail your check payable to "ZAMWI" to **Mr. Rohinton Tengra, ZAMWI Treasurer, 7104 Copperwood Court, Rockville, MD 20855.**

# Youth and Youth Congress

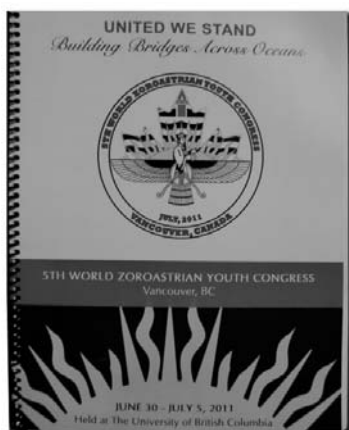


## “UNITED WE STAND – BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS OCEANS”

### 5th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress: An Overview

July 1-4, 2011, Vancouver

NOUSHIN KHUSHRUSHAHI



From July 1-4 2011, over 550 Zarathushti delegates from across the world convened at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, for the 5th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress (WYZC). Hosted by the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (ZSBC), the Congress,

whose theme was “**United We Stand – Building Bridges Across Oceans**”, followed the tradition of previous youth congresses by striving to create a global platform for Zarathushti youth to connect with one another, discuss pertinent community issues, and come together to create a united future.

Kicking off the Congress program on Canada Day, July 1st was *Meher Pavri* with a moving rendition of “O Canada,” the Canadian National Anthem, followed by a welcome ceremony by the First Nations Musqueam Band. *Mr. Homi Italia*, President of the ZSBC, then spoke about the spirit of the Congress in bringing together Zarathushti youth from across the world to share in their perspectives. *Mr. Zain Mavalvalla*, Chair of the 5th WYZC, greeted delegates, introduced his fellow committee and organizing members, and welcomed *Ervad Soli Dastur*, who led the humbandagi through an interactive jashan and featuring prayers by an Iranian woman mobediyar for the first time in North America. Following a memorable rendition of “I Believe” by *Vista Trethewey* and *Manek Mavalvalla*, who performed with local Zarathushti children, Keynote Speaker *Fred Sarkari* presented on the importance of courage and what it means to be a Zarathushti. Capping off the Opening Ceremony was a rousing performance by the *Shiamak Davar Dance Troupe* that had everyone on their feet.

Congress days were packed with educational sessions and networking opportunities. From the opening intergenerational discussion panel featuring *Sarosh Collector* (ZAH), *Zeeba Kayani* (ZAH), and *Simone Balsara* (AZA), *Ervad Soli Dastur* (Central Florida) which provided the opportunity for serious deliberations on community issues and their relevance

for the youth, to the final panel where delegates exchanged ideas and information about what they learned throughout the sessions, participants were able to articulate their concerns and their suggestions for how to collectively engage their communities.

\* *Dr. Nergis Mavalvala*, MIT quantum physicist and winner of the 2010 MacArthur Fellows Program, *Narges Nirumvala*, Dale Carnegie Sales Talk Champion, and *Anosh Irani*, celebrated author and playwright, entertained and engaged attendees about their professional careers choices, and motivations, sharing advice and strategies about how delegates could best strive to achieve their goals;

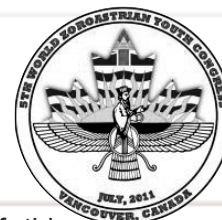
\* The panel “*Doctors in the House*” brought together *Dr. Babak Kalantari*, Assistant Clinical Professor at the UCLA School of Medicine and the Chief of Breast MRI & Ultrasound at Harbor-UCLA, and *Dr. Shirin Abadi*, a Vancouver pharmacotherapeutic specialist in the field of oncology, who spoke about strategies for minimizing the



risk of cancer. They were joined by *Dr. Farah Shroff*, Adjunct Professor at the Department of Family Practice at the University of British Columbia, who provided highlights of her recent ongoing study documenting the stories of elder (photo page 51) Zarathushti women while encouraging the youth to become the experts on their own communities and inviting other researchers and interested youth to become involved in this work (for more information on Dr. Shroff’s project and how to get involved, please email: [fmcshroff@gmail.com](mailto:fmcshroff@gmail.com))

\* Attendees who shared similar career goals were able to meet co-professionals through a “*Youth Career Connect*” session whereby attendees were divided according to relevant industry groups and tasked with sharing information, exchanging professional experiences, and brainstorming ways in which group members can collectively give back to the community. Each group was then asked to summarize their

# Youth and Youth Congress



discussions and share their action plans with the larger group, which included the creation and maintenance of global professional online directories and the facilitation of mentorship programs;

\* *Dr. Jenny Rose*, noted historian of religion, provided a fascinating overview of her recent study on the interaction between the Parsi merchants of Bombay and Gujarat and their counterparts in Boston and Salem, Massachusetts;

\* *Ava Afshari* shared her experiences of a recent trip to Yazd, Iran, and the significance and importance of Zarathushti holy sites (Piroons) located therein. Delegates from Iran joined in the presentation by singing songs traditionally sung during Pir-e-Sabz, the annual Zarathushti pilgrimage to Chak Chak in Iran;

\* *Benafsha Engineer* (WZO) spoke about the differences between rituals and spirituality in Zoroastrianism while *Monaz Dalal* (WZO) presented on the meaning and relevance of Zoroastrianism for the "Facebook generation";

\* *Dinyar Patel*, a PhD candidate in the Department of History at Harvard University, highlighted the Zarathushti demographic crisis, characterized by rapidly declining population figures and prompted by cultural and attitudinal factors that lead to late marriage and non-marriage amongst Parsis;

\* Several Zarathushti groups from Iran, India, Australia, and North America shared information about their local organizations, activities, and mandates, allowing for broader overview and platform for interaction and exchange between Zarathushti youth from across the world.

Alongside the educational and networking opportunities were evenings packed with entertainment and activities. Delegates were treated to an Opening Night boat cruise from which they took in spectacular Canada Day fireworks, a trip to Vancouver's famous Grouse Mountain, a fun beach night and a fantastic evening gala to conclude the Congress and to hand the next world Zoroastrian youth congress over to New Zealand. We wish the New Zealand association great

success with the planning of this monumental but greatly rewarding task. A big thank you to Chair Zain Mavalvalla, the organizing team and all the volunteers who banded to make the 5th WYZC such an incredible success!

For more information on congress events and biographies, please visit:  
<http://www.zsbc.org/congress2011/>

For more information on the 6th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress to be held in New Zealand (2015), please visit: <http://www.6wzyc.co.nz/>

**Noushin Khushrushahi** was awarded a student excellence award for her work on examining the historical and cultural construct of "Indian sexuality" on safe-sex practices, analyzing HIV/AIDS prevention and education programs in Pune, and investigating the impact of safe-sex messaging on the sex practices of sex workers and their babies. She is also very interested in examining and addressing the global issue of human trafficking, and has provided consultancy and research for the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women in Bangkok, Thailand, focusing predominantly on immigrant and migrant worker's rights.

Noushin Khushrushahi joined SHARE in August 2010 and leads SHARE'S research and shareholder engagement program on social issues, including human rights, labor rights, indigenous rights and free, prior and informed consent, and supply chain standards.

Noushin holds a Master of Arts in Asia-Pacific Policy Studies from the University of British Columbia

## Photo Credit Armaity Homavazir and Dinaz Sethna ATTENDEES CAME FROM

### COUNTRIES

UNITED STATES (USA)	200
CANADIANS (CAN)	168
IRAN (IRAN)	90
UNITED KINGDOM (GBR)	29
AUSTRALIA (AUS)	23
INDIA (IND)	15
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)	6
PAKISTAN (PAK)	5
NEW ZEALAND (NZL)	4
SWEDEN (SWE)	1
NETHERLANDS (NLD)	1

---

TOTAL 542



# Youth and Youth Congress



## UNITED WE STAND: BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS OCEANS

Thirteen young Mobeds from across the world perform an interactive jashan under the direction of Ervad Soli Dastur.



From left Ervads Dumasia, (Melbourne) Desai (Sydney), Balsara, (Vancouver) Firouzgary, (Houston) Bhadha (LA), Khambatta, (Houston), Nariman, (Houston); Katrak, (Houston) Khambatta, (Houston), Bucchia, (Houston) Katrak (Houston), Shahzadi (Tehran) and Mobedyar Namiranian (Tehran)

The theme for this congress was, United We Stand: Building Bridges Across Oceans. specially chosen to represent the importance of uniting Zarthushti youth around the world in order to create new relationships, and foster existing ones.

In 2010 Ervad Soli Dastur had been asked by Zain Mavalvala, the chair of the 5th World Zoroastrian Congress to make an interactive Jashan presentation, using young mobeds attending the congress, giving a 45 minute explanation of the jashan ceremony, prayers and English translations.. Ervad Soli accepted the request and started preparing an informative, interactive explanation of some of the prayers of the beautiful jashan ceremony using young Mobeds from Australia, Iran and North America, a total of 13 including Mobed Ramin Shahzadi and his wife, the newly ordained Mobedyar Parva Namiranian, This was the first time a lady Mobedyar participated in such a jashan presentation in North America

Invitation letters were sent to almost 300 mobeds all over the world so that all the young mobeds attending the congress could participate.

Ervad Soli communicated with the parents of all the young mobeds and their parents to give them an overview of what will be covered in the Jashan presentation and what will be expected of them This involved preparation of a lengthy WORD document covering the whole presentation, all selected prayer paras, their English translation, the Flower ceremony, the role of Zoti (lead Mobed) and the Raathwi (his helper) etc. This was sent to all the mobeds and their parents do they know what to prepare .

The material had to be condensed to fit 45 minutes which meant cutting many beautiful prayers and to select very few paras from each of the three parts of the Jashan for the final powerpoint presentation (PPT). This contained 6 prayers for the whole audience and 12 prayers for a select group of young attendees who recited the translation first followed by the Mobeds reciting the prayers.

. The young mobeds were given a 58 page ring binder to recite the required prayers without looking into their prayer book and follow the Flower Ritual step by step

# Youth and Youth Congress



The religious implements, *Barsom* (a bundle of metal wires bound together by metal chains) resting on *Mah Ruys* (two tripod like implements with semi-circular openings to rest the Barsom on them), which are used in all the higher Zoroastrian inner liturgies, were used on this occasion as well, to connect them with the Congress' Theme of Unity and Building Bridges

These symbols were augmented with the four beautiful words representing the Zarathushti creeds from our beautiful Kusti Prayer, *Jasa Me Awanghe Mazda* – Oh Ahura Mazda! Come to my aid! I stretched their actual meanings and used the following:

*Fraspaayao-khedhraam* – Bridge Builders,  
*Nidhaasnai-thîshem* – Peace Makers,  
*Khaetva-dathaam* – Self Confident,  
*Ashaonîm* – Righteous!

The Presentation gave the meaning of Jashan, its three parts, *Dibaache*, (introduction/forward) *Kardaaas*, *Aafrins* (blessings) and selected paras from each one of them. For the required interactive involvement of the audience, we started off with the *Jasa Me Awanghe Mazda* prayer, to be recited by the whole audience

(850+ in actual presentation) with the translation and the actual prayer!

This was a wonderful sight to behold and hear! This was followed with the famous *Hamaa Zor* Greeting among all audience which really broke the ice and impressed upon them that they are not going to sleep during this presentation! The 13 Mobeds and Mobedyar did a wonderful job of reciting the selected prayers in unison and the Zoti and Raathwi demonstrated the entire Flower Ceremony perfectly as Professional Mobeds! Ervad Soli stayed at the podium orchestrating the whole presentation using the PPT slides! Due to time restrictions, a few slides had to be skipped but the ending was performed by the whole audience reciting the translation and prayers of the last two paras of the last Aafrin ending with the beautiful *Humatanaam* prayer!

Jashan Presentation was a great success in bringing a spirit of cohesiveness among the attendees of the Congress.

*Report abstracted from Ervad Soli Dastur's report in "Zor and More" Special edition July 2011, a publication of the Zoroastrian Association of Florida.*

# Youth and Youth Congress



## 5th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, Vancouver, Canada--July 2011

Report by Dr Farah Shroff

### United We Stand - Building Bridges Across Oceans

Our international Zarhusti community celebrated a wonderful five days in Vancouver this year! From the opening ceremonies to the dinner and dance of the last day, hundreds of Zarhusti youth from all over the world conversed, created friendships and created bonds. This congress was exceptionally well organized by a fantastic team of volunteers led by Zain Mavalvala: Armin Buzorg, Mehernaz Buzorg, Homi Italia, Shiraz Italia, Yohan Irani, Benafsha Kapadia, Behramsha Mizan and many others. The program was a nice blend of fun and serious topics. Auspiciously, the congress began on *Tirgan*—our ancient celebration of summer. It was delightful to see a bit of water splashing in the cafeteria—an illustration of the longevity and transportability of our traditions!

During the opening ceremonies I saw for the first time in my life a woman mobed-- Parva Namiranian. I was moved to tears. After many years of talking about the importance of such advancements in our community, it was like a dream come true to see her performing prayers with her male counterparts. She came from Iran with her husband who was also a mobed. Mobed Ervad Soli Dastur did an educational and most interesting presentation on the meanings of our rituals, prayers and more. He was able to involve many audience members in a way that was truly creative and interactive.

The theme of the congress—*united we stand—building bridges across oceans*—was beautifully conceived. In these times when our community has experienced some divisions, based mainly on viewpoints of a minority amongst us, it was touching to see the genuine desire amongst participants to be united and accept diversity within our community. We held both formal and informal discussions about how to build unity—between Irani Zarhustis and Parsis and between those who have married non-Zarhustis and those who have married within the community. We did not stray from the controversies. For example, we discussed linguistic similarities of Farsi and Gujarati. A striking number of Zarhustis are bilingual—illustrating how possible it is to bridge the language divide. Most importantly, those who genuinely wish to learn another language, with strong motivation, will learn. We are all enriched when we increase communication within the community.

As a speaker at the First World Zoroastrian Congress in 1993 (another wonderful experience), I remember how difficult it was to discuss the controversial topic of accepting women who marry out of the community. When I discussed this topic briefly at my address in Vancouver, many people applauded and came to talk with me about this important and most painfully divisive issue. In the Zarhusti diaspora we are holding conversations about the evolution of our community and it is decisions that come from these conversations upon which our survival rests. Will we look the same as we look now or will we look different? Congress participants asked many such vital questions.

Presenters engaged the audience in many ways. Ava Afshari's slideshow of Zarhusti pilgrimage sites, for example, inspired many of us to go to Iran and visit the ancient natural sites of our ancestors. Some participants sang some of the traditional songs that are part of these rituals. Dinyar Patel discussed population figures, showing us how important it is for us to create more community members. Zarhusti celebrities--Anosh Irani, Narges Nirumvala, Nergis Mavalvala—did a wonderful panel, encouraging everyone to do their best and be successful. Drs Babak Kalantari and Shirin Abadi did informative and engaging lectures on cancer. I gave a presentation of a long term study I am doing on elder Zarhusti women's oral herstories and encouraged us to be our own experts. Monaz Dalal talked about keeping in touch through social media. Armaity Homavazir and Trity Namiranian wrapped up the presentations with some ideas of how to keep the momentum going.

The beach party, dances and dinners and other social events really brought participants together. By the last evening, the feelings amongst the crowd were familiarity and warmth.



# Youth and Youth Congress



## WHERE'S YOUR HEAD AT - An Intergenerational Dialogue hosted by NextGenNow

Designed to get a pulse of the youth of today, the Intergenerational Panel moderated by Armaity Homavazir (Canada), a leader in NextGenNow, was the first session to start off the congress. The panel consisted of: Simone Balsara (Australia), Sarosh Collector (USA), Nahid Dashtaki (USA), Soli Dastur (USA), and Zeeba Kayani (USA).



From left Armaity Homavazir, Sarosh Collector; Zeeba Kayani; Simone Balsara; Nahid Dastaki, Ervad Soli Dastur

This interactive panel focused on three key areas affecting the youth and the next generation of Zarthushtis: the future, religious education and the youth. The panel was asked to reflect on specific questions such as: *What do you consider the most important issue/s affecting the future of our community? In terms of delivery, are we doing enough, and what more can be done to strengthen and improve our religious education programs for the future? Are local, North American and world Zarthoshti organizations and leadership bodies doing enough to connect, relate, inspire and collaborate with the next generation?*

The discussion began with a response from the panel members to the above questions. The audience was then invited to counter with their own questions and opinions. *Zeeba Kayani* offered that acceptance (in terms of community, culture, economically and sexually), still remained an issue. She explained that there were still a lot of societal pressures of what "normal" behaviour is. *Sarosh Collector* felt that our sense of belonging in a community was key to our future, and that we needed occasions to create togetherness in order to have a bond or sense of cohesiveness. He attributed our geographical distances between each other as one of the factors. *Soli Dastur* added that a challenge for our community consisted in the many groups we have such as: orthodox vs. reformist or Parsi vs. Irani, or even "they vs. us." *Simone Balsara* shared some great ideas about religious education including smart phone apps, and how her community gives back when the youth start becoming religious education teachers themselves.

One of the main concerns was that of perception. It was felt that people make many statements, for instance, we have a small number of priests, but no one actually counted them or had an accurate figure to back that statement up. This led to a discussion about the accuracy of information out on the web.

The audience had a lot to say on culture and acceptance. The opening ceremonies, as well as the lack of translators at this congress for all the Farsi speaking delegates who traveled from Iran, were mentioned as a case in point. It was added that the community as a whole has to act together to address such issues and ensure inclusiveness and acceptance.

One of the surprises came from *Soli Dastur* when he asked the audience to stand up and do hamazor with the people around them! This was a carry over from the day before where he had led a very engaging interactive jashan at the opening ceremonies.

In terms of youth, there was the perception from some members in the audience that people were still not listening. Whereas *Nahid Dashtaki* felt that many youth were already in positions of leadership and that the others knew whom to contact if they wanted to take them on. *Soli Dastur* added that the youth need to be clear about what they want and to make suggestions too. Both *Zeeba Kayani* and *Nahid Dashtaki* encouraged the youth to get energized and get active about the future. They both emphasized the need for the youth to find their own inspiration for change, commit to their passions, and then follow through by reaching out in their respective Zoroastrian communities (city and nation-wide).

The session ended with a treat from the Australian contingent, Basement Jaxx, led by *Simone Balsara*. They had put together a rap titled, *Congress Day* to the tune of, *Where's Your Head At* and performed it for the audience! The rap was written by *Karl "K-Dog" Desai*, *Yuhan "MC BC" Reporter*, and *Simone "Simmy-B" Balsara*.

You can hear them sing at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcAUS1dBCdw&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcAUS1dBCdw&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

# Youth and Youth Congress



It must be said that the hour discussion for this panel barely allowed the audience to touch upon the major issues in any depth. Overall, there was great passion on all sides in support of education, leadership and the future successes of our community.

**Submitted by: Armaity Homavazir, Toronto, Canada**

**Photo credits Armaity Homavazir and Dinaz Sethna**



## YOUTH CAREER CONNECT

*Moderated by Armeen Bhesania (Toronto, Canada) & Zeeba Kayani (Houston, USA):*

Sponsored by the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce, the goal of this 120-minute session was to connect and unite Zarathushti youth who share similar career goals and passions.

The Youth Career Connect Session was attended by nearly 220 people—age ranged from 16 to 40. Zeeba began the session by providing an overview of the goals and format of the session. She also spent few minutes describing the WZCC—encouraging attendees to join their local chapter. Armeen organized the youth while they were getting into their choice of professions and encouraged them to discuss their goals. Many youth stepped up as small group leaders and continued the dialogue for a collaborative and high-pact networking session.

During the interactive portion, attendees were grouped based on their career experience and aspirations. Each of the twelve industry groups was seated with community members, both youth and some senior, who have in-depth experience in their respective fields. The groups engaged in a round of introductions and ice-breakers—followed by a structured discussion—where members could ask questions, relate experiences, provide advice, share ideas, and bond over shared passions.

During the second half of the interactive session, each group was tasked with brainstorming ways that, as co-professionals, they could collectively give back to their community. At the end of the brainstorming session, each group shared their idea and action plan with the entire room. Common themes developed by the groups included: mentor and internship programs,

youth empowerment, professional online directories and networks, pro-bono services for the community, etc.

To preserve these connections after the Congress, each person provided their email address, so that they could be added to an email list, social network, and mentor program—designed specifically for their industry group. The email list of 220 youth will also be used to recruit more young members and leaders to the WZCC as well as to launch a WZCC mentorship program across North America

**Reported by Zeeba N. Kayani**

**Zeeba Shaheen Kayani**, has been a proud member of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston, from 1991 at the age of 9 when her family moved to Houston. She has a Bachelor of Science in Communication Disorders, with a focus on Early Childhood Development & Early Autism Detection, from the University of Houston. Following her ASHA (American Speech and Hearing Association) certification in 2009, she is working on her Masters in Science in Audiology, with a focus on Cochlear Implants.



Zeeba works for the Children's Learning Institute within The University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, Texas (UT-HSCH) where she oversees all funding that is awarded for/to the Developmental Pediatrics Division.

# Youth and Youth Congress



## ARE YOU STILL HAVING FUN?

"Did you have fun" at the 5th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, in Vancouver ? This was a question asked by two key speakers at the Congress. *Fred Sarkari*, in his excellent speech, on Human Behaviour, mentioned that *"without having fun, why do certain things at all!"* *Ervad Soli Dastur*, during his interactive Jashan, also asked, *"why should we not have fun when life is so short ! "* This thought on "having fun ", as mentioned by these two key speakers, got me thinking, and thus with this question in mind, I interviewed many young Zarathushtis, about their " having fun ", at this Congress.



Surprisingly, most of the participants that I met and interviewed, already had one purpose in mind, while they were at the Congress. And that was to "have fun", to the fullest. Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce to you, this amazing short journey, that we all lived, to the fullest, at the Youth Congress, in Vancouver, BC.

Let me share with you all, the thoughts and feelings that came straight from the hearts of many young Zarathushtis. Many of the youth mentioned that prior to the Congress, they did not feel close to their faith, religion or to the Zarathushti community. And within five days of the Youth Congress, most of their perceptions and feelings changed, after interacting and meeting with " fun loving " young Zarathushtis from all over the world. These ordinary young Zarathushtis, within five days, transformed into " proud Zarathushtis ", proud of wanting to be one, and " enjoy ", while they were all

together. These "proud Zarathushtis", inspired by the speeches, and happy to feel one amongst new friends,



made the effort to build strong bridges, between most of the youth they met at the Congress.

While interviewing the many participants, all of them were eager to share their thoughts on the Congress, but most of them requested that their names be omitted in this report.

One very interesting couple I met and talked to, were Mobedyar Dr. Parva Namiranian,(photo left) and her husband, Mobed Ramin Shahzadi.(photo above) Mobedyar Parva is one of the eight lady mobedyars from Iran. She comes from a religious family. She confided that her father and her husband are the main mentors in her life, who inspired her to practice the religion, in so much depth. Her main reason to take up the mobed way of life was because her grandfather was also a mobed. Mobedyar Parva wants to be an example to the Zarathushti women of our generation, that this too can be a way of life, along with your own chosen career. By being a mobedyar, she can give back religious services to the community. Mobedyar Parva kept herself mentally strong, positive and focussed, during her journey to become a mobedyar.

When I interviewed her husband, Mobed Ramin, he kept praising his wife, and her achievements in Iran, and in the community. He did not say much about



# Youth and Youth Congress



himself. This also goes to show, that behind "some " successful women, there surely is a proud man, called, " The Husband ! "

During the Congress, lunches at 1pm were always a great ice breaker, to meet new and interesting people. Some people were so focused on their food, that there was either a loud munching chorus, or a pin drop silence, from their tables. However, most of the other "fun lovers " ,just enjoyed the vibrant company around them. This was evident by the non-stop deafening chatter of the "proud Zarathushti Youth ".

*Ervad Soli Dastur* had a very " happy - go - lucky " manner of talking, which was " fun " to listen to. He truly has a depth of knowledge and wisdom to share with the youth ! One of his quotes, that captured my attention, was, *"it is never too late to have fun, and having fun does not need a particular age!"*

Some other participants, with whom I shared quality time, were young individuals who had left home for the first time, all by themselves, and they were definitely "having a lot of fun ", throughout the Congress. When I asked one youngster, whether he was enjoying the congress or not, he said "the word **not** does not exist in this Congress for him, nor for anyone. The word NOT should be forgotten for these five days ". Truly, a positive mindset, to make this a memorable congress. This was the very first Youth Congress this young Zarathushti was attending, and he was so happy and satisfied, that he looked forward to attend the next Congress as well.

Most of the interviewees, surprisingly, also mentioned that there was a feeling of a very high energy level, from day one, till the end of the Congress. The groups of " fun loving " Young Zarathushtis from Iran, were regularly seen, having a thrilling time, when they kept singing and dancing, even when, at times, there was no music ! Vibrant Farsi hymns was all it took for them to be on their feet, and persian dance, and " have loads of fun ".

During the lecture sessions, the speeches in Farsi definitely helped our Iranian Youth to "enjoy" the talks. Many of the participants from Iran felt that the speeches in Farsi certainly helped bridge the gap between the Iranian Zarathushtis and the Parsi, from all over the globe. This positive feeling among many participants also measures the success of the 5th Zarathushti Youth Congress.

Many youth who were interviewed, also mentioned strongly, that the friendliness and the open mindedness of the young Zarathushtis they met, during the Congress, was truly contagious.

Two other young lady Zarathushti participants from Canada felt that the Congress was truly a success. They both felt that the Grouse Mountain trip, and the night at the beach, at the Spanish Banks, was "helping bring the room mates and the neighbours together". For both of these ladies, the exciting racing activity was a perfect opportunity to make new friends. They further shared that the seminar sessions helped both of them understand the different cultures in North America, the science behind ours and the next generation. They found the talks on certain diseases very enlightening.

Others wished that the congress was for more than just five days. Many participants interviewed, commented on the excellent arrangements and activities arranged by the organizing committee and all the help and assistance given by all the volunteers. Many felt that the scenic city of Vancouver was the best venue to host the Congress. Though some felt the cold a bit, even in July, but most of the youth cherished the snow capped mountains in July, the tranquil lakes and oceans, and the lush green forests. Now, back to our routines in life, the fabulous memories of the 5th Youth Zoroastrian Congress, will also stay in our hearts and minds for ever. We will surely miss all those lovely new friends we made at the Congress.

So, did we all have fun? Yes, most certainly.

**Contributed by: Narius Cyrus Magol.**

**Photo credit Armaity Homavazir and Dinaz Sethna**



**Narius** has studied Human Kinetics and Recreation from Langara college and has a Business Management Certificate. He is working towards a degree in English Literature and Counselling from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, BC.

*Narius is very interested in social work and volunteering and some of his activities include helping children with autism to learn horse riding, volunteering at the National Sports Events and assisting at an elementary school and university level.*

# Youth and Youth Congress



## FORMULA FOR SUCCESS"

With a session titled "*Formula for Success*", it is no surprise that our panel of speakers delivered an invigorating presentation full of laughter and deep insight.

We were privileged to have acclaimed novelist *Anosh Irani*, whose youthful tales inspired the audience to live life

from left Prof Mavalvala, Narges Nirumvala and Anosh Irani



to its fullest. Mr. Irani described how his unconventional life journey led him to possess the creativity and imagination necessary to produce award winning novels.

Echoing the words of Mr. Irani, *Dr Nergis Mavalvala*, a professor of Physics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) inspired the audience to march to the beat of their own proverbial drum. She shared personal

stories of struggle and triumph as an extremely successful woman in a male dominated field.

Last, but certainly not least, *Narges Nirumvala* discussed her passion for life emphasizing the need for planning and organization as important tools for balanced and happy lives. The panel conversations ranged from how to choose one's career or university major, how to overcome struggles in life and the work place, the use of religion and culture, how to use one's differences to their advantage and how to achieve genuine success.

The panel was for 45 minutes, with 25 minutes of questions from the moderator, Delna Contractor, and 20 minutes of questions from the audience. The success of the panel was evident when, at its conclusion, the panelists received a standing ovation from the packed auditorium.

**Delna Contractor,  
Vancouver, BC**

**Photo credit  
Armaity Homavazir  
and Dinaz Sethna**



***Earning the trust of  
families,  
one at a time.***



**Selecting a Financial Adviser is not  
an easy decision.**

**It's a matter of trust.**

**Zarir J. Sethna, CLU, LUTCF**  
**Member Agent, The Nautilus Group®**  
*A Service of New York Life Insurance Company*

1330 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 1900  
Houston, TX 77056

Tel: (713) 963-4229 Fax: (713) 963-4249

Email: [Zsethna@ft.newyorklife.com](mailto:Zsethna@ft.newyorklife.com)

[www.zsethna@nylagent.com](http://www.zsethna@nylagent.com)

Financial Adviser offering investment advisory services through  
Eagle Strategies LLC, a Registered Investment Adviser



# Youth and Youth Congress



## GOOD THOUGHTS, GOOD WORDS, GOOD ACTION! PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER - WHAT ARE WE LEAVING WITH?

Moderated by *Armaity Homavazir* and *Triti Namiranian* (both leaders in NextGenNow), the purpose of this session was two-fold: to provide an opportunity for the participants of the congress to identify areas of concern, and a forum to help create a project action plan with tangible results.



Over the years we've learned that even though great ideas result from congresses and much enthusiasm is built, once the congress is over, real life takes over and the challenges of following through sink in. For this congress, we wanted to ensure that delegates left with concrete action plans and structured support, to see new projects to completion.

First we asked the entire delegation to come up with ideas. Using a rough vote to narrow down the areas of concern we chose three action projects to focus on. Those individuals who expressed an interest in dedicating a year to a project, were asked to stay back. Using SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely), as a model for creating goals, we led the groups in setting specific targets for a one year period.

### PROJECTS

The following collaborative groups took shape as a result of our session:

	<b>Project Z-Med</b>	<b>Project Zoroastrians Stepping Forward</b>	<b>Project Zdir.org</b>
<b>Leaders</b>	Hormuz Nicholwalla, College Station, Texas, USA  Khushnuma Driver, Miami, Florida, USA	Hoshaang Gotla, Mumbai, India  Behrose B. Taraporewalla, California, USA	Farhad Mehta, Portland, Oregon  Shahrooz Bhopti, Princeton Junction, NJ, USA
<b>Co-Leaders</b>	Zenia Shroff, Tampa, Florida, USA  Hufarish Mahava, Vancouver, Canada	Narius Magol, Vancouver, Canada  Armina Kapadia, Mumbai, India  Parizad Aderbehman, Melbourne, Australia	Zeeba S. Kayani, Sugarland, Texas, USA  Mehrzaad Dehmiri, Toronto, Canada

This group is organizing a day of service where Zarathushtis are encouraged to walk, to build community, while collecting money and shoes for those who are in need.

### OUTCOMES

The sessions ended with everyone in great spirits, energized and ready to take action!



# Youth and Youth Congress



## NOW WHAT?

A month after the congress, the groups are working in collaboration with people from Iran, India, Australia, England, the US and Canada. Every group member has a copy of the plan they created together in Vancouver. They are using various modes of communication and almost all of them have started a Facebook page and are working on their own websites.

For more information, you can visit the *NextGenNow* page on Facebook and see the links for the individual projects. Stay tuned on our website, <http://www.nextgennow.org/> for upcoming action and information!

**Submitted by:**

**Triti Namiranian (left)**

**Armaity Homavazir (right)**

*Photo credit Armaity Homavazir and Dinaz Sethna*



## DAISY DAVER OF EDMONTON ATTENDS THE YOUTH CONGRESS FOR THE FIRST TIME AND WRITES

The Zoroastrian congress in Vancouver ended up being a very memorable trip for me. I went with an open mind, but thinking that if not much comes out of it, I will have a fun-filled trip. Surprisingly, I



ended up making some really close friends there. I sincerely hope we all keep in touch with each other and create life-long friendships. I am confident we will be able to do so as I do believe it is not that difficult to maintain basic social

contacts with each other in today's day and age with Facebook, cell phones, text messages and online chats. I actually learnt so much more about people my age and of my culture. I also think another very remarkable change I have noticed in myself ... I have started randomly speaking more and more Gujarati words which I heard at the congress and which I have not used for years!

The best lecture I attended there and my personal favorite was probably the "*networking session*" It consisted of us sitting in a room and then separating into groups based on the field of our studies or career path we were going into. I particularly enjoyed it because it was so great to meet other Zarathushtis who were involved in my very own field of arts, which I have not commonly heard or acquainted myself within our community. I got to meet some extremely talented and interesting people, and it was a major highlight of the trip for me. I also really

enjoyed meeting Zarathushtis from around the world. Having lived in Edmonton for the past 6 years and with the community here being so small, I forget sometimes how many Zarathushtis are really out there. I found it so astonishing to meet people who have grown up in so many different countries, with such different lifestyles, and yet we still had a similar understanding and sense of belonging and togetherness, based on our culture. I went into this experience thinking that it will be okay, but I came out of it really wanting to experience more and more of this and something similar again soon someday. I will keep my fingers crossed and hope that I can make it to the next Youth Congress again. I strongly encourage other youths to make every attempt to attend such events and experience this at least once in a lifetime.

Sincerely

**Daisy Daver (age 20 years, Edmonton, Canada), a FEZANA Congress subsidy recipient.**

# Youth and Youth Congress



## Impressions of a FEZANA Subsidy Recipient

### Mahfrin Santoke

As expected, my experience in Vancouver for the World Zoroastrian Youth Congress proved to be thrilling and exciting. The congress was very well planned and I feel that the four days there were packed with wonderful experiences.

My favorite thing about attending congresses is meeting new people and rekindling with old friends, many of whom I had met at previous congresses. I met people from all over the world, of different ages, backgrounds, and careers, but we all had one thing in common; we were all Zarathushtis. We had all gone to Vancouver with the intention of having a good time, meeting new people, and connecting ourselves with our religion. The sessions were interesting and informative and the activities were enjoyable and encouraged mingling. I particularly enjoyed the career connecting session. This session has happened in the past four congresses I attended. However, in the past, with fewer participants, there have never been more than one or two people in my field, which is creative arts. However, in Vancouver, we had a sizable group of about ten people and I really enjoyed being able to discuss my career goals with other Zarathushtis moving in a similar direction.

One of my favorite activities at the congress was one that not many attendees participated in. A trip had been planned to Grouse Mountain and while the plan was to have us all take the gondolas up, a small group of us chose to hike up the mountain instead. This common goal built friendships and encouraged support and the sense of accomplishment in the end gave us a reason to continue bonding. Many of the hikers were from Australia, and it was fun and interesting to mingle with them and hear about what is happening at their end of the world.

On the last night, the gala event was more grand and thrilling than I could have ever imagined. Though it had only been four days, celebrating with the other attendees felt like celebrating with old friends. We all danced together and took pictures with each other as though we had known each other for years and talked about hopefully meeting again at future congresses. I left Vancouver feeling very satisfied with my experience, and very sad to leave. It was a wonderful city, with wonderful people, and wonderful events planned. I would like to thank FEZANA for the subsidy because taking some of the burden off the cost involved definitely allowed me to enjoy the experience more. I hope to attend many future congresses and continue learning about my religion,

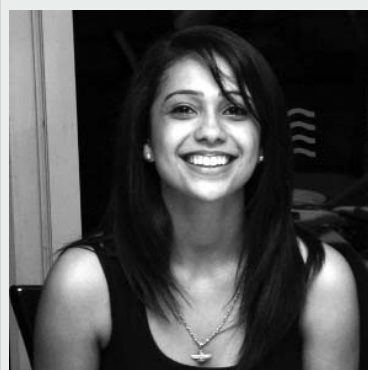
meeting new people, and keeping in touch with old friends, even if I only see them once every few years!

Thanks again to all!

**Mahfrin Burjor Santoke**, (Age 24, USA) working towards her masters in Music Performance at California State University, Northridge. She plays the flute, enjoys local gigs on flute and well as giving private lessons, and teaches cardio kickboxing at the gym.

## WELCOME TO THE 6th WORLD ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH CONGRESS NEW ZEALAND

My Dear Global Zarathushti Leaders,



I would like to thank you all, very sincerely, for your very kind words of support and encouragement. It is a great honour for me to Chair this event and I would like to share this with you and the youth of your prospective countries.

As the *Zoroastrian Youth of New Zealand*, (ZYNZ)

we are a motivated team who have taken on this challenging task to provide a memorable religious and social experience and in doing so create a strong networking base for our young global Zoroastrian attendees. We envision creating a global platform for our youth to embrace our treasured culture, enhance our unique traditions and evolve to create a united future. In essence, our motto, **Embrace..Enhance...Evolve.**

May I take this opportunity and request you all as Leaders, to encourage the youth in your country to actively participate and come forward to attend this congress. This will mean a lot to all of us here in New Zealand.

With the blessings of our Dear Ahura Mazda, we look forward to making this congress a roaring success.

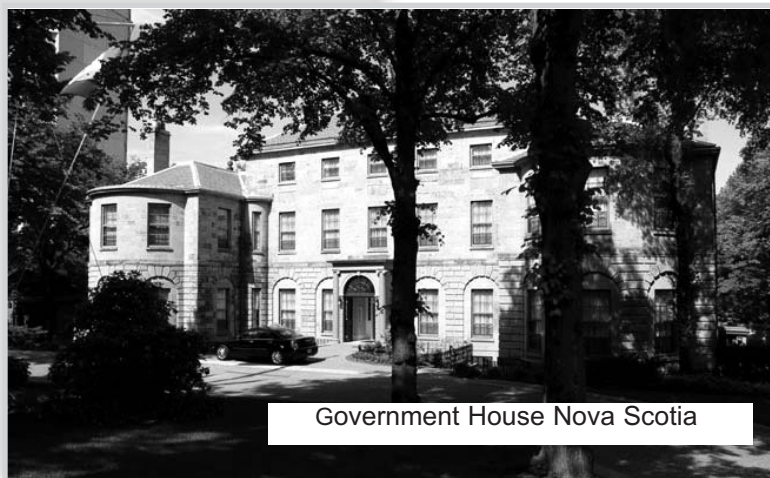
Warm regards and wishes,

**Tinaz Karbhari**, Chair, 6th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, 2015

*In the Winter issue of the FEZANA JOURNAL, the 6th WZYC team will be introduced.*

# In The News

## ZARATHUSHTIS OF ATLANTIC CANADA CELEBRATE IN ROYAL FASHION



Government House Nova Scotia

After decades of service to families across four provinces, the Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada celebrated its 20th anniversary in regal style.

Dozens of people came together on 18 June 2011 at the home of the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia for a jashan presided by *Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli*.

About 60 people attended the event in Halifax, which also served to bless Government House – the oldest occupied vice-regal residence in North America. In addition to Zoroastrian families from the region, the ceremony was attended by friends and invited guests from the spiritual, academic and cultural communities of Nova Scotia.

As representative of Her Majesty the Queen in Nova Scotia, *Lt. Gov. Mayann E. Francis* has made outreach to communities and groups a signature of her nearly five years in office. *"I am a firm believer in the strength that this diversity brings to our society as a whole,"* she told the assembled crowd.

Over its 210-year existence, Government House has been the venue for royal visits, meetings of heads of state, grand balls and private teas. It has also hosted services for various religious faiths and denominations, including blessings by Hindu, Muslim, Mi'qmaq and Christian communities.

*"I am confident in claiming that this is the first time a Zoroastrian ceremony has been carried out at Government House,"* Her Honour said, calling it a *"historic moment in the life of our province"*

During the jashan, the house received the blessings bestowed in the invocations. *"May all virtues, blessings, happiness and prosperity come here,"* the prayers stated. At the conclusion of the ceremony, *Ervad Bagli* gave a brief explanation of the various parts of the ritual, including an interpretation of the flower ceremony.

In this rite, the priest uses flowers to signify the exchange of life from the material world to the spiritual world, while praying, *"We revere and praise those persons in both the material and spiritual world who have engaged in Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds."*

The simplicity of this message struck the Lieutenant Governor, who noted in her remarks that, *"there is much that all peoples can learn from the rule of truth and good thinking. Without question it is a rule that every individual should strive to incorporate into their being."*

The Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada, known as ZAAC, got its start in 1991 and has members in Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

*"Although our Zoroastrian population is sparse and spread throughout the Atlantic provinces, we have strived to reach out and involve every Zarathushti to the extent they wished to participate with all our activities, including a jashan ceremony virtually every year,"* said the association's current president, *Sarosh Rustom*. *"At our Annual General Meeting in 2010, we recognized that this upcoming milestone – our 20th anniversary – should be celebrated in a unique way."*



Lieutenant Governor Mayann Francis greets Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli before a jashan ceremony



# In The News

Holding the ceremony in the ballroom of Government House, as early summer sun streamed through the windows and the sound of the prayers echoed to the back of the room, was truly unique.

Situated in the heart of Halifax, Government House was built in 1800 by Sir John Wentworth, who strongly objected to the squalid conditions he found at the Governor's residence upon his arrival in the colony in 1792.



Ervad Bagli performs the flower ritual during the jashan

Georgian style popular in England and the colonies between 1720 and 1840. The manor features classic design elements such as symmetrical windows, hipped rooflines and chimneys on either side of the home.

Nearly all the construction materials for the original home were assembled from across Nova Scotia. This enabled the house to truly be a ceremonial home built by Nova Scotians, for Nova Scotians.

Government House recently benefited from a three-year, \$6.25-million renovation, which was completed in November 2009. When the Queen toured the province in June 2010, she rededicated the building, which serves as her home when she visits. The Jashan was held in the ballroom of Government House. On the far wall hangs a portrait of Sir John Wentworth, who built the home in 1800 (photo right)

After the renovations were completed, the Lieutenant Governor – whose father was the Archpriest of Saint Philip's African Orthodox Church in Sydney, Nova Scotia – held an interfaith ceremony to bless the house.

Because of her strong religious and spiritual beliefs, Her Honour said it was important to offer prayers before taking up residence. *"Prayers and blessings create an environment of peace, love, respect, wisdom, truth, sound decisions and understanding,"* she said. The Zoroastrian blessing was in keeping with that philosophy.

*"During the blessing, I felt very peaceful and calm," she said. "For me it was a remarkable experience and I felt very privileged to have been part of this sacred occasion."*

**Photos Courtesy Government House**

<http://lt.gov.ns.ca/government-house/the-story-of-government-house/>

In letters he wrote back to England, he described the residence as being *"in danger of falling into the cellar."* Wentworth set his eyes on a plot of land with lush greenery, rich soils, and commanding views of Halifax harbour. He soon persuaded the legislative assembly to provide a budget for plans, estimates and lands.

The house was modeled after a proper English country home and was designed in the



**Zahra Sethna** is a writer and editor with over 12 years experience in print, video and online formats. She has recently worked as a communication specialist with UNICEF, a news writer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and a web producer at The New York Times. She is the author of three guide books to New York City and has contributed to publications such as BBC Travel, The New York Times, Picture, Clear and Maisonneuve magazines. She lives in Halifax with her husband, Stephen.

# In The News

## Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe

### 150th Anniversary Gala Banquet 16 July 2011

The Zartoshty Brothers Hall at the Zoroastrian Centre, Rayners Lane, North West London, bore witness to a landmark event. To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE); whose proud roots in the United Kingdom can be traced to the year, 1861, members, their guests and well wishers joined together for a Gala Banquet on the evening of 16th July 2011.

On arrival at the Zoroastrian Centre, proceeding into the foyer, a kaleidoscope of colour as presented by the variety of exotic juices, laid, neatly on the reception bar, greeted the eye.

A purple helium balloon depicting the anniversary years floated behind a silk flame simulated fire, and friends greeted one another whilst making their way to the seating plan. A special 150th Anniversary

souvenir brochure was on sale, packed with advertisements from sponsors, messages from well wishers and photographs of important events from as early as 1906. It also included nuggets of information of historical importance such as a copy of a letter written by *Seth Muncherji Hormusji Cama*, the result of which culminated in the formation of the Zoroastrian Association in the UK, 150 years ago.

At around 7:30 pm, the doors to the Zartoshty Brother's Hall were opened. The Hall dedicated to *Mobed Mehraban* and his brother the late *Mobed Faridoon Zartoshty* whose largesse and philanthropy, together with the efforts of the Zoroastrian community of the UK, made the acquisition of the *Zoroastrian Centre*, an art deco heritage listed building a reality; was awash with white and purple decoration. To seat the three hundred revellers, thirty tables, were laid with white table cloth, crossed with a purple sash, on which stood tall glass vases cradling flowers and candles, which floated in a mixture of water and purple dye. The chairs, covered with white cloth, were adorned with purple bows and the white walls were touched with the gentle glow of purple up-lighting. All the ladies looked resplendent in their ball gowns, cocktail dresses and saris, whilst men dressed in dinner jackets, duglis, lounge suits or traditional Indian dress looked dapper, marking the occasion in style.

The banquet commenced with an array of mouth watering starters, which consisted of: chicken tikka, filo

pastry filled with spicy minced lamb, marinated fish fried in batter, and aloo papri chaat- a mixture of chick peas, sliced potato, yoghurt and tamarind sauce with chaat masalla. White and red wine was placed on the tables, along with water and soft drinks. *The President of the ZTFE, Mr Malcolm M Deboo, (photo below)* addressed everyone welcoming them to the grand event. As he spoke a projector screen depicted various photographs of past premises that the Association had used for the benefit of the Zoroastrian Community over the years. Mr Malcolm M Deboo thanked the Zoroastrian

Community of the UK and all well wishers of the ZTFE for their continued support and assistance and especially thanked the organisers and volunteers for their hard work in making the 150th Anniversary Gala Banquet a great success. A press

photographer perched aloft a silver ladder, took a picture of those seated in the Zartoshty Brothers Hall. This no doubt will serve as a reminder to future generations of the celebration, and perhaps, even make its way, into a similar Brochure, as those printed for this occasion.

After Mr Malcolm M Deboo's welcome address a group of female dancers in grass skirts swayed to the beats of Polynesian drums, as the group 'Beats of Polynesia,' began the entertainment for the evening. The dancers then left the stage, and eased their way into the gathering and sought members of the audience to join them, for more rhythmic gyrations.

Soon it was time for the main course, which consisted of ten different food items. Timeless dishes from the Indian Sub-Continent were served at the table which consisted of: a sumptuous platter of *lamb biryani*, along with *malai jeera chicken*, *karahi lamb*, *chilli paneer*, *fresh chillies in a spicy sauce*, *black lentils in a creamy butter sauce*, *tandoori naan*, *Peshwari naan*, *salad and raita*. A delicious serving of mango kulfi and fruit salad rounded off the main meal, cooling the palate wherever necessary.

As the evening drew to the part of the programme billed as the 'Formal Function,' following the Banquet dinner, the President of the ZTFE Mr Malcolm M Deboo, took to the stage and further addressed those gathered. In his address Mr Deboo announced that the Banquet





# In The News

was the first event to commence celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Association. Mr Deboo provided a synopsis of how the Association came into being, and the achievements of early Zoroastrians in the UK. He paid tribute to past Presidents, Trustees and Committees of the Association. He thanked the priests for their dedicated service and reverently remembered those from the priesthood who were no longer with us, but who had given much to the Association. On a solemn note, a minute's silence was observed by all, out of respect for the victims and all those affected by the terrorist outrage in Mumbai India, which occurred on 13th July 2011. This was of particular significance given the strong ties that so many Zoroastrian families in the UK and the diaspora have with Mumbai. Mr Malcolm Deboo concluded his speech by requesting everyone to raise their glasses in a toast to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

An enthusiastic message congratulating the ZTFE, from our Patron *Mobed Mehraban Zartoshty* on the achievements of the Association and for hosting such an event was read out by past President *Dorab E Mistry*. Not only had our Association been supported in acquiring the Zoroastrian Centre by Mobed Mehraban and his brother the late Mobed Faridoon Zartoshty but it was through the benevolence of both brothers, and their families, along with a generous bequest from the estates of late *Professor Mary Boyce* that a Chair in Zoroastrian Studies has now been established in perpetuity at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. *Professor Almut Hintze* Zartoshty Professor of Zoroastrianism and Head of Department at SOAS and *Dr Harriet Crabtree OBE*, Director, The Inter Faith Network for the United Kingdom, both supporters of the ZTFE were amongst the guests invited to the Gala Banquet.

*Mr Jitendra Kumar*, First Secretary for Consular and Community Affairs at the High Commission of India, spoke from the stage exalting praise for the values of the Zoroastrian Community and noting the achievements of Zoroastrians such as the great politician Dr Dadabhai Naoroji - the 'Grand Old Man of India', Dr. Homi Bhabha the 'Father' of India's nuclear programme and prominent industrialists, such as the Tatas.

Guest of Honour, *The Right Honourable Lord Karan F Bilimoria of Chelsea, CBE, DL*, Chairman, Cobra Beer Partnerships Limited, (photo right) expanded on the political achievements of those elected to the Houses of Parliament, and touched upon the business acumen of the Tatas in acquiring 'Corus Steel,' and then 'Jaguar Land Rover.' In an uplifting speech, Lord Bilimoria traced his own journey in business and hailed the UK as an excellent place for business and investment where merit had overtaken prejudice. Lord Bilimoria spoke in glowing terms of the Zoroastrian Ethos of Integrity and Excellence. He pointed to India's growing markets and



the opportunities for investment. His own COBRA Beer had just concluded a Joint Venture in India. Lord Bilimoria raised his glass in a toast to all who served the Association over the past 150 years to the present day and wished the Association luck for the future.

The gathering gave a resounding ovation to all past presidents and trustees who had served the Association and who were requested to take a bow by past president Dorab E Mistry, serving as the Master of Ceremonies for the evening.

Soon the DJ opened up the dance floor with a burst of floor filling hits and the dancing commenced. A variety of tracks were played ranging from some more popular Western tunes, to some Bollywood hits. Whilst dancers crowded the dance floor, those who were in need of tea or coffee made their way to the foyer where it was being served. Dancing continued until about 1 am, when carriages were called and the ZTFE 150th Anniversary Gala Banquet came to a close.

**Report filed by Mr Rohinton F Munshi, member of the ZTFE Managing Committee**



**Report by Mr Rohinton F Munshi, member of the ZTFE Managing Committee**



# In The News

## MUNCHERJI N. M. CAMA ELECTED TRUSTEE OF THE BOMBAY PARSI PUNCHAYAT

On Tuesday July 5th 2011, Muncherji N. Cama was declared elected as a Trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayat by 58.19% of the votes cast.

Mr Cama has a degree in commerce from Bombay University as well as post graduate diplomas in Arabic and Computer Sciences and has studied Latin at the University. He is the managing director of Bombay Samachar and Chairman of the K.R. Cama Institute, Mumbai, the leading institute for scholarly research. Mr Cama has managed numerous trusts for over 30 years, more than 400 apartments of the Garib Zarthostiona Rehethan Fund (GZRF)

Mr Cama shares some random thoughts post election with the **FEZANA JOURNAL**.

“Many friends and well-wishers were horrified when I informed them that I planned to stand again for the Trusteeship of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet. “Do you really want to get involved in the murky world of Parsi politics?” they queried incredulously.

But I had a different take on the subject. Having gained an appreciation of the several aspects of effective charity management over the years, I was sure that I could put my experience to good use in the community's apex charity, the Bombay Parsi Punchayet. Having had a ring-side seat from where I was able to watch the various activities of this great organization, I strongly believed that I could make a positive contribution which could ultimately help the community in general and the needy amongst us, in particular.

Being a realist, I did not expect my candidature to be acceptable to all and I was quite ready to face the rough and tumble of the system as it existed. But that is all behind me now and the time has come to move ahead.

The one area where the BPP could improve is in our delivery system – I refer to the means employed to initially identify the needy and to provide for them in a practical and humane manner. Make no mistake, this is a herculean task. Just the process of identifying and later updating the rolls of the needy requires a different approach. It is very important that the aid provided is relevant and timely. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work, one has to understand diverse needs and for this a highly sensitized approach is called for. This will, naturally, require training of the Punchayet staff and this too will be a laborious process. But the start must be made and made soon.

Our senior citizens are growing in number. Perhaps the community's percentage of elderly folk is closer to that prevailing in Japan and Scandinavia and is certainly not representative of the national demographic. A special effort is required to ensure that our elderly are cared for when required, not only monetarily but also psychologically. There are large numbers of our community members who are growing old leading bleak and lonely lives, living all by themselves. This is one section of the community which requires special attention and I am in the process of formulating plans in this direction for presentation to my fellow Trustees.

The other area which requires course correction is the BPP's housing policies. The needy must be housed in well constructed and reasonably sized accommodation. However, the community must understand that it is no longer possible to house those on the waiting list within the parts of the city which have been our traditional strongholds. While it is true that a number of charity buildings could be pulled down and reconstructed to house a larger number of persons, the municipal tax on such reconstructed buildings would be completely unaffordable for the vast majority. Hence the viable alternative is to move to the suburbs.

There are other areas with which the community associates the BPP. I am of the firm opinion that matters of religion must be left to the senior clergy who must be enjoined to clarify issues logically and cogently, without losing sight of the world in which we live. On lay issues, I believe that the law of the land should prevail.

From my childhood I watched my grandfather and then my father take a leading role in a diverse clutch of charities. Their guiding principle was that the wishes of the settler or donor must be paramount in every case and that all monies be spent in providing succor accordingly. I have always followed this rule in every Trust in which I play a role.

The Bombay Parsee Punchayet is an omnibus body with a host of activities and objectives. I expect over the course of the next few years to play my part in helping to utilize available funds to the greatest good of those that need help from this magnificent institution”.

***Congratulations Mr Muncherji Cama, the FEZANA Journal wishes you much success in your term of office as the Trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayat.***



# In The News

## ROHINTON NARIMAN THE NEW SOLICITOR GENERAL OF INDIA

Delhi based Supreme Court lawyer Rohinton Nariman was appointed the Solicitor General of India, the second senior most law officer of the Government of India. Nariman will assume charge and represent the government in all important cases that were to be attended as solicitor

55 year old Mr Nariman is the son of eminent jurist Fali S. Nariman. He was designated senior advocate at the age of 37 when the Chief Justice of India M.N. Venkatachaliah reduced the minimum age of 45 for designating a lawyer as a senior advocate. Mr Nariman joined the bar as an advocate in 1974 after completing his LLB from Campus Law Centre, Delhi University then at Harvard University for further studies. He has had an illustrious legal career.



## Godrej “Billy” Billimoria of Rotary Club of Wilmette awarded the President's Service Award for his many years of dedicated voluntary service through the Rotary Movement and as a lasting testimony to his many years of commitment to alleviate the inequalities in this world.



Godrej Billimoria grew up in a small town in India about 150 miles from Mumbai, he went on to study in the U.S. and build a successful CPA practice on the North Shore. He and his wife Avan, have lived on the North Shore, Chicago, since 1970, but he never forgot about the people in India living without even the most basic necessities, like clean drinking water. He witnessed first hand the destruction and pain that is

caused by poverty.

In 1982, Billimoria joined the Rotary Club of Wilmette, and he quickly realized that the organization would enable him to help people in need more than he ever imagined he might do on his own. He took a \$12,500 contribution from the Rotary Club of Wilmette, and leveraged it to secure additional funding from other Rotary clubs, Rotary International and the Indian Government.

Over the course of a decade, Billimoria turned that initial \$12,500 into \$2.5 million to build a water filtration plant for his hometown of Billimora, India. Largely as a result of Billimoria's efforts, 100,000 people finally have access to clean drinking water.

Billimoria has also dedicated significant efforts to helping blind people. He connected 61 different Rotary clubs and the Blind Foundation for India to provide assistance to more than 20,000 people with vision problems.

**REPORT BY Meghan Streit a Chicago-based freelance writer.**

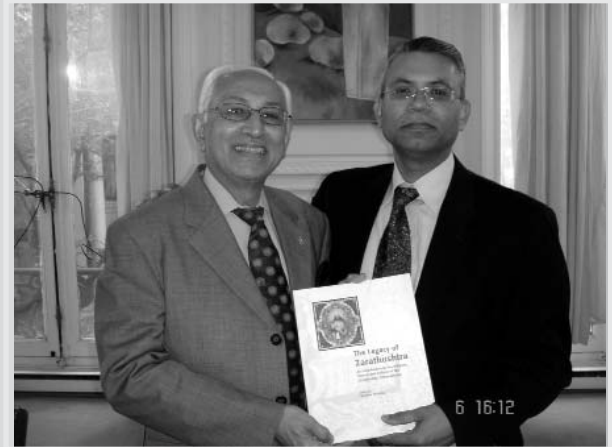
# In The News

## GOODBYE TO Dr. AJAY M. GONDANE INDIAN DEPUTY CONSUL GENERAL, NEW YORK

New York area Zarathushti community lost a good friend recently. Dr. Ajay M. Gondane, Indian Deputy Consul General, New York, was transferred from New York in June 2011 to a new assignment as Indian Ambassador to Papua New Guinea.

Ever since his arrival in New York over four years ago, Ajay and his wife, Varsha, have been frequent visitors at our Arbab Guiv Dar e Mehr on the festive occasions of Nowruz and New Year functions. Our community will miss both of them but wish them happy and healthy days and years ahead in the new assignment.

As the community was unable to say a proper goodbye to the Gondane family due to their sudden departure, I visited Dr. Gondane at the Indian Consulate office and presented him with a copy of the "Legacy of Zarathushtra", which he said he will always cherish as a fond memento of the Zarathushti community.



Homi D Gandhi

## QUILLING AND PUNCH CRAFT



Arnavaz Barshan, was selected together with 90 other artists as a "Featured Artist" for the Annual Craft Exhibition held at Oakbrook Mall, Chicago on July 9 and 10. Her work mainly involves the art of 'quilling' and 'punch craft' from paper. (photo left Arnavaz with mother Shirin).

Quilling a process of cutting strips of paper, and rolling them with a special tool to form shapes and then gluing strips of paper into designs is as impressive and popular now as it was during the Renaissance. Quilling technique along with Punch Craft has helped Arnavaz create wall art, greeting cards and photo frames for different occasions.

Being a carpet designer by trade, working for Brinton Carpet and an avid art lover, Arnavaz learnt quilling from her mother Shirin Mundagar, who took

up the quilling craft about six years ago in her home in India while caring for her husband, suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

*"What fascinated me about the art of quilling and punch craft is Paper!! It's an everyday item that can be molded into beautiful wall art by curving it and creating botanical-looking wall art or pretty flower bouquets. With paper, things can go wrong, you have to have a steady hand. I was able to represent the design aspect of my work in the form of jewelry and botanical-themed greeting cards and wall hangings featuring hydrangea, roses and spider plants as art pieces for this exhibition".*

Arnavaz continues "I was very determined to exhibit our art to make my mother feel proud of what she did as it's quite tough and depressing for the person who is taking care of an Alzheimer patient. Participating in the show was an honor for both. The success of the show was a combination of my mom and me" Being interviewed by the "Daily Herald" was a great sense of personal accomplishment for Arnavaz.



# In The News

## SHERRY PATEL WINS CANADIAN AGE GROUP NATIONALS AND QUALIFIES FOR OLYMPIC TRIALS



Canadian swimmer, Sherry Patel, 18, earned a Silver Medal on August 1, 2011, for the 50m Fly event at the Canadian Age Group Championships in Montreal. In her 100m Butterfly race, she qualified to swim at the 2012 Olympic Trials. This is a national level competition and Sherry competed against the best Canadian swimmers in the 16-18 year age category.

*"I'm really excited I was able to make the finals at this national meet, let alone winning a medal! It was a great way for me to end the swim season and I'm looking forward to going to the University of Ottawa next year and continuing to swim in preparation for the 2012 Olympic trials,"* said Sherry after her event in Montreal. Sherry also competed in the Summer Nationals aka the Pan Am trials, on July 21-24, 2011, where she made finals for 50 fly, 100 fly, 50 breast, 4x100 medley relay. This competition was without age categories, and the top 30 in the country in each stroke, swim at the finals.

Unlike other swimmers at the national level, who have trained a lot longer, Sherry has only trained for the past three years. Having been an athlete all her life, she was encouraged by her coaches to try competitive swimming after she ranked third in an inter-high school swim meet, with absolutely no competitive training in 2008.

When she joined the Oakville Aquatics Club in 2008, she only knew Free Style and Backstroke; the basics taught in recreational swimming. But after training 20 to 25 hours each week, with Coach Melanie McKay, who represented Canada in the 1976 Olympics, Sherry not only learned the Butterfly and the Breast strokes for the first time, but she perfected both strokes to senior national standards in two years and qualified with Senior National teams in events related to both strokes – a truly amazing accomplishment!

In 2010, she dislocated her shoulder during a practice session, and was told she could not use her right arm to swim for 12 weeks. Still, she continued to train 25 hours a week, and participated in a 5K Swim-a-thon, swimming all strokes with only one arm, to raise funds for her team. When she was allowed to compete again, she qualified to swim in the 2010 Age Group Nationals, which were held just three months later. Her performance there qualified her to swim at the Senior National levels this year. Sherry now has Senior National qualifying times for 50m Fly, 100m Fly, 50m Breaststroke, and is working on getting her senior national qualifications for the 100m Breaststroke and Free Style events. A sprinter at heart, Sherry has focused on 50 and 100m races.

In 2010 and 2011 she was trained by Dave Judd who meticulously scrutinized every stroke, every turn and every dive and ingrained in her the passion for excellence

Born on February 21, 1993 to Cyrus and Keshwer Patel of Mississauga, Ontario, Sherry and her sister, Roxanne, who currently studies at Western University, were brought up in Canada. Sherry is an honor student and an alumnus of Port Credit Secondary School and Loyola Catholic Secondary School. She is the recipient of merit and athletic fund scholarships from the University of Ottawa, where she will begin to study bio-medical science in September 2011.

Sherry will compete in the Olympic Trials in March 2012, and in other competitions along the way as part of the University of Ottawa swim team. She hopes to become a sports medicine physician, while maintaining her status as a competitive swimmer with Olympic aspirations. Asked why she continued to persevere, despite the rigorous training and academic demands, she nonchalantly replies, *"I like competing in individual sports yet training in a team environment. I simply enjoy competing."* **Submitted by Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi**

# In The News

## AN OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT BY A YOUNG CANADIAN BORN ZARATHUSHTI ---ZUBIN SURKARI

On May 15, 2011, friends of Zubin Surkari in Ontario, Canada hosted an afternoon to honor our very own young Zarathushti. This young man was embraced by his family and approximately 120 friends to celebrate the first Canadian Zarathushti's outstanding achievement representing Canada in the 2011 World Cup Cricket Championship tournament played in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka from February 19, 2011 to April 2, 2011. A delicious lunch and cake to celebrate Zubin's success was enjoyed by all.

The afternoon started with a "live" broadcast on the internet, readings of congratulatory letters from the Member of Parliament of Oakville, the President of the Etobicoke Cricket Club, and Chief Executive of the Canadian Cricket Club. He also received a congratulatory letter from Canada's Prime Minister, the *Honorable Steven Harper*. A long distance congratulatory telephone was received from a former Zarathushti World Cup Champion - cricketer *Mr. Farokh Engineer*. During the afternoon, fellow cricketers and friends acknowledged his team spirit, the effort Zubin put in practicing to play at a World Championship level and shared experiences of being on Zubin's team. His peers encouraged Zubin to inspire and motivate other young Zarathushtis and share his experiences with them. The afternoon continued with pictures and the video presentation of excerpts of the historical games played by the Zarathushti Cricket Club ZCC in Ontario for the last 33 years – games of all different age groups, playing with Toronto Cricket teams. Considering the small number of cricketers representing the 14 participating countries in the World Cup, the fact is that it takes one in 11 million to participate at this level of world championship and this young Zarathushti man made us all very proud.

Since the age of six years, Zubin Surkari has shown a keen interest in cricket and fulfilled his passion for the game by playing friendly games with fellow adult Zarathushtis in the ZCC of Ontario. Practice made him

perfect, stepping up the ladder to achieve success and the ultimate goal in this sport, to represent his country Canada in the *Cricket World Cup*. Zubin has made his dreams come true by playing in his third World Cup Cricket Championship, first for the under-16 Canadian national team, then for the under-19 Canadian team and finally his crowning achievement on the men's World Cup team in 2011. Zubin's parents Eruch and Katy and his older brother Xerxes, have always stood by his side and supported him with patience and encouragement at every step along his journey.



A gift of a watch was presented to Zubin from his family and friends, as he was overwhelmed/'bowled' by this tremendous tribute at such a high level to honor him and for the love and support of his community. He then took the stage to share his experiences of the cricket played at a championship level in different places in India (Kolkata, Chennai, New Delhi, Nagpur, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Mohali and Bangalore) in Sri Lanka (Colombo, Kandy, Hambantota) and in Bangladesh (Chittagong and Dhaka). It was a tough predicament Zubin underwent with practices and pressures of winning, including dealing with a serious medical issue, but in the end he came out successful, achieving the goals set out. He gladly answered questions from the floor.

Zubin plans to play cricket for a few more years and volunteer his time to coach young Zarathushtis and other youth, as well as promote the game. In spite of receiving the attention of the world, this humble young man is indeed an inspiration to young and old alike. Zarathushtis across the world can be proud and we wish him much success in his future endeavors.

His parents Eruch and Katy would like to take this opportunity to thank our Zarathushtis of Ontario-Canada, India and the world over who have shown so much love and respect to one of their achievers who they have proudly called '*Beejo Aapro Zubin*'.

**Reported by Roshan Davar, Ontario, June 2011**

# In The News

It was Firoozyves' third exhibition in this beautiful gallery located on tree covered Marie-Anne Street in Montreal. Besides having original paintings on silk on display, it was the first time that Firoozyves displayed reproductions (Giclée) and greeting cards of some of her works in an exhibition. She recently started her giclee reproduction project to offer those who appreciate her artwork an affordable option to the more expensive original paintings on silk.

She was also very pleased to share the gallery space with a remarkable artist, Jean-Raymond Turmel. Although the artists have different painting styles and work in different media, the two art styles complemented each other rather well and made for a special and interesting exhibition. This was mentioned by the majority of visitors to the gallery.

Jean-Raymond Turmel has been painting for over thirty years and gets much of his inspiration from the surrounding nature and places he has visited. His oil on canvas paintings are mainly influenced by Alex Colville and René Magritte.

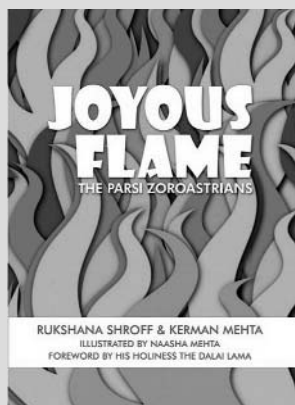
Originally from India, Firoozyves, is now settled in Montreal. Specializing in painting on silk, her first experiments began in 1987 and her originality is documented by an unusual multi-layered painting style, which has nothing to do with traditional silk painting. Her abstract works have been presented in several solo and group exhibitions in India, Germany and Canada.

Exhibition of  
paintings and giclee  
reproductions jointly  
held by Firoozyves  
(Firooza Vajifdar  
Aubry) and Jean-  
Raymond Turmel at  
the Galerie le 1040  
from 18th-23rd May  
2011





# In The News



**JOYOUS FLAME - PARZOR publication launched by Mr. Habibullah, chairman of the national commission for minorities.**

Parzor Foundation's latest publication takes the form of an illustrated, reader-friendly edition that is aimed at the youth, and hopes to inform children of all faiths as well as children of Parsi Zarathushti families about their rich heritage. The book, named *Joyous Flame: The Parsi Zoroastrians*, is authored by *Rukshana*

*Shroff and Kerman Mehta*. It provides a lucid introduction to the historical origins of the community, the life and teachings of Zarathustra, beliefs and practises, as well as stories and legends that have been passed on through the oral tradition. *Naasha Mehta*, who has a degree in Illustration from Canada, was responsible for the vivid and engaging pictures present on nearly every page of this book, as well as the layout and design.

The book was launched on 5 August 2011 at the India International Centre, New Delhi, in a packed auditorium and was graced by Parzor Patrons *Mr. Fali Nariman* and *Mr. Wajahat Habibullah*, President *Mr. Tirlochan Singh*, Director *Dr. Shernaz Cama*, many of Ms. Rukshana Shroff's colleagues and students from Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi; family members, friends and well-wishers. Dr. Shernaz Cama introduced the Foundation and its work for over a decade in the preservation of vulnerable human heritage. Co-author Rukshana Shroff then spoke about the genesis and journey of the book – from the Farohar Club for Parsi children, which started in a "tentative fashion" several years ago but soon became invaluable to familiarise them with the tenets of their religion, and especially to allow them to interact with other Parsi children. As the teachers of the group, she and Kerman Mehta were often asked to bring out a book of their teachings that would be valuable for generations to come, and thus *Joyous Flame* was born. The Forward to the book by *His Holiness The Dalai Lama* commends the Parsis for having made, like his Tibetan community, an effort "to preserve our religious and cultural identity", which he believes is "in large part a tribute to the warm and generous welcome we have received in India". This book highlights the common strains of compassion, love and mercy that bind all religions.

The Farohar children – fondly referred to as the Von Trapp family of the Parsis – then delighted the audience with Gujarati hymns, a song about the Gathas, and one highlighting what seems to be the inherent sense of

humour of the community. The book was released by Mr. Wajahat Habibullah, Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities. He, already having read the book, commended it as a "significant work" which was both a pleasure to look at and to read, dubbing it as a great resource for all those who don't have time for academic reading, and a valuable addition to any home and library.

Eminent lawyer *Mr. Fali Nariman* gave the Presidential Address. He referred to Parsis as "born-again Zoroastrians", and to Zoroastrianism as a faith that doesn't demand too much of its adherents; his



*Photo above from left Naasha Mehta, (illustrator) Rukshana Shroff, Kerman Mehta*

speech was peppered with anecdotes and he captivated the audience with his ready wit and charm. Mr. Tirlochan Singh, President of the Parzor Foundation, then proposed the vote of thanks, which was followed by a high tea with traditional Parsi snacks.

**Report by Kriti Bajaj a graduate in English Literature from Delhi University,**

Books are available for purchase at US \$20 plus postage from Dolly Dastoor, editor@fezana.org



# In The News

## TOP STUDENTS AWARDED HONOURS

### Khushnuma Bhesania awarded the Exemplary Student Leadership Award

Members of Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences (KGI), Claremont, CA graduating Class of 2011 were honored recently for their academic performance, leadership, institutional service and teamwork at an annual awards luncheon.



The Exemplary Student Leadership Award was given to Khushnuma Bhesania (MBS '11), who served as student body president during the 2010-2011 academic year. *(Photo above Khushnuma accepting the award from VP for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty Dr James D. Sterling).*

*"It is with a great sense of pride that we present Ms. Khushnuma Cyrus Bhesania, a student of Baroda, Gujarat, who reached great heights not only in India, but also abroad".*

Khushnuma completed her schooling from Convent of Jesus and Mary School, Baroda. She was always interested in student life activities and was elected as Assistant Head Girl of her school in 1998. She moved to

Ahmedabad, to pursue her B.Sc in Biochemistry and Vocational Biotechnology from St. Xavier's College, Ahmedabad. She was involved in research even at her under graduate level and was awarded a gold medal for her research on protoplast fusion.

In 2003, Khushnuma returned to Baroda and obtained her M.Sc in Biochemistry, again with a Gold Medal from the M.S.University, Baroda. After completing her graduation, Khushnuma joined Quintiles, India Pvt. Ltd. as a Clinical Research Associate. She was responsible for monitoring global clinical trials in indications like oncology, cardiology and psychiatry all over India. After 3 years of working with Quintiles, India where she was based at the Ahmedabad office, she was promoted to Assistant Training Manager and relocated to Singapore. She was responsible for addressing the training needs of Quintiles staff across their offices in Korea, China, Malaysia, Indonesia and Japan. Khushnuma was always interested in working on the management side of companies and after working for Quintiles for over 4 years in various capacities and two different countries, Khushnuma left Quintiles to join the Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences (KGI) to pursue a second Masters. Based on her exemplary scholastic track record and work experience, she was awarded an excellent scholarship and a tuition waiver for her education at KGI. In May 2011 she completed her Masters in Bioscience (MBS) degree which is a specialized management degree with a focus on the life science industry. In 2010 Khushnuma was elected as the first international President of the Student Government at KGI. Upon graduation, Khushnuma was awarded the Exemplary Student Leadership Award for her contribution to Student Life during her presidential tenure. She was nominated by her fellow students and chosen as the winner, by the Keck Graduate Institute Faculty. This was indeed a great honor for her and has made us all very proud. Khushnuma now lives in the beautiful city of San Francisco, California, and works as a Product Manager for Veracyte, which is a molecular diagnostic start-up in South San Francisco.

We wish her all the Very Best in all her future endeavors.

**Report by Dr Navaz Bhesania**

# In The News

## “Encounters by the Rivers of Babylon: Scholarly Conversations between Jews, Iranians and Babylonians”

**By Prods Oktor Skjaervo, Harvard University**

During the last week of May, 2011, the Hebrew University and the *Scholion* (an *Interdisciplinary Research Center in Jewish Studies*), Jerusalem, hosted a conference on the Talmud in its Iranian and Ancient Near Eastern context. The interest among Talmud scholars in Iranian matters has been growing ever since *Professor Yaakov Elman* began writing about parallels between the Talmud and the Pahlavi legal literature.

I became involved when Yaakov spent a year at Harvard at the Center for Jewish Studies and studied Pahlavi with me. Soon after, his student *Shai Secunda* (one of the organizers of the conference) also spent time at Harvard reading Pahlavi with me. Both Yaakov and Shai are well known to Zoroastrians, having attended several conferences, among them the Gatha conference in New York, 2009. The Iranists at the conference were *Professor Shaul Shaked (Jerusalem)*, *Professor Maria Macuch (Berlin, a specialist on Zoroastrian law in the Pahlavi literature)*, and myself.

I also gave two class lectures at the Hebrew University on Avestan, Old Persian, and Pahlavi literature, attended by about 20 students and some faculty.

The Babylonian Talmud has its name from Babylon, that is Ctesiphon, the capital of the Sasanian empire in the third century CE. The importance of the cross-cultural study lies in the historical fact that the rabbis who compiled the Babylonian Talmud lived in the capital together with the Zarathushti herbeds and dasturs, sometimes on the same street, even in the same house, as we know from the Talmud. Being inquisitive, as we also know they were, they must have exchanged views on numerous issues, especially on the ever-present problem of pollution caused by death and menstruation and how to avoid and remedy such pollution, but also on other matters of family and religious law. The Talmud and the Pahlavi texts therefore mutually illuminate each other, which is already contributing to a much improved understanding of the obscure style and sometimes opaque discussions in the Pahlavi texts.

At a time when academic interest in ancient Iran is dwindling in the West, this newfound interest among Talmudists is heartening. In fact, Prof. Elman has already arranged for Pahlavi to be taught at the Yeshiva university in New York, and, as his colleagues are getting increasingly convinced of the importance of Pahlavi literature for their studies, there is perhaps hope for more positions in ancient Iranian language and culture in Jewish studies departments around the world.

*Prods Oktor Skjaervo is an Agha Khan Professor of Iranian studies at department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations in Harvard University*





# In The News

## **Dr ZAVER M BHUJWALLA, Director In Vivo Cellular Molecular Imaging Center (ICMIC), Russell H. Morgan Department of Radiology and Radiological Science Johns Hopkins University (JHU) School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, USA**

Zaver M. Bhujwalla, Ph.D., Professor of Radiology and Oncology is the Director of the JHU ICMIC Molecular Imaging Program and is the Associate Director of the SAIRP. She is an internationally recognized scientist and a pioneer in the application of MR imaging technology to promote our understanding of



cancer biology in general and, in particular, to characterize the nature and importance of tumor-specific alterations in cellular metabolism and vascularization. Her major research interests are to understand the role of vascularization and the tumor physiological environment in breast and prostate cancer invasion and metastasis using imaging techniques.

She has directed the Oncology Section of the Division of MR Research, Department of Radiology since January 1997. Dr. Bhujwalla also directs an NIH Oncological Imaging Training Grant and has close collaborations with several of the cancer investigators at JHU.

Dr Bhujwalla has her Masters degree in Bio-physics from University of Bombay and an MSc and Ph.D in Radiation Biology from the University of London.

Dr. Bhujwalla's work has focused on the applications of MR imaging and spectroscopy and more recently multi-modality imaging to understand and treat cancer. Dr. Bhujwalla has over 120 publications in this field. Currently her research covers understanding the role of inflammation and hypoxia in cancer invasion and metastasis, identifying tumor microenvironments that are permissive for 'stem-like' cancer cells, developing theranostic agents to target metastatic cancer, and identifying early noninvasive biomarkers for cancer-induced cachexia.

She presented a paper at the 2011 World Molecular Imaging Congress, in San Diego on September 7 on Physiologic MR Imaging of Cancer.

## **INSTITUTE OF NEUROSCIENCES FOR SURAT, A FIRST OF ITS KIND IN ASIA**

Dr Keki Turel, head of department of neurosurgery at Bombay Hospital in Mumbai, has joined hands with the city-based PP Savani Group to set up India's first dedicated Rs 1,000 crore Institute for Neurosciences.

The state-of-the-art institute of neurosciences, likely to come up on 20 acres of land at Abhrama area, will have a trauma centre, a research institute, a rehabilitation centre, a diagnostics centre and an air ambulance facility among other things.

"Surat is my hometown and it was my dream to set up an ultra modern institute for neurosciences here. The project will be completed in three phases and it will be the first institute of this type in the country and Asia," said Turel, an eminent Parsi neurosurgeon

Turel, who has the credit of removing two of the world's largest brain tumours weighing over half a kilo and

the first surgeon in India to operate on patients suffering from AIDS, said, "I want to introduce robotic surgery in the institute. I want people from across the country to come to the diamond city for treatment." According to him, about 75 per cent of accidents are fatal due to brain injury and 10 per cent of hospital admissions are because of neurology-related subjects.

"There are many renowned Indian doctors settled abroad, who are keen to return and give their services to the people here. I am planning to invite such neurosurgeons and neurophysicians to offer their services to the patients in Surat and south Gujarat," Turel said.

### **TIMES OF INDIA, SURAT**

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/surat/City-to-get-world-class-neurosciences-institute/articleshow/7788898.cms>

# In The News

**Hormuzd Katki, PhD, lead investigator, of the U.S. National Cancer Institute says “HPV testing adds tremendous safety to cervical cancer screening”**



A large, “real-world” study has validated current cervical cancer screening recommendations that endorse a 3-year cervical cancer screening interval for women over age 30 with a negative human papillomavirus (HPV) test and a normal Pap test. Furthermore, testing HPV-negative resulted in a very low risk of cancer that was not appreciably reduced by also having a normal Pap test. However, Pap testing remained important for HPV-positive women, because an abnormal Pap test helped identify even more women who developed cancer or pre cancer. The study was highlighted at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Clinical Oncology and the manuscript is online at Lancet Oncology.

*“This first large-scale study of concurrent HPV and Pap testing for cervical cancer in routine clinical practice in the United States found that women who tested HPV-negative had an extremely low risk of cervical cancer. This finding demonstrates that a 3-year screening interval is safe,”* said Hormuzd Katki, PhD, lead investigator, of the U.S. National Cancer Institute.

Although the Pap test is an effective screening method for cervical cancer, 11,000 new cases develop annually in the United States. Because HPV causes almost every cervical cancer, guidelines incorporated concurrent HPV testing with Pap testing at each clinical visit (ie, co-testing) for women over age 30. Guidelines currently recommend a 3-year interval for women who are HPV-negative and have a normal Pap smear. However, co-testing has not been widely adopted by physicians and by women, who may fear that extending the screening interval beyond 1 year is not safe, Dr. Katki explained.

The study followed 331,818 women aged 30 and older enrolled in Kaiser Permanente Northern California's co-testing program between 2003 and 2005.

Testing HPV-negative implied lower risk of cervical cancer than having a normal Pap test. The 5-year risk of cancer for women who were HPV-negative and had a normal Pap test was only 3.2 per 100,000 women per year. Looking at each test separately, a negative HPV test was associated with a 5-year risk of 3.8 cervical cancers per 100,000 women per year; a normal Pap test was associated with a 5-year risk of 7.5 cervical cancers per 100,000 women per year. The cervical cancer risk for an HPV-negative woman was similar to her risk of cancer of the vulva, a cancer that is too rare to justify organized screening.

Furthermore, the HPV test identified more women at high risk of cancer or precancer than the Pap test. Women who were HPV-positive had a 7.6% 5-year risk of cervical cancer or pre cancer, whereas women with an abnormal Pap test had only a 4.7% 5-year risk of

cervical cancer or precancer.

*“These findings demonstrate the superior ability of HPV testing to separate women into groups at high and low risk of cancer and precancer,”* Dr. Katki stated.

However, Dr. Katki emphasized that the Pap test remained useful for HPV-positive women. *“For HPV-positive women, a positive Pap test identified an additional 6 in 100 women at risk for cervical cancer or pre cancer over 5 years,”* he noted. *“For HPV-positive women, abnormal Pap tests help identify immediate disease, whereas a normal Pap test signifies that cancer, if it occurs, is more likely to develop in the future.”*

Based on their findings, the authors suggest that a screening program with a single HPV test could be used first, and if negative, no additional testing would be needed for at least 3 years; the Pap test would be reserved only for women who were HPV-positive.

*“This program could retain nearly all the safety of co-testing, but in our population, would have reduced the number of Pap tests by 95%. Still, we need to test this hypothesis in practice,”* Dr. Katki stated. He pointed out that if the HPV test is positive, the same sample could be used for the Pap test, avoiding a second visit for the Pap test.

*“This is a wonderful population-based study... that makes us comfortable with the current recommendations. The issue of how frequently one or the other test should be used is an evolving area,”* said George W. Sledge, Jr, MD, of the Indiana University School of Medicine.

<http://www.ascopost.com/articles/june-15-2011/3-year-screening-interval-safe-for-women-with-hpv-negative-and-normal-pap-tests,-data-show/>

# In The News

## THE HEART OF THE MATTER— OZCF PUTS HEART HEALTH ON PUBLIC AGENDA

On Sunday, April 3, 2011, Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation held an information session at the ZRCC, in collaboration with Dr. Dan Mehta & The Heart & Stroke Foundation. The agenda was to bring awareness to the community about heart & stroke risk factors, warning signs, and prevention. The agenda generated enough interest to pack the ZRCC hall.



"My name is Stuart Wilkinson and I am a stroke survivor" And so began a thought provoking presentation by a man who is grateful that his wife's quick actions saved his life. "A stroke is a medical emergency but if caught in time, it can be treated" stressed Stuart Wilkinson who now passionately volunteers for the Heart

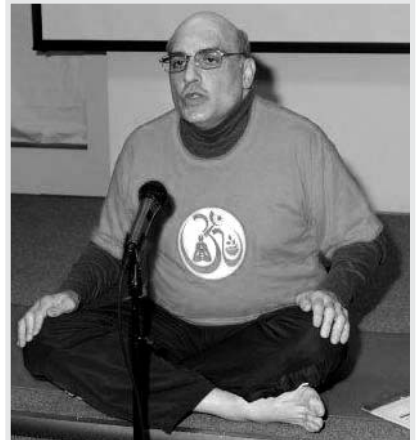
and Stroke Foundation. He explained the 5 warning signs of a stroke—*weakness, trouble speaking, vision problems, headache and dizziness*. Only 20-25% of those who have a stroke actually get emergency care within 3 hours of onset—the critical time frame during which clot busting drugs are most effective.

The second speaker for the day was *Dr. Dan Mehta*. Dr. Mehta a retired specialist in the field of Internal Medicine and Rheumatology patiently outlined the anatomy and working of the heart. He explained how blood flows through various chambers and blood vessels and how a blood vessel narrows with fat deposits. "This is how I would want my cardiologist to explain things" a member of the audience was over heard saying. Dr. Mehta went on to give an in-depth description of heart illnesses, and touched upon the preventive aspect: sensible dietary choices & exercise.

The floor was opened for a Q&A session after each speaker, giving the audience, an opportunity to ask their own questions. Why are South Asians at greater risk from heart disease? Do symptoms of heart attack differ in women? What happens to olive oil when it is heated? Many such diverse questions kept the audience engaged and the speakers on their toes.

The presentation ended on the preventive aspect of health. *Zubin Dotiwala* had a by pass operation 4 years ago. While in hospital, he was introduced to Pranayam Yoga, which is the art and science of deep, rhythmic

breathing. Zubin (photo right) introduced the audience to this yoga that increases lung power, allowing the heart to pump more oxygenated blood to the brain. Pranayam Yoga energizes the body to function at full capacity and to heal most ailments. The short demo which concluded with an exercise using 'laughter' had the audience in fits of well.....laughter..... and sparked great interest.



Firdosh Bulsara the master of ceremonies kept the evening going at an even pace. Nilofur Aga presented the speakers with a token of appreciation, including a donation to the Heart & Stroke Foundation.(photo below). The event ended with refreshments in true Parsi style.....



**Report prepared by Niloufer Aga,**

**Nilofur Aga** is currently involved in research at the Canadian Cardiovascular Research Network. Her research interests include South Asian heart disease and emerging risk factors in South Asian babies. She is a medical doctor from Pakistan and holds a Diploma in Dermatology from the University of London (UK). Nilofur has two children at university and lives in Oakville with her husband, Keku



# In The News

## ACT FAST at the First Sign of STROKE



### RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF STROKE

Dr. Nikan H. Khatibi

*Dear Dr. Khatibi – my husband suffered a stroke five years ago. Had I known the signs earlier, maybe his prognosis would have been better....Sincerely, Melody Brahn*

Stroke is one of most devastating events that can occur in a person's life. To this day, it is still the number one cause of long-term neurobehavioral disability in the United States and the third leading cause of death. While strokes are more common in older people, 1 in 4 persons who have a stroke are actually under the age of 65, with women at higher risk than men. Even worse, the treatment options are extremely limited. That is why educating yourself about how a stroke can present is so important – because identifying the signs early on can help improve your long-term outcome.

#### STROKE TYPES

Stroke is defined as a progressively rapid loss of brain function because of a disturbance in blood supply. When a stroke occurs, it can fall in one of two categories – either an ischemic stroke (85%) or a hemorrhagic stroke (15%). With an ischemic stroke, there is a sudden state of starvation of oxygen rich blood to the brain. This can occur from anything that slows down or blocks blood supply to the brain such as a clot or an embolism. On the other hand, hemorrhagic strokes occur when blood leaks out of the vessels to the brain, resulting in a large puddle of blood in the brain tissue. These types of stroke usually occur from long-term uncontrolled hypertension, abnormal blood vessels, or traumatic injuries.

Either way, when brain tissue is deprived of oxygen enriched blood, brain cells (i.e. neurons) die. That is why getting help fast is extremely important. The longer the brain tissue is starved, the more damage is done.

#### WHO'S AT RISK?

Just like with any disease process, certain lifestyle behaviors and co-morbidities can put one at higher risk for stroke than a healthier individual. These risk factors include: (a) *high blood pressure* – also known as hypertension; (b) *atrial fibrillation* – an abnormal heart rhythm that makes a person more prone to clot formations; (c) *carotid stenosis* – build up of atherosclerosis in the walls of the carotid arteries, which are the blood vessels in the neck that supply the brain; (d) *high cholesterol* – need I say more; (e) *heavy alcohol and drug consumption*; and (f) *diabetes* – increases your risk 2-3 times as most individuals commonly have high blood pressure and cholesterol .

#### HOW A STROKE PRESENTS – KNOWING TO 'ACT FAST'

One in four individuals actually recognizes the signs of a stroke – unfortunately, that's not enough. When a stroke occurs it comes on fast and has no mercy. That is why every minute counts and being able to recognize the signs and get to the hospital faster can really make the difference. To increase this awareness, various health departments throughout the world have come up with a universal campaign to help individuals like you and I better identify signs of a stroke. It is known as – "Act FAST". Please memorize it!

# In The News

- F – FACE:** Does the face look uneven? Ask the person to smile, show teeth, raise eyebrows, or close their eyes
- A –ARM:** Does one arm drift down? Ask the person to raise both arms, lift something, walk or initiate movement
- S SPEECH:** Does their speech sound strange? Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase, identify an image, or read
- T TIME:** Are they confused with the timing? Ask the person to recall where they are, a calendar date or their age

**\*\*If you observe any of these symptoms, ACT FAST and call 9-1-1 immediately**

## TAKE HOME POINTS

Once it occurs, stroke can affect a person physically, mentally, and/or emotionally. 30 to 50% of stroke survivors suffer post stroke depression and a disproportionately large number of victims have long-term disabilities preventing them from even doing the simplest of tasks i.e. brushing teeth, eating lunch. That is why proper diet and exercise, in conjunction with knowledge of how to recognize a stroke are so important. I highly recommend you memorize "ACT FAST" – it can be the difference between walking on the beach and lying in bed.

*Dr Nikan H Khatibi is a certified medical physician currently completing his residency training in Anesthesiology at Loma Linda University Medical Center in Southern California [www.DrNikanKhatibi.com](http://www.DrNikanKhatibi.com)*

## Give Back to America

**Persian Thanks** is a new program of the PUBLIC AFFAIRS ALLIANCE OF IRANIAN AMERICANS (PAAIA) that embraces American culture--Persian style.

Since 2010, PAAIA Chapters nationwide are mobilizing members to take Persian food to homeless shelters on Thanksgiving Day--or on any day during the week--and hope that "Persian Thanks Week" will become an Iranian American tradition. To do good as a community on this most American of American holidays is their way of showing that the American Iranians are grateful to have a home away from their ancestral homeland, that they care and that they want to share a delicious part of their cultural heritage with their fellow Americans.

Persian  
Thanks



International Year of Volunteers

*The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) program is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development, and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. To participate, visit: <http://www.unv.org/how-to-volunteer.html>*

## THE GOOD LIFE EMBLEM PROJECT OF TINA UNWALLA

The Good Life Emblem is a religious project which shows recognition of the Zarathushti youth and participation in community service. As a part of my Good

a great supply of food packages and canned goods. It is important to know that, we, as a Zarathushti community, can come together for an important cause. The food items were donated to the Salvation Army in Norristown the very next day with my coordinator, Diana Dadachanji



Life Emblem project, my objectives were to compile monetary donations to help the Parsi Mobeds in Udvada, as well as to raise awareness of people in need of food in our own surrounding community. On May 14, 2011, I started a collection fund for the Parsi Mobeds in Udvada. I worked under the guidance of Diana Dadachanji. The money we collected will be delivered directly to the Mobeds and the help of maintaining our Atash Behram, as I am going to India in December 2011. In all, we raised \$695.65 for Udvada. Many ZAPANJ members donated generously, in an effort to keep our religion alive. Our religious beliefs are based on Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds which were actively portrayed throughout that day. Not only did we raise money for the Parsi Mobeds, but I also organized a food collection drive the proceeds of which went to the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army started out as a church, and then grew into a community organization supporting the general population. As a ZAPANJ community, all rallied to stamp out hunger on this day. Many devoted members brought

**Tina Unwalla** is fifteen years old, residing in Eagleville, Pennsylvania and attending Methacton High School. Tina has been attending religious classes for the last ten years, actively participating in learning about Zarathushti history. She has been a part of The National Junior Honor Society, serving as the Vice President, and has volunteered for three years at the Lower Providence Library. In the summer of 2011, she served as a volunteer at the Variety Club Camp, a camp for children with developmental or physical disabilities. The Good Life Emblem is a religious project which makes the Zarathushti youth more aware of their faith as well as the surrounding communities. It is important to complete The Good Life Emblem because it shows our connection with the Zarathushti community, as well as with the people with whom we interact daily.





# INTERFAITH INTERALLA

## HUMANITARIAN TRIP

*Working for Peace and Justice*

### Ariane-Jade Khanizadeh



Ariane-Jade Khanizadeh participated in a humanitarian mission to Sénégal, West Africa in February, 2011. A group of 16 students accompanied by their teacher and two other adults, left Montreal on February 23.

For two weeks, they were accompanied throughout their travels by representatives from Mer et Monde, a non-profit organization whose mission is to support human rights through international cooperation, support of local businesses and support of durable development. They are especially focused on women's rights and those of their children. They accomplish their mission by encouraging



international solidarity by increasing awareness in young adults.

One of the ways they do this is by arranging for these trips, where students travel to a remote village in Sénégal, where there is little infrastructure; running water and electricity are hard to come by. Each person is hosted by a local family, where they spend a full two weeks learning about their culture and day to day living. Each day, they meet with their team members to work on one special project.

Ariane's special project was to renovate a day care. Each day, they scraped old paint and repaired damaged walls, cleaned refuse, repainted and helped make a tired, run down day care, a happy looking place again.

At the end of their two-week stay, Ariane's school arranged for the group to travel into the city. Here, they were on an exchange program with a local private school. They were each hosted by a second local family. The lavish accommodations of city living and private school contrasted with the very modest accommodations of a



# INTERFAITH INTERALLA

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

farmer's village, made the students experience the contrast of the different lifestyles.

If you ask her which part she preferred, Ariane will tell you that the simple life style, cooperation and community spirit of the small village is what she enjoyed the most. She returned to us a young lady, full of appreciation for what we have at home, but mostly, overwhelmed by the fast pace of the life we lead in North America. By her own doing, she made decisions to simplify her life as much as possible and since her trip, takes more time to enjoy the little things in life. She has always been very environment conscious but this trip truly sensitized her and those around her, that the little things we do on this side of the ocean have an impact on people in developing countries and how we can each play a role in making the world a better place by being respectful to our fellow man and our environment.

We are so proud of our girl, that she chose this venue for her travels. It was a very tough three weeks of adaptation and home sickness but she returned with nothing but appreciation and fond memories of her new friends and family in Sénégal.



**Reported by**

**Proud parents Elise and Shahrokh Khanizadeh**

## *Zoroastrian Association of Chicago participates in Interfaith Sculpture project for the visit of Dalai Lama.*

ZAC was among 12 religions that participated in preparing religious sculptures for the Dalai Lama's public talk on "Bridging the Faith Divide" at the UIC Pavillion on July 17th. About 25 ZAC youth and friends attended the event, which gained a lot of press coverage. The Chicago Tribune (July 16th) said: "*Framing the Dalai Lama on stage were a dozen towering religious icons created by artists of other traditions ...An African-American Protestant congregation on the South Side incorporated the design of the 4,000-year-old symbol of Zoroastrianism, a tradition some didn't know existed before this project.*" The Zoroastrian group had sculpted a Christian cross. The Sun Times Doings (June 30th) had a full page article "*Zoroastrians construct sculpture for the Dalai Lama's Visit*" with photos of our youth at the dar e mehr. Thanks to Rohinton Rivetna, trustee of the Parliament of World's Religions for coordinating this project.



A luminescent Farohar joins sculptures representing other major faiths, as a backdrop on the stage for the Dalai Lama's presentation in Chicago.

# INTERFAITH INTERALLA

## HOMI GANDHI ATTENDS THE UNIVERSAL PEACE DAY

This year's *Hiroshima/Nagasaki Atomic bomb Memorial - Universal Peace Day Gathering* was different, by creating a unique way of interfaith prayer with peace, respect and harmony. This was a challenge to unifying prayers with various elements.

You imagine that you are in Hiroshima, Japan. It starts with Shinto invocation, and then you hear the drumming with a loud sound representing atomic bombing. After a period of silence, Japanese Buddhist chanting to the deceased starts ....then, Dance of spirit starts. While chanting and dancing is going on, people come to the shrine to show their respect and offer the prayers - various prayers from various traditions were offered - , and after everyone finished their offerings, dancer disappears and chanting stops. Again silence....  
(photo left Homi Gandhi in dagli)



This represented the entire world coming together to pray for peace on August 5 (August 6 in Japan). In fact, the ceremony was taking place in Japan, when we all were gathered.

After the ceremony at the Church Center, religious leaders led the walk to the park three blocks away in Dag Hammarskjold Plaza. At the park a short ceremony for ringing the peace bell and chanting of NO More Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Atomic Bombs, etc. were recited by the religious leaders, which were echoed by everyone in the crowd.

## Maneck Bhujwala in the July 4th Parade on Huntington Beach

Maneck Bhujwala , member of the Greater Huntington Beach Interfaith Council and currently the Vice-president of the Council participated in this year's July 4th parade, attended by around 400,000 people in Huntington Beach.

Maneck is holding a banner "**Zoroastrians wish you a Happy Independance Day**". This created interest and aroused curiosity as to who the Zoroastrians were?





# Personal Profiles

## A LIFE WORTH LIVING – Jehangir M. Kheradi, MD, FACC

Jehangir was born in Yezd, Iran. When he was 10, his parents moved to Bombay where many "Iranis" had settled and made their fortunes. His father, Mehraban Kheradi, made a good living and sent him to one of the best schools in Bombay, St. Mary's High School. His mother, Morvarid, raised the growing family of three boys and two girls. When Jehangir was in the 8th grade, his mother had a heart attack and his father was undergoing treatment for kidney problems. These events made Jehangir interested in the human body and he read many books on human anatomy. He wrote an essay on Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the missionary doctor who had gone to Africa to serve the forest people, which received much praise from his teacher. This was the beginning of his lifelong interest in curing human illness. And when it came time to decide on his career, there was no question, he wanted to be a doctor.

Because of his excellent scholastic record, Jehangir was admitted to Grant Medical College in Bombay. Like most Zarathushtis, he applied for scholarships from the Parsi scholarship funds. But because of his Persian passport, his applications were rejected! Luckily for Jehangir, his father believed strongly in the value of higher education and in spite of hardship, he paid for the education for Jehangir and also his brother Sohrab (who later obtained a PhD at Columbia University and worked for many years at the United Nations, being the head of Disarmament Committee) and his two sisters.

Jehangir promised himself that when he is in a position to help other deserving students get higher education, he would do what he could to help them. After completing his M.D., he came to the USA for medical specialization. After his residency in New York, he became known as Jerry and completed a two year fellowship at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island, where he became a successful gastroenterologist.

Now Jerry decided to put his plan of helping other Zarathushti students into action. He called FEZANA. I was the Treasurer of FEZANA at that time and we set

up an endowment fund in memory of his father. That was the start of the Mehraban and Morvarid Kheradi Scholarship Endowment Fund. Over the years, Jerry and other members of his family now all living in the United States, and many others, added to the endowment so that by June 30, 2011, the Fund assets have grown to \$ 154,760 even after awarding several scholarships every year. After 2000, it was decided by FEZANA and Jerry to name the recipient of the Mehraban and Morvarid Kheradi Scholarship Endowment Fund as the "FEZANA Scholar" who would receive \$5,000 from the Fund, based on merit alone.

But Jerry and his wife Celeste have done much more than donate significant funds to FEZANA. Jerry has chaired the FEZANA Funds and Finance committee since 1998 and together, Jerry and Celeste have raised additional amounts so that by 2008, FEZANA's assets increased steadily to over \$1 million. Due to the current economic slowdown, the pace of donations has reduced somewhat.

Jerry and Celeste are also the driving force behind fundraising for a Zarathushti Center for ZAGBA. In April 2011, after serving the community for over 13 years, Jerry resigned from the chairmanship of the Funds & Finance committee.

We salute Dr. Jerry Kheradi for his selfless work for the community, for his dedication to higher education and for his love of the Zarathushti faith. His life has indeed been a life worth living and emulating.

It has been rightly said:

Life is like a sea on which we are moving about without end. Nothing remains with us.

What remains are just....the memories of some people, who touched our lives as waves.

**Rustom Kevala, Chair, Funds and Finance Committee, FEZANA**



# Personal Profiles

## Mr. Noshir Dadrawala, CEO Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy, Mumbai in an interview with Nazneen Spliedt, San Francisco.

Noshir Dadrawala, the CEO of Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy was in San Francisco April 12-15 2011, to attend the 10th Annual Global Philanthropy Forum which was attended by people from around the world representing major Foundations. Noshir with two other colleagues made a presentation on philanthropy in India. Nazneen Spliedt, President of the Zarathushti Anjuman of Northern California met him at Sofitel San Francisco Bay Hotel for a short interview.

Noshir was born in Bulsar, since his mother came from there, but studied, lived and worked in Bombay all his life and is a proud life-long Bombay-ite. He was educated at St. Peter's School and attended the University in Bombay. He lives in Bombay with his wife Mavaz and son Darius.

In 1990 The Centre for Study of Philanthropy at CUNY in New York invited him as a Fellow.

As a young man of 25 Noshir started working for Parsi General Hospital in the administration department, to get experience and to do some service for the community. It was this experience that sparked his interest and love of community service.

As he said *"Life is full of accidents"* and one has to take the road offered and make the best of it. In the mid eighties a few leading businessmen in India with philanthropic leanings decided to set up a not-for-profit company and called it the Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy. Noshir was requested by them to head this initiative. The House of Tata's provided a significant start-up support. Since the last 24 years this organization has grown and has not only served as a Clearing House of Information on Philanthropy but, has provided consulting and training to a host of non-profit initiatives in India. The Centre's core expertise continues to remain in areas of non-profit laws and good governance practices. It assists both grant makers and grant recipients with legal and statutory compliances under the complex regulatory systems in India, provides consulting and training in resource mobilization as also issues surrounding accountability and transparency. Noshir has

authored a number of resource books. (For more information visit [www.capindia.in](http://www.capindia.in)).

When asked about the difference between Charity and Philanthropy within the Parsi community, Noshir felt that most Parsis as well as BPP (Bombay Parsi Punchayet) and the large institutions were more involved with outright charity rather than philanthropy and not many of them distinguished between the two. Most initiatives are reactive instead of being proactive in striking at the root of societal issues.

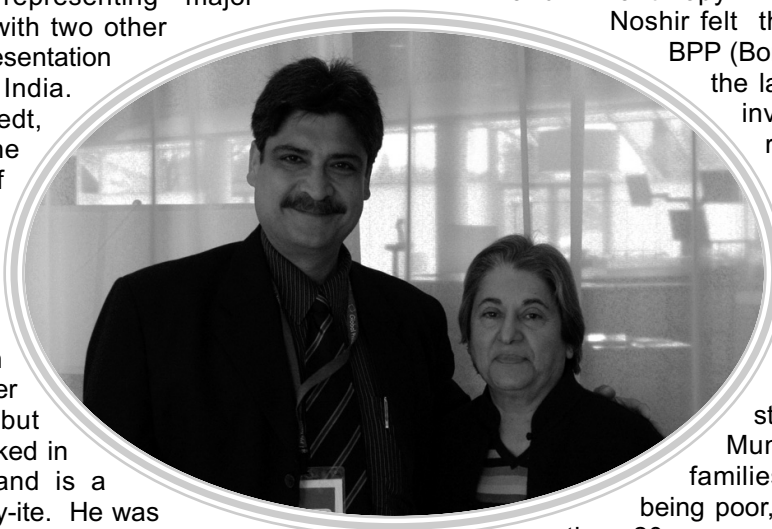
He said that there were still many very poor Parsis in Mumbai, about 500 to 600 families could be categorized as being poor, though the number is less than 20 years ago. The middle class was expanding but had not yet become used to the idea of giving.

In his view, housing remained the biggest problem for the community at the moment, but with decreasing numbers in the community, there will come a time when there could be many empty Punchayet flats.

He bemoaned the fact that he had to resign from the trusteeship of the BPP, as his other colleagues who were in the majority, completely alienated and marginalized him and rendered him ineffective. *"They refused to share basic information such as minutes of meetings and accounts. It was a classic case of 'might & majority is right'",* he lamented. He felt the community is not as "enlightened" as it likes to think. *"What sort of a community would put up with such impropriety and do nothing about it",* he said!

The politics and lack of prudence and foresight among his colleagues did not help his vision of being of service to the community. He said it was 'like a bad marriage' he tried to make it work for the greater good of the 'family', but finally it had to end in divorce for everybody's sake and for his own future. He felt he could have made a difference and wanted to change things for the greater good.

**Nazneen Spliedt is the President of the Zarathoshti Anjuman of Northern California**





## Be paeman i do hazar deram sim-e sapid.....

Dear Editor:

I have attended several weddings where Parsi Mobeds performed the religious ceremonies. I was surprised to hear that some of them will ask the father of groom to pay 2000 gold coins of Neishapour to the family of bride. Of course practically this is not done and just said. Recently I asked the Parsi Mobed why was this request made, particularly as we Zarathushtis do not have dowry. He explained to me that the requested gold coins is not dowry, but reflective of the agricultural era when all members of family including the parents, girls and boys worked on the farm and subsidized the family. When a girl was married and moved to the groom's house, the family of the bride lost an active earning member and by paying gold coins to her family, they were compensated. I told him this is never said in the Iranian Zoroastrian wedding ceremonies. My wife and I were married in New York by two Parsi Mobeds and they did not mention the payment of gold coins. In fact my brother-in-law who was married in the same temple by two other Parsi Mobeds and witnessed by us, confirmed that there was no mention of gold coins. Despite the Mobed's justification from the historical perspective, nevertheless the request of paying gold coins to the family of bride even just by words and symbolic, is reminiscent of the societies in which the girl is bought from her family and it is a cause for misunderstanding among the audience.

The Zarathushti community that evolves in this continent is neither Parsi nor Iranian, it is American or Canadian Zarathushti community. We have to adjust our traditions to the new life and refine them from Un-Zarathushtrian influence. I believe this can be done by our educated Parsi and Iranian Mobeds in association with scholars. Our religious ceremonies have to be pure Zarathushtrian, refined from alien concepts and practiced in harmony.

**Daryoush Jahanian, M.D. Kansas city**  
**ZOROASTRIAN WEDDING HYMN**

### DISCUSSION

There is no commentary, comments or even a hint on 2000 derem in Avesta. The Revayats Introduction (p. xxxiii) and Nariman Hoshang Rivayat (p. 196-197) states that it should be announced in the marriage contract. The same is also stated in the Revayats of Dastur Darab Hamjiyar (p 365). Dastur Dhalla in Zoroastrian Civilization (p. 304) writes *"The parents of the bridegroom promised to pay 3000 silver coins to the bride's parents as the bride price,"* hence according to Dhalla it wasn't even a gift for the bride; it was a sort of bargain price; and not 2000 but 3000!!!

However, The Matican E Hazar Datastan translated by S J Bulsara provides valuable information. In Introduction (p. 64) *".....it was husband's duty to maintain her in a matter suiting to his condition in life, all until she lived, and if he died before her his estate was required to provide for her maintenance. This was to be irrespective of any property she might have of her own. As a matter of fact both her parents and her husband were supposed to assign her gifts of clothing, jewellery and money or other property. A gift thus or subsequently made by the husband to her, could not be taken back....."* vide ch. xxxv, x+26; ch. 36, 11; ch. 37, 16-18; ch. 39, 38. Note that Bulsara emphasizes As a matter of fact..... which means it is not a gift but something else (protection for a newly wed wife???). All these articles give inference, that something more than a gift was meant.

Amongst Parsis the tradition goes back to the *"Nam Padvu"* ceremony, whereby from that day on the brides name is linked with her future husband and no longer with her father. The money is given to the bride to be, so that in the event that the husband dies prematurely the wife is not left destitute and a burden to society and has independent means of support.

Today, this exchange is purely ceremonial, but we think that it is a link to our past culture and heritage, though may not be relevant in present times.

There is a custom prevalent amongst the Parsis where both sides exchange a few sets of clothes, jewellery, watches, cash, furniture and many more items basically intended to help the marrying couple to start their new life and set up their new home.

Reference to Nishapur is the royal mint in Nishapur where Iranian coinage was minted in unadulterated form and guaranteed that the coinage had the full value as stated.

### OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES

So, we now have the following alternatives:

1. **Omit the sentence.** However, bear in mind that there are many references in our prayers that are not relevant today. Does that mean we throw them out of the window!
2. **Keep the words as they are** though this exchange is purely ceremonial, it is a link to our past culture and heritage.
3. **Maybe we can correct the corrected words** by Ervad Masani to suit our present conditions in North America as follows:





(The Mobeds looking towards the father of the bridegroom or widower or his witness question him the following:)

**Ba Roj e XXXXX, ba Maah e XXXXX, saal awar XXXXXXXX, az Shehenshah Yazdegard Sheheryaar, Saasaan tokhm, ba shaherestaaan khujeste Iran, andar XXXXX Shaher anjaman jasta ested;**

*Awardaad va aain i deen i Maazdayasni, ba kad khudaai i een zani dukht daheshnee –*

In Kanik (if bride) (with her name) naamwar:

or

In zani (if widow) (with her name) naamwar:

*Ba Paemaane chanda Dollareh Americki/Canadiani gereftan oh chand aaraayashna va payraayashna zarrin awash daadan, Padeerafteh Boodi?* (question to Bridegroom's witness)

He answers: *Padeerafteh budam!*"

English translation for the above American/Canadian currency:

(The Mobeds looking towards the father of the bridegroom or widower or his witness question him the following:)

*From the ancient times of the Sassanian Emperor Yazdegard Sheheryaar of the auspicious country of Iran, in the Yazdegardi year of XXXXX, in the Shehenshahi month of XXXXXXXX, on the Shehenshai Day of XXXXXXXX, in the city of XXXXXXXX, the whole Anjuman (community assembly) has assembled (to witness this wedding). (There) according to the established law and custom of the Maazdayasni Religion, for receiving this lady bride as the lady of your household, this bride of the name XXXXXXXX or the widow of the name XXXXXXXX, in order to create the matrimonial relations with her, have you agreed to give some American/Canadian Dollars to her and some gold jewellery pieces?*

The bridegroom's witness replies: "Yes I have agreed to do so."

## NAMC STAND

Since so many aspects of our customs and traditions are essentially symbolic and as long as they are not in violation of the intent of good will and good faith, NAMC does not favor a change, as that would dilute the original effect. It is imperative that we maintain the original sanctity of our literature and not bring about changes for the sake of a change based on an individual's perception or interpretation.

The stand taken by NAMC is not binding on any of its members. Accordingly, should a mobed wish to change or omit the sentence to suit his personal conviction he is at liberty to do so.

## MOBED FALI KANGA

89 years, of Southern California has completed 77 years of dedicated priestly service to the communities in India, Pakistan and North America.

The Avesta Class of Southern California felicitated him on September 11, 2011 at the California Zoroastrian Centre .



***The FEZANA JOURNAL congratulates Mobed Kanga and wishes him good health and happiness with his family***

## JASHAN IN HOUSTON

A Jashan was celebrated in Houston at the residence of Shernaz and Affraz Boomla, on Saturday July 30, 2011 by young mobeds and mobeds in training



*From left to right*

*Ervad Vispi Katrak ; Farzad Sarkari; Ervad Noozar Boomla; Ervad Bahrom Firozgary*

*Yazad Sidhwa; Ervad Rayomand Katrak; Ervad Noshir Khumbatta; Ervad Peshotan Unwalla*

*Ashtad Boomla; Ervad Kyrus Buchia*

# Milestones

Ervad Jal and Nergish (Sethna) Panthaki of Montreal, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on March 30, 2011. The best anniversary gift they received was the birth of their twin grandsons on February 14, 2011.



## HOMAI AND SHIAWAX CANTEENWALLA

### 65th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



Homai and Shiawax Canteenwalla celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on September 7th 2011. They came to Canada in May 1970, and have lived in Montreal, Quebec since then. Their son Jehanbux (Jambi), daughter in law Vahishta and their daughter Zeenia, along with their 3 grandchildren, Shauna, Zara and Shayne would like to wish them on this unique achievement.

*Congratulations Homai and Shiawax. We think you hold the unique title of being the oldest living Zarathushti married couple in Canada.*

# M I L E S T O N E S

May 15, 2011 to September 1st 2011

## BIRTHS

Eric Shahrokh Boedker, a boy, to Christa and Klaus Shahrokh-Boedker, brother to Kia, grandson to Rostom and Mahnaz Shahrokh in North Vancouver, BC on March 9, 2011.

Ava Ogra, a girl, to Anahita and Ferozshaw Ogra, granddaughter to Aban and Keki Daryushnejad, Farida and Nusserwanji Ogra, and niece to Kamran and Kaivan Daryushnejad in Richmond Hill, ONT on April 5, 2011.

Azita and Arya, twins to Arnavaz and Afshan Barshan in Chicago, on April 23, 2011.

Karl Kekobad, a boy, to Dilshad and Jamshid Kekobad, brother to Zara, grandson to Meher and Kersi Choksey, (Lombard, IL) and Jeroo and Behram Kekobad (Mumbai) in Santa Clara, CA on April 27, 2011.

Zane Rohan Madon, a boy, to Ronda and Eddie Madon, brother to Sam, grandson to Pervez Madon and Jemeli Halabe, nephew to Natasha Madon and Rodney Agha in North Vancouver, BC on May 10, 2011.

Sanaea Warden, a girl, to Nazneen and Mehlie Warden, sister to Abrina, granddaughter to Aban and Sarosh Challa (Lahore, Pakistan) and Mani and Rustom Warden (Mumbai, India) on May 15, 2011.

Logan Choksey, a boy to Zubin and Nicole Choksey (St Croix, USVI), brother to Leslie and Lilly, grandson to Meher and Kersi Choksey (Lombard IL) and Katie Phillip (St Croix, USVI) on June 4, 2011.

Kaizad Bhesania, a boy to Rushna and Firdosh Bhesania, (Kirkland WA) grandson to Meher and Kersi Bhesania (Dubai) and Perviz Baji Patel and Deenaz Masi (Chicago) on June 4, 2011.

Aiden, Nathan, and Jacob Satha, boys, to Rayomand and Sandra Satha, grandsons to Mehroo and Rohinton Chothia, Maneck Sattha and Osvaldo and Maria Faria,

great-grandsons to Dhun and Yasmin Bhaya in Toronto, ONT on June 14, 2011.

Farah Ray Mirza Rogers, a girl, to Khurshid and Jeff Rogers, sister to Zehan, granddaughter to Noshir and Putli Mirza (ONT) and John and Janet Rogers (MI) in Colorado on July 1, 2011.

Zane Mancherjee, a boy, to Kevin and Janine Mancherjee, brother to Xerxes, grandson to Hosie and Jeroo Mancherjee and Rusi and Zareen Tamboli, nephew to Zubin Mancherjee in Toronto, ONT on July 2, 2011.

Milana Jasmine Duran, a girl, to Cyra and Oscar Mobed-Duran, granddaughter to Goher and Danny Mobed in Miami, FL. on July 8, 2011.

Mitra Farsinejad, a girl, to Roya and Afshin Farsinejad in Montreal, QUE on July 30, 2011.

Joshua Neville Arjani, a boy to Neville and Mandy Arjani, grandson to Mehroo and Minoo Arjani (Hamilton, Ont) and Gene and Linda Beauchamp (Brockville, Ont) in Ottawa, in August 19, 2011.

## NAVJOTES

Ross and Raha Banoo Namdari, children of Dr. Rostam and Antonio Namdari. The sudreh poushi ceremony was performed by Mobeds Dr Touraj Khodabakshi and Dr Ardeshir Behi in Vancouver on May 14, 2011.

Kareena Bulsara, daughter of Parvez and Anita Bulsara in Mississauga, ONT on June 4, 2011.

Tatiana Golwalla, daughter of Zhaleh and Rushad Golwalla in Terra Cotta, ONT on June 11, 2011.

Roxanna and Isabelle Irani, daughters of Drs. Adel and Natasha Irani, grandchildren of Dr. Katie Irani (Houston, TX) and Dr. Dolly Dastoor (Montreal, QUE) and Dr. Phiroz Dastoor (Toronto, ONT); Ervads Shapur



Pavri and Zubin Dastoor performed the ceremony in Houston, TX on June 18, 2011. (photo above)

Chloe and Tayte Choudhury, children of Tanaz and Chelsey Choudhrey, grandchildren of Banoo and Dara Colabawalla and Marie Celine and Kamal Noel Choudhury (Mumbai); Ervads Bomanshaw Sanjana and Yazdi Dastur performed the ceremony in Houston, TX on July 2, 2011..

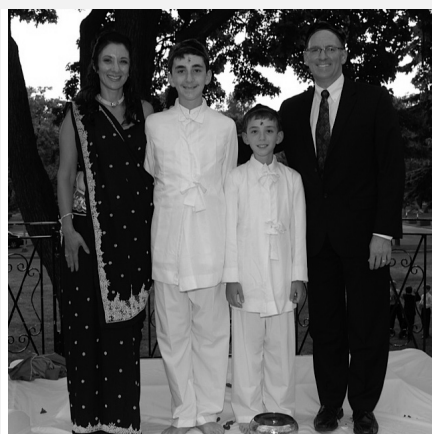


Darius and Cyrus Dadyburjor sons of Dinaz and Khush Dadyburjor, grandchildren of Sherroo and Minoo Bhatena (Toronto) and Banoo and Adi Kanga (Mumbai). Ervads Jal Panthanky and Noshir Mirza performed the ceremony in Toronto, on July 3, 2011.(photo above)

Hanosh & Farhad Balsara, sons of Sharookh & Tanvir Balsara; navjote ceremony was performed by Ervad Jal Panthaky of Toronto, ONT in Calgary, AB on July 10, 2011.



Xerxis and Karl Dastur, sons of Mehbhad and Zenobia Dastur in Toronto, ONT on July 22, 2011.



Kai and Ryan Washer, sons of Tinaz Chinoy and Glen Washer. Ervads Gev and Zal Karkaria performed the ceremony, in Montreal, QUE on August 6, 2011. (photo above)

Aidun and Rachael Silliphant, children of Zenobia and Harry Silliphant, grandchildren of Perin and Soli Pardiwala and Betty and Harry Silliphant. Ervads Nozer Kotwal and Farzad Mirza performed the navjote ceremony, Oakville, Ont, on August 27, 2011. (photo below)



## WEDDINGS

Anaita Kasad, daughter of Homai and Arvand Kasad (Belmont, CA) to Peter Cureton, son of Rosemary and David Cureton (England) in Hong Kong, China on April 18, 2011. The couple will reside in New York, NY.

Percy Mehta, son of Dali and Roshan Mehta (Mumbai, India) to Marlyn, daughter of Naldo and Kameroon (Suriname) in Richmond, BC on April 30, 2011.

Rohini Jasawala, daughter of Annahita and Jehangir Jasawala (Modesto, CA) to James Chitwood, son of Sue Harrison and Richard Chitwood (Modesto, CA) in Davis CA on May 21, 2011.

Fiona Petigara, daughter of Shahrugh and Perveen Petigara (North Vancouver, BC), sister of Phiroozeh Romer and Sharlene, to Nabil Valji, son of Nizar and Almas Valji on the Sunshine Coast, Vancouver Island, BC on May 28, 2011.

Karl Masani, son of Gool and Dara Masani to Simin Godiwalla, daughter of late Jal Godiwalla and Soonu Godiwalla in Houston, TX on May 29, 2011

Dina Marawala, daughter of Beth Blakely and Zarir Marawala (Bay area, CA) to Zahan Lalkaka, son of Shiraz and Ruby Lalkaka (Mumbai, India) in Hayward, CA on June 11, 2011.



Zia Karkaria, daughter of Shirine and Gev Karkaria (Kirkland, QUE) to Conor Stapleton, son of late John Stapleton and Dolores Stapleton (Ireland). Ervads Gev and Zal Karkaria performed the ceremony in Montreal, QUE on June 25, 2011. (photo above)

Kamal Dubash, daughter of Mehroo Dubash, to Brent Bromley in Houston, TX on July 9, 2011.

Ayesha Sagar, daughter of Pervin and Vispi Sagar (Houston, TX) to Jason Bradley Wageneck at the Grand Cayman Resort on July 9, 2011.

Anahita Dua, daughter of Arnavaz and Kulvinder Dua (Brookfield, WI) to Jason McMaster, son of Marion and Bernard McMaster in Milwaukee, WI on August 26, 2011.

## DEATHS

Joli Rusi Bharucha, wife of late Rusi Bharucha (Mumbai, India), mother of Sunnie Gustad Irani (Mumbai, India) and Jasmine Kersi Chesson (Richmond, ONT), and grandmother of Zubin, Cherag, Jamie and Jennifer in Mumbai, India on March 16, 2011.

Dolly Jain (Mississauga, ONT) mother of Deepak Jain (California), aunt of Arnavaz Jamshed Dhabhar (Mississauga, ONT) in Billimora, India on April 4, 2011.

Minoo Dadinatha, 89, husband of late Villy Dadinatha, father of Zersis (FL) and Zarir (Coquitlan, BC), father-in-law of Anahita and Zarrin, grandfather of Anahita in Mumbai, India on April 27, 2011.

Noshir Jamsetjee, father of Bachi (Bomi) Damkewala, Rumi (Kashmira) Jamsetjee, grandfather of Diana (Rohinton) Gazdar, Zarine (Mehrab) Deboo, Persis (Burjis) Sidhwa, Roshni, Tanaz, and Darius Jamsetjee, great grandfather of Natasha and Kashmira Gazdar in Naperville, IL on May 9, 2011

Minoo Nariman Bharucha, father of Arnavaz Godiwalla (Houston, TX), Bomi Bharucha and Gool Kalyaniwalla in Mumbai, India on May 25, 2011.

Roshan Filly Patel, mother of Farida (Richard) Tinker (Maryland), late Nilufer (Mike) Hagen, grandmother of Nicole and Eric Hagen, Scott and Conner Tinker, sister of Nari and Perin Patel (Florida), Ruby Bengalee and Jerroo Polly Sidhwa, late Nergis (Homi) Pavri and late Khorshed (Curshedji) Gandevia, aunt of Jimmy and Arnavaz Gandevia (Virginia), Jasmine Ness Shroff and Sanaya and Zarius (Ohio) to Sykesville, MD on May 31, 2011.

Godrej Dinshawji Sidhwa, husband of Dina Sidhwa, father of Farhad and Pouruchisty Kavasji Dadachanji (USA), brother of Bejan Sidhwa (Mississauga, ONT) in Karachi, Pakistan on June 4, 2011.

Dolly Nariman Balsara, 75, wife of Nariman Balsara, mother of Zubin (Silvia) Balsara, Navzor Balsara, Mona Balsara, grandmother of Carl, Adrian, Richard, Ariana, Ryan and Robert, great grandmother of Kayden, sister to Kobad Arjani, Freny Ranji (New Jersey). Tehemtan Arjani (Cal), Neville Arjani, Jer Udvadia (Savannah, Georgia) in Miami, FL on June 8, 2011.

Ketty Bhathena, mother of Rushad Bhathena (Toronto, ONT) and Kashmira Bhathena (Dallas, TX) and mother-in-law of Zeena Bhathena in Mumbai, India on June 17, 2011.

Darius Contractor, husband of Yasmin Contractor, father of Percy and Nazneen in Toronto, ONT on June 13, 2011.

Purviz Saher, wife of Noshir Saher (Mumbai, India), mother of Fakirjee Cowasjee (London, UK) and sister of Villie Homi Homji, (Toronto) and Soonu Dali Mama (Toronto, ONT) in Mumbai, India on June 27, 2011.

Khushroo "Dusty" Dastur, 76 years, husband of Margaret Dastur, father of David (Janice), Sean (Jodi), and Brian (Maria), brother of Jerroo, Soli and Homi in Northbrook, IL on June 27, 2011

Kersi Nariman Mehta, 70, husband of Kamal Mehta, father of Cyrus Mehta (Philadelphia, PA), Neville Mehta (Willoughby Hills, PA), and Tina Mehta (Philadelphia, PA) in Cleveland (Willoughby Hills), OH on July 4, 2011.

Homai Feroz Birdie, mother of Khurshed (Mithoo) Birdie (New York) and Nilufer (Danny) Mama, grandmother of Michelle and Darius Mama in Brampton, ONT on July 6, 2011.

Faridoon Gustad Khosravi, 69, husband of Diane; father of Roxanne and James; brother of Rashid Khosravi and Pervin

Paterasp Nirumvala, in Oregon, on July 11, 2011.

Khushro Byramji Divecha, father of Shiraz Jimmy Engineer (Karachi) and Purviz Tiraz Birdie (Kansas), brother of Jehanbux (Toronto) and Dossabhoy (Karachi) in Karachi, Pakistan on July 15, 2011.

Pesi Hathiram, husband of Coomi, father of Phiroza (Bruce) Stoneback and grandfather of Rachael, in Mumbai, July 24, 2011.

Edul Udvadia, husband of Gool Udvadia, father of Filli (Jer) Udvadia, Jimi Udvadia, Mehru (Rohinton) Jamooji (India), grandfather of Nina (Dan) Mastrian, Eddi, Tiffany Udvadia, and Shirin Jamooji, great grandfather of Laila Mastrian in Savannah, GA on July 29, 2011.

Bano Bagh-Khandan Khosravian (Keshavarz), mother of Homa, Daryush, Soheil, Farhad and Fereydoon, grandmother of Behrang, Kave, Mitra, Kasra, Sam, Golrokh, Yasaman, Nicku and Shawdi, great grandmother of Nina and Freddie on August 5, 2011.

Iran Mehraban Ghibi, Southern California, on August 5, 2011

Savak Jamshedji Kasad, husband of Nerges Kasad, father of Dinaz (Jamshed) Ravji (Chicago, IL), Pervin (Aspi) Konkrawala (Toronto, ONT), Sherna (Mehernosh) Kasad (Richmond, BC), grandfather of Mahazarin, Jennifer, Nusli, Zenobia, Rayomand, Farzad, and Nazneen, and great grandfather of Keden in Richmond, BC on August 6, 2011.

Minoo Mana, 82, husband of late Pervin, father of Shermeen (Sherry) Sethna (Houston) Naomi Framjee (Oklahoma) Hormuzd (Karachi) in Karachi on August 6, 2011.

Roda Patel, wife of Khushroo Patel, mother of Farhad & Susan Patel, Shiraz & Melanie Patel and Rokhsana & Jay Bozicevich, grandmother of Darius, Fransisco, Peyton, Bailee, Madison, Asha, Maya, Tehmi, sister of Nergish

Irani, Roshan & Nano Daroowalla, Soli & Linda Mullan, Homi & Shirin Mullan, Aspy & Bapsy Mullan, sister in law of Lily & Firoz Kavina in Northbrook, IL on August 8, 2011.

Munchi Captain, husband of Aashi Captain (Mumbai), son of Jalloo Captain (Boca Raton, FL), father of Mehernosh (Mumbai), brother of Rita Engineer (Boca Raton, FL), Feroze Captain (Kuala Lumpur), uncle of Rehan Engineer in Mumbai, India on August 16, 2011.

Sheroo Rustomji, mother of Bakhtawar, Rashnu and Kersi (Arvinda) in Mississauga, Ont, on August 27, 2011.

Khodarahm Rashid Aidun, 86, son of Rashid and Sarvar Aidun, of Yazd, Iran, husband of late Paridokht Soroush Aidun, father of Rashid, Daryush, Sarvar & Cyrus in Brockville, Ontario on 8 September 2011.

#### LANDMARK BIRTHDAY

Khorshed Jobani mother of Gulrukh (Cawas) Patel, (Toronto), Dara (Zenobia) Anary (London, Ont) and Adi (Behroze) Anary (Toronto), celebrated her 90th birthday with family and friends in Mississauga on June 17, 2011.

TO THE WORLD YOU  
MAY BE JUST ONE  
PERSON

BUT TO ONE PERSON  
YOU MIGHT BE THE  
WORLD

MARK TWAIN

# Matrimonials

FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at [RRRivetna@aol.com](mailto:RRRivetna@aol.com).

Male, 34, M.S. in Computer Engineering, working as a Software Engineer in California. Go-getter, ambitious, hard-working, with a positive attitude, interested in meeting educated, good-natured girl willing to settle in the US. Contact: [pdmsfdc@gmail.com](mailto:pdmsfdc@gmail.com) [M11-35].

Male, 35, studied hotel management from Switzerland, currently residing in Pune, India. Interested in meeting girl in US or anywhere outside India. Call 99 6049 8392. [M11-36].

Female, 29. If your Prince of Persia is looking for a Persian princess, look no further. Our daughter lives in Sydney, Australia, is a professional with a great personality and variety of interests. Contact [khosravi@live.com.au](mailto:khosravi@live.com.au). [F11-37].

Female, 29, Chartered Accountant, working in a bank in Canada, Contact [honeybee82@hotmail.ca](mailto:honeybee82@hotmail.ca) [F11-38].

Female, 35, Graphic Designer in Mumbai, very attractive, generous and caring, with many interests, including martial arts and western dance. [di\\_bharucha@live.com](mailto:di_bharucha@live.com). [F11-39].

Male, 28, B. Com and MBA (Marketing), working in Law

Offices in Manhattan, New York. Contact [piraan@gmail.com](mailto:piraan@gmail.com), tel: 646-247 9517. [M11-40].

Female 26, Masters in Aerospace Engineering from US university, working in Boston. Contact relative [bpsavai@gmail.com](mailto:bpsavai@gmail.com). [F11-47].

Male 50, MBA, University Head Tennis Coach, well-settled in New Orleans for the past 30 years, seeking life partner between 38-45 years, who loves to travel, is independent, thoughtful, caring and considerate. Please contact [bkanga@aol.com](mailto:bkanga@aol.com) or 504-450 7598. [M11-48].

Female, 34, attractive, health professional, interested in meeting an attractive, mature, educated man. Please contact me at [sunnyday.a5@gmail.com](mailto:sunnyday.a5@gmail.com). [F11-49].

Female, 28, 5' 3", slender, MD (Moscow Medical Academy), Masters in Public Health (University of Toronto), currently working in Toronto, family-oriented and fun-loving, willing to settle in India or abroad. Contact aunt at 919-929 6966, [myneice2011@hotmail.com](mailto:myneice2011@hotmail.com). [F11-51].

Female, 26, 5' 2", slender, Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management, currently working at 5-star Oberoi Trident hotel in Mumbai, family-oriented and fun-loving, willing to settle in India or abroad. Contact aunt at 919-929 6966,

[myneice2011@hotmail.com](mailto:myneice2011@hotmail.com). [F11-52].

Looking for a Soul Mate? Try these matrimonial sites and services:

[www.Matrimonial.Zoroastrianism.com](http://www.Matrimonial.Zoroastrianism.com)

[www.zoroastrians.net](http://www.zoroastrians.net)

[www.TheParsiMatch.com](http://www.TheParsiMatch.com)

[www.shaadi.com](http://www.shaadi.com)

[www.ParsiMatrimony.com](http://www.ParsiMatrimony.com)

[www.ParsiShaadi.com](http://www.ParsiShaadi.com)

[www.MatrimnialParsiZoroastrianism.com](http://www.MatrimnialParsiZoroastrianism.com)

Mrs. Gool Banaji, Parel, Mumbai, [goolpesi@gmail.com](mailto:goolpesi@gmail.com), tel: 91-22-2416 6120.

**FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties; We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at [RRRivetna@aol.com](mailto:RRRivetna@aol.com)**

Please send all submissions for "Milestones" to Mahrukh Motafram, 2390 Chanticleer Drive, Brookfield, WI 53045, [maharukhm83@gmail.com](mailto:maharukhm83@gmail.com) Tel 262-821-5296

**NOTE: If no year is specified it implies "within the past 12 months"**

## HAMAZORI REKINDLED

The booklet, **Creations of Ahura Mazda**, based on the stories in the Bundahesin created by the children of the Zarathushti Religion Education Class of the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas as part of their fundraising drive for the Dar-e-Mehr in Dallas, Texas was reprinted in India. 600 copies were made available to the organizers of the **Fifth World Zoroastrian Youth Congress** in Vancouver, Canada for distribution to all attendees, courtesy of FEZANA. Additional Copies have been distributed to Zoroastrian Associations in Australia and New Zealand.

*Grateful thanks to Poras and Pearl Balsara (Dallas, Texas), Firdosh Mehta (Calgary, Canada) and Yazdi Tantra (Mumbai, India) to bring this idea to fruition*



## **Roda Khushroo Patel (January 25, 1934 - August 8, 2011)**

### ***A celebration of life well spent in the service of humanity***

Roda Patel passed away after her recent struggle with cancer.

Roda born in Mumbai, India grew up in Navsari and went to school in Panchgani but attended college and medical school in Mumbai. During her school years she met Khushroo Patel, who she married on April 28, 1963. They immigrated to Chicago after she received a Fulbright Scholarship to further study Pediatrics.

Roda practiced and taught pediatrics for many years. She took a brief hiatus from pediatrics to raise three children Farhad, Shiraz, and Rokhsana. In 1977, she battled and overcame breast cancer. During her bout with cancer, she rekindled her passion for art and flourished as an artist. In 1994, at the age of 60, she started her humanitarian work in India by joining forces with the Gram Seva Trust. She created a program to educate, nourish and help the rural children of India. Through her warmth, persistence and talents, the program Roda started has grown from serving 30 children to serving over 5000 children. Learn more about her work with Gram Seva at [www.gramseva.org](http://www.gramseva.org).

Roda Patel will be remembered as a wonderful wife, mother, pediatrician and humanitarian. She is and will remain an inspiration to many across the world. Her pain is gone and she is at peace – we all celebrate her life.

***(Dr Roda Patel was profiled in Fezana Journal Spring 2008 Vol 22 No 1 pps 52-53 )***



## **Doctor who shaped Tata Memorial Hospital dies on August 26, 2011**

Padmashri Dr. Ketayun Dinshaw, a leading radiation oncologist who led the premier-care hub of Tata Memorial Centre for 13 years, passed away peacefully, on Friday, August 26, 2011, "after an illness borne bravely". She lost her personal battle to the disease which she ironically fought as a disciplined soldier and visionary leader for four decades. She was cremated at the electric crematorium at Chandanvadi,

Born in Kolkata, Dr Dinshaw was motivated by her father, an architect, to become a doctor. She studied at Christian Medical College, Vellore, and later at Cambridge University. She returned to work in Tata Memorial Hospital, retiring in November 2008 after serving as its director for 13 years

Dr. Dinshaw not only ensured that Tata Memorial Hospital expanded, but also introduced indigenous technology and cancer outreach programs. She pushed for the development of indigenous radiotherapy machine and christened it Bhabatron; it is being used in over 20 centres in India and has been donated to some developing countries as well.

She is described as an institution builder. ACTREC, the 60-acre research campus in Khargar, the Homi Bhabha Block at Tata Hospital and the Tata



Medical Centre in Kolkata have her signature inside and outside. The hospital's research wing, based in Khargar, is the fruit of her vision.

Former ambassador to the US, Ronen Sen, said, "Katy, as she was affectionately known to her numerous friends, colleagues and admirers, was internationally recognized for her outstanding contributions to combating cancer." She was elected as president of International Society of Radiation Oncology, as Council Member of International Union against Cancer. The Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India (FAPZA) gave her the Award for Excellence in Professional Competence, and the Zoroastrian Foundation conferred on her the Life Time Achievement Award, and in 2007 she received the Great Woman Achiever Award.

Her guiding principle is aptly summed up in the motto of the Tata Medical Centre inaugurated recently by Ratan Tata in Kolkata, namely, "*state of the art and straight from the heart too, because cancer cannot be cured by medicine alone,*"

*Ketayun Dinshaw is the sister of Navaz (Jim )  
Modi of Chicago*

*Abstracted from Times of India New service*

## Our Angel: Shavak Jamshedji Kasad (April 20, 1925 - August 6, 2011 )

Shavak Jamshedji Kasad was born on April 20, 1925 in Navsari, India. At the age of 17 he immigrated to Mombasa, Kenya, where he started a family and several successful businesses, among them being Shermehkas, a hardware shop and the Black Lion, a plot of cottages rented out by tourists. All those who had the privilege to be connected to Shavak Kasad remember him for his kindness, honesty, and pure heart. He was a humanitarian and dedicated his life to uplifting others. Currently a school run by a charity organization in Mombasa is named after Shavak Kasad, representing his philanthropy to the community. He continues to be an inspiration for the rest of us- to remember that we must believe and dedicate our lives to something greater than ourselves. His legacy carries on as we continue to practice our grandfather's principles: patience, tolerance, honesty, and faith in God. May Ahura Mazda grant him eternal peace, bliss and love. And, may all of us continue to be connected to Shavak Kasad through our own peace and joy.

-Kasad, Konkrawala, and Ravji Families By Zenobia Ravji, Granddaughter,

## NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS 2009-2010

The year 2010 has been a record year for many of the categories of the milestones recorded by the FEZANA Journal. The information received and registered for the Journal is obtained through various FEZANA association newsletters, e-mail contacts and/or mail. As we move forward with the FEZANA Strategic Plan, it becomes necessary to maintain such demographic records that can assist the Survey and Census committee to measure the Zarathushti growth on this continent.

It has to be noted that there may be some inaccuracies in the data, given that all qualifying events may not be recorded in association newsletters, and information from families in areas not connected to associations, may not have been communicated to the "Milestones" staff.

Analysis of the data for 2009-2010 Spring/March 2010 to Winter/December 2010 (total 4 publications each year)

The total births recorded for 2010 increased by 25%; the number of girls born increased by 38% compared to the boys, who were up by 15%.

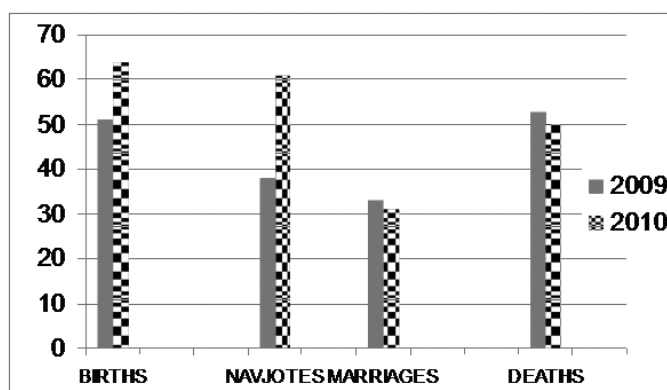
The total navjotes recorded increased by 61%!! Once again, the number of girls initiated in the religion was up by a whopping 107% with a decent 30% increase with boys.

The total weddings recorded were in fact down by 6%; but, the interfaith marriages were up by 44% compared to marriages within the faith that were down by 53%.

The total deaths recorded in North America were down by 6%; with female deaths being down by 32% compared to male deaths that increased by 13%. It must be noted that only those

deaths occurring on the North American continent are included in this data. Many deaths occurring outside the continent if parents, are communicated to the "Milestones" staff, and these have been excluded from the data.

Overall, the demographic trend for the North American Zarathushti community looks encouraging, given the births and navjotes are on the increase.



	BIRTHS	NAVJOTES	MARRIAGES	DEATHS
<b>2009</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>% CHANGE</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>-6%</b>

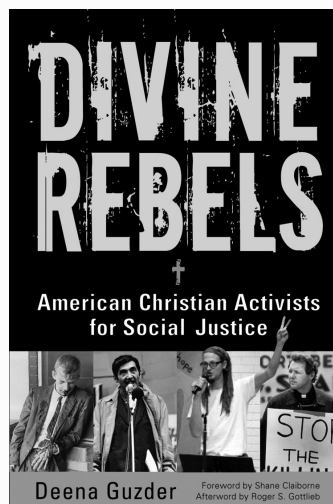
# Divine Rebels

By Deena Guzder, Lawrence Hill Books, 305 pages. \$16.95  
ISBN 978-1-56976-264-6

A book written by a Zarathushti author that must be read, a young author who must be celebrated and a call to action that we all must answer – somehow! The book *Divine Rebels, American Christian Activists for Social Justice*, written by Deena Guzder, is a concise and factual account of individuals who followed their faith, to a degree and depth that only few venture to traverse. The reader is taken on a journey of social realization that would require volumes of reading but is so well documented and presented in this one manuscript, *Divine Rebels*. Deena Guzder's compilation of ten individuals, who heed their Christian faith to move the world forward in a more peaceful, loving and just manner, creates for the reader a template we can utilize in examining our own commitment to our faith.

"The Christian social justice activists profiled in this book believe in an interfaith global community based on ethics, a world with infinite potential for improvement, and an inclusive God of love," says Deena Guzder in her introduction. These activists are predominately from the Christian left, a more progressive group who endear to let actions speak for their beliefs rather than religious based rhetoric. The voyage through the experiences of these ten activists, leads the reader to discerning the path of several social justice movements of the past fifty years. *Divine Rebels* discusses the early civil rights protests, the antiwar movements of Vietnam and today, American foreign policy and its impact relating to arms and immigrations, nuclear disarmament, death penalty abolitionists and environmental activism all through the experience of Christian activists. Deena Guzder's enlightened insights regarding each subject matter covered and her creativity in presenting the entire story is the true significance of reading this book.

The individuals chosen for this book range from those who are recognizable for their activism throughout their lives, having accomplished tangible results, to those who persevere for the sake of their own moral beliefs, with no formal notoriety or end in sight. Father Daniel Berrigan, was a recognized leader in the Vietnam antiwar movement, he continues to be a peace activist, and was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Two other Nobel Peace Prize nominees are Roy Bourgeois and John Dear. Roy Bourgeois has championed for the



BOOKS  
ARTS &

closure of the School of the Americas (SOA), after learning the school was training Latin American tyrants in order to generate positive US economic interests in the region, which led to creating poor and destitute conditions for the

masses in Latin America. John Dear who has worked tirelessly for a nuclear-free world, was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 2008. Robin Harper is a US citizen who refuses to pay income taxes to the IRS after learning that over 50% of his federal income tax is spent on military programs. As a war tax resistor, Harper sends donations to humanitarian organizations in the amounts owed to the IRS. Joseph Land spent two years of his life perched in a California redwood tree in order to protect one of the last swaths of old-growth redwoods, these majestic trees can grow for over 1,500 years. The above are a sampling of the individuals you will meet in your journey through *Divine Rebels*.

Deena Guzder's book took me through a thought process of self-examination. I echo the sentiments of John Dear when he says in his own autobiography, *A Persistent Peace*, "Deep down, more than anything, I craved meaning .... I wanted my own existence to have meaning." *Divine Rebels* challenges the reader to determine his/her own moral compass, be it governed by religious, spiritual or other guiding forces, it must be presided over first and foremost by justice! In the words of Deena Guzder, "We are the ones with the power to love one another, answer each other's prayers, and create a more heavenly world." This is a book that will make you think, read it, but more importantly act upon it, the world will be a better place.

For more information on Deena Guzder and to read more about her upcoming publications and past articles, visit her website [www.deenaguzder.com](http://www.deenaguzder.com).

**Keshvar Buhariwalla** is a member of the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (ZANT). She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Loyola University in New Orleans and served in the Army Corps of Engineers as an officer for 4 years. She is an active member of ZANT, is married to Kali and has three sons.



Reviewed by Dr Ardeshtir B. Damania  
(University of California, Davis)

## Zoroastrianism: An Introduction

by Jenny Rose, I.B. Tauris,  
London, UK. ISBN: 978 1 84885  
088 0 (paperback) and 978 1  
84885 087 3 (hard cover). 303  
pages. Paperback \$19.00  
(Amazon.com)

In recent years there has been a surge in interest in religion studies at all universities. Motivations and beliefs of various religions besides Christianity, are being examined and discussed. Zoroastrianism is one of the world's great ancient religions. In present-day Iran, significant communities of Zarathushtis (who take their name from the founder of the faith, the remarkable religious reformer whom the Greeks called Zoroaster) still practice the rituals and teach the moral precepts that once was the official state-sanctioned faith of the mighty Sasanian Empire that extended from the Punjab right up to Greece. In the west, the religion is not well-known and very few have any insights into its teachings and the life of Zarathustra himself. Jennifer (Jenny) Rose, Associate Professor of Zoroastrian Studies in the Department of Religion at Claremont Graduate University, California, and Visiting Associate Professor of Religion at Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, has made a bold and convincing effort to educate the world, especially the youth, about the beauty and truthfulness of the Zarathushti religion.

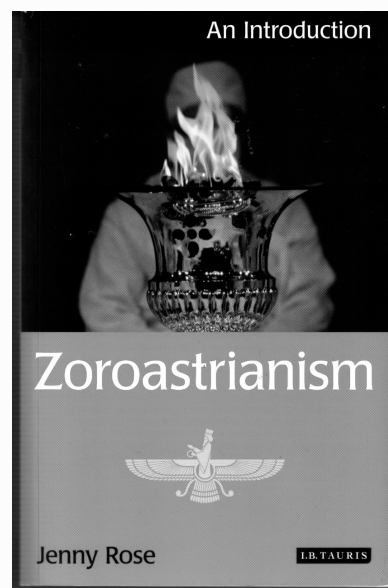
Beyond Iran, the Zarathushti Diaspora is significant especially in India, where the Gujarati-speaking community of exiles from post-Sasanian Iran call themselves the Parsis. This new book will appeal to anyone interested in discovering more about the faith that bequeathed the contrasting words "Magi" and "magic," and whose adherents still live according to the code of "Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds." The central Zarathushti concept that human beings are continually faced with a choice between the path of "good" and "evil," represented by the contrasting figures of Ahura Mazda – the good spirit and Ahriman – the devil. Through her new book, Jenny Rose shows why the Zarathushti faith remains one of the world's most inspiring and perennially fascinating systems of ethics and belief.

There have been several books written by Parsi as well as western scholars on the religion of Asho Zarathustra. Jenny Rose's book "Zoroastrianism: An Introduction" is a welcome addition because it is written in modern style and is very readable and at the same time it is a well informed review of Zoroastrianism and

also Parsi history. The book is a pleasure to read throughout, and the author's writing style is markedly beautiful, placing her very much within Mary Boyce's literary tradition. Rose, who is the grand-daughter of Shirin Khorshid Boga, has read widely on the subject, and has included numerous citations and mentions her sources for her thorough treatment of the Zarathushti faith. This book is fully up-to-date with the latest information on the faith and the Diaspora of the Parsis. Jenny Rose also discusses the Zarathushti faith in Central Asia. As we know now, and from the travel reports of Dame Dr Meher Master-Moos, there are hundreds of thousands of Zarathushtis in Central Asia, particularly Tajikistan and Armenia. The importance of Afghanistan in Zarathushti religious history is also mentioned. Afghanistan was once at the cross-roads of the Zarathushtrian religion, Buddhism, and Hinduism much before the advent of Islam.

The author took on a very tall order to explain and summarize such a polyglot scriptural and religious tradition as Zoroastrianism, with its 3000 years of history extending across so much of Asia and into the global Diaspora. Everyone who wants to know more about the Zarathushtis the Parsis and their religion should read the book from beginning to end without putting it down. I particularly recommend this well-researched book to each of our youth in South Asia, North America and Europe. Perhaps, due to several reasons it may not be possible for all to go to Iran and visit the land of our forefathers and places connected with the birth and early years of the religion, but there should not be any excuse not to read this well-written and lucid account by Jenny Rose.

BOOKS  
&  
ARTS



## Suits: A Woman on Wall Street

by Nina Godiwalla; Atlas & Co Publishers 2011, 350 pages, ISBN: 978-1-934633-95-3, \$24.00 US

Nina Godiwalla's debut novel, *Suits: A Woman on Wall Street*, is a riveting read that recounts her life in investment banking on Wall Street. Published in 2011 by Atlas & Co Publishers, it feels deceptively thick and heavy at first (it's a hard back book), but once begun, its 350 pages are almost impossible to put down.

Within its thirteen chapters, Godiwalla details through her own experiences, the shallow and over indulgent way of life enjoyed by financial analysts at a high profile firm on Wall Street. Throughout the book she also successfully weaves elements of the foundation her faith and family gave her before she embarked on her career in New York. One passage in chapter two particularly comes to mind:

"Five yatha ahu vairyos followed by three ashem vohus," my grandmother commanded as she walked around our huddle, listening to our pronunciation of ancient Persian prayers. "Anything to bring blessings to our house of failure. With our heads covered in scarves we all looked at the floor in shame. Every couple of minutes, each of us would feel her sly eye, sharp with the wish that one or the other had been born a boy."

Contrast this with a glimpse of Godiwalla's New York way of life from chapter seven:

"Under the table, I thrust my fists upwards, joggling all our empty glasses, and said, "One last round – tequila washed down with double Goldschlager!"

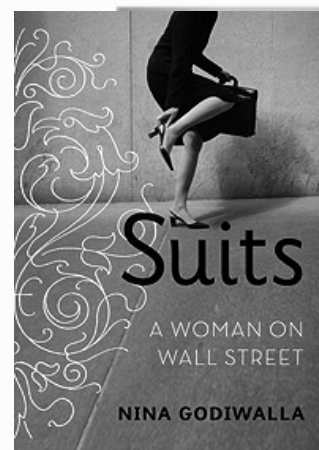
"I'm in!" Luis agreed, getting up to find a waiter.

"Hard-core!" Daniel shouted. "Hell, yeah!"

Too impatient for a waiter, I ran over to the bar and returned carrying a heavy tray of colored potions back to the table. We all closed our eyes and gulped, until we felt light enough."

In these two passages you find the stark contrast between the values of her family and community, growing up in Texas and those in her chosen career in New York. Perhaps this culture and lifestyle clash is not so different than what most Zarathushti youth experience on a daily basis in the western world when they make that same transition? Beneath the skin, Godiwalla's book is about so much more than what it's like for a woman on Wall Street, it also vividly depicts the generational and cultural struggles of Parsis in the new millennium.

Godiwalla's book takes her moral and ethical struggles into specific work related situations that the reader can relate to, from something as simple as a having coffee with colleagues, to wanting to take a sick day. She displays the deep sacrifices that she made for material wealth and the conventional definition of success. Ultimately Godiwalla makes the right choice for her and leaves her career on Wall Street with her soul still intact. To quote from her book: "It's not just a job" I said, holding my knees to my chest. "It dictates your life – when you can eat, sleep and shower. Even who we have time to be friends with." Her dialogue is tight and sharp. Her characters interesting and multidimensional. It is evident that she is a writer of some skill and it comes as no surprise that she writes for prestigious publications such as



The Wall Street Journal, Washington Post and Houston Chronicle.

The true to life dialogue, that is peppered with vulgar language, along with the sexual situations in chapter nine, make this book definitely not for everyone. So if you are thinking of buying Godiwalla's book as a gift for someone, bear that in mind. Given how freely money is thrown around in many of the situations it also sheds a different perspective on the recent financial crisis and recession that gripped Wall Street. One can only imagine how these investment bankers manage to live without the finer things in life.

*Suits: A Woman on Wall Street*, on the surface is an urban adventure book, but peel away the layers and you find Godiwalla has given us relevant and thought provoking themes that need to be discussed so that different generations of Zarathushtis in North America will understand each other and bridge the divide.

© 2011 Narges Nirumvala

**Narges Nirumvala, BSc** is a Dale Carnegie Sales Talk Champion, executive speech coach, keynote speaker, corporate trainer and published writer. She has appeared on radio and television. Her writing has been published and circulated to 106 countries worldwide. Narges can be reached at <http://www.NargesNirumvala.com>

Reviewed by Ervad Gev Karkaria, Past President of the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec and past Treasurer of the North American Mobeds' Council.

## Understanding and Practice of Navjote and Wedding Ceremonies

BY Ervad Jehan Bagli and Ervad Adi Unwalla, 97 pages Published 2011, Forword by Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia

BOOKS  
ARTS &

Religious traditions, rituals, and ceremonies have for centuries been handed down from one generation to another. To preserve these religious traditions and rituals, it is the responsibility of every generation to ensure their continuity.

The past 25 years, Zarthushtis on this continent have been very fortunate to witness a growing number of young men being ordained as mobeds after going through intensive training and the ritual of the Navar ceremony in India. Additionally, there have been a number of Zarthushti men, young and old, across North America, who have been

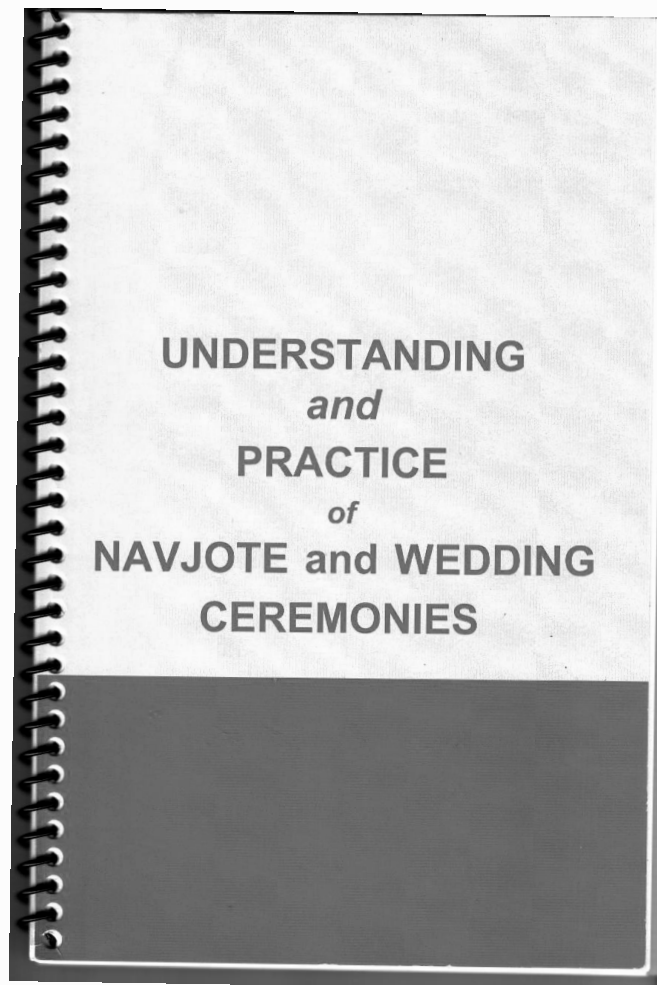
trained as Mobedyars under a special NAMC sponsored programme, permitting them to lead and participate in various religious ceremonies.

In order to assist these young mobeds / mobedyars in their performance of various outer liturgical and ritual ceremonies, two of the NAMC's most respected and learned senior priests, Ervad Jehan Bagli and Ervad Adi Unwalla, have published their book "Understanding and Practice of Navjote and Wedding Ceremonies". This is their third book in the series of The Understanding & Practice of Zarthushti Ceremonies. This book provides both the step by step guidance in the initial preparation, and the rituals that precede the Navjote and Wedding ceremonies. It also provides a concise historical background and an explanation of the significance of these rituals and ceremonies. This is followed by the actual prayers to be recited.

The authors' Epilogue for both Navjote and Wedding is a helpful tool for a mobed to address the congregation after the completion of the ceremony.

The other unique aspect of this book is the comparison that is being drawn between the Parsi Zarthushti rituals and the Iranian Zarthushti rituals.

I felt that the book was well organized and the prayers easy to follow. Explanations of the rituals and their significance were useful and easy to understand. It's a good place to start for inexperienced mobeds just beginning to perform these important and ancient rituals. I am confident that if a young mobed is called upon to perform either of the ceremonies on his own, he could do so very easily by following this book step by step. It is highly recommended that each



association present this book to all young mobeds in their jurisdiction.

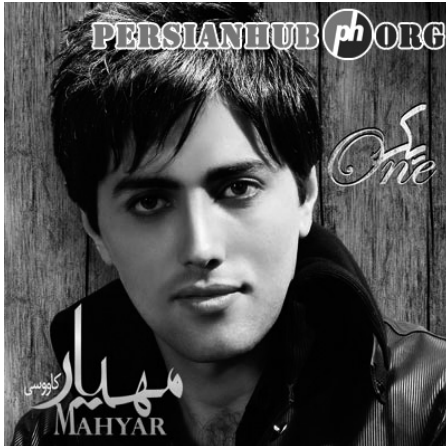
The two authors as always have done an exemplary job.

*The book is available (for a minimum donation of \$10.00 for NAMC) from*

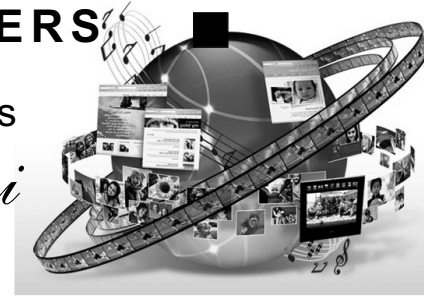
*Ervad Adi Unwalla (Ph. 856 983 6239, nergisadi2@aol.com) in USA*

*Ervad Jehan Bagli (ph. 647 344 3531, jbagli@rogers.com) in Canada*





## Meher Amalsad Interviews *Mahyar Karvosi* A Zarathushti singer



*our Zarathushti faith, tradition and heritage?*

**Mahyar:** The guiding principle, on which my parents' religious teachings were structured, was to live a life based on good thoughts, good words and good deeds. My wish for all Zoroastrians in the world is to abide by these three tenets in every moment of their lives instead of just following some rituals that do not represent true Zoroastrianism. It saddens me to see them gossip, lie, misbehave and still call themselves a Zoroastrian. By doing some of the Zarthushti rituals or simply being born a Zarathushti, does not make a person a true Zarthushti, but by putting good thoughts, good words and good deeds into daily practice makes one a true Zarthushti.

**Meher:** Great. So how do you use the three Zarathushti tenets to build your career in the music world?

**Mahyar:** In order to be a winner in the music career sometimes an artist has to deal in such a way that is not in accordance with the three Zarathushti tenets; for example, in order to become popular, one has to sometimes lie, cheat, and even sing certain songs that are detrimental for the minds of our younger generation. My top most priority is following good thoughts, good words and good deeds while focusing on building a successful career in the music industry. Many of my famous singer friends have told me that if I remain genuine and pure in music industry, I would not last in this profession.

**Meher:** I firmly believe that even in the dark character shows, because it always glows. It is good to note that you aspire to be a role model for our future generation which is commendable. So as a Zarathusti artist, what is your message for them?

**Mahyar:** I am humbled by your kindness. My message to the youth is that if they truly love something and put their life and soul into it, they will achieve their goal but in order to achieve real success in life, one needs to remember Zarthosht's message that there is only one way and that is righteous way.

**Meher:** Wow. That's admirable. So in the spirit of righteousness what is your goal and how would you like your fans to support it?

**Mahyar:** As I travel in life, I have noticed that each person chooses their own path to achieve success. The light from the vessel that I am traveling in brightens my pathway only a few meters at a time. Therefore, I cannot tell with certainty what is at the end of this road. But I am determined to continue my journey on the path of righteousness, even if it takes a little longer for me to achieve my goal. My goal is to become successful not just in the Persian music industry but also across the world. I also intend to continue my major in Allied Health. Having said that, I am grateful to my fans for their inspiration, continuous support and kind encouragement.

**Meher:** Thank you Mahyar for your time and I pray that your righteous endeavor culminates into a successful career.

**For more information about Mahyar's Music please visit:**

<http://mahyarmusic.com/> and <http://www.facebook.com/MahyarKarvosi?sk=wall>

Sometime back, I had the opportunity to meet Mahyar - a young talented Zarathushti singer from Iran who migrated to the United States in 2010. Mahyar has already been interviewed and showcased by Amordad and Beresad in Iran because he produced a music album titled: YEK (One) and was the first Persian minority singer in Iran to be licensed by the Islamic Government of Iran to sing.

What got my attention about Mahyar is not just his talent in music but also his deep affection for our Zarathushti faith, tradition and heritage. This inspired me to conduct this interview with the hope that you will support his work and aspirations with a Zarathushti gusto.

**Meher:** What got you interested in music in spite of being a student of Microbiology?

**Mahyar:** As a child, my mom used to take me to Pire Sabz, Pire Naraki and Pire Herisht, where she used to entertain people with her artistic abilities of playing DAF and singing. That sparked a love for music in me. My father bought me a musical keyboard when I was 11 and registered me for Piano lessons. That's when I got involved in music. In addition to music, I have also had a keen interest in the field of health sciences.

**Meher:** It is good to note that you have had parents who supported your passion for music. How did they influence you towards learning about

## BETWEEN THE COVERS



### *Bestoor — a zoroastrian sensation*

Bestoor was listed among the “Most Popular Singers” on Radio Javan within the first two days after his official music video “Didane To” was debuted. His song has also been favorably showcased on Iran Proud TV, Bidar TV, ONM Voice & Radio Nabz. His interview with Tehran Magazine was showcased on its cover page.

This video is a culmination of Zarathushti talent because the music, lyrics, arrangement and performance are all created by Zarathushtis. <http://www.radiojavan.com/videos/video/bestoor-didane-to>

Bestoor is the son of Dr. Kurosh and Margit Behizadeh from Kerman, Iran. He has performed at the California Zoroastrian Center, Westminster, California, USA on numerous occasions. Besides being a singer, he has also acted in the Iranian film Milad and hosted a TV show Cravate on Tamasha in the United States.

Blessed with a gifted voice, he has a promising future in the music industry.

***A detailed interview with Bestoor will follow in the next issue.***

***Submitted By: Meher Amalsad, Westminster, California, USA***

## OZCF - Annual Natak a Big Success!

More than 400 members of Toronto's Gujarati community roared with non-stop laughter on Saturday June 4th, 2011 when the *Toronto Parsi Nataak Group* successfully performed “*Sasoo No Suntaap*”

The show opened with the Toronto Parsi Drama Group's standard benediction by Khorshid Jobani laying a garland of flowers over a portrait of Zarathushtra, over the strains of Richard Strauss' Also Spake Zarathustra. Then the laughs started even before *Sasoo No Suntaap* began: the emcees set the comedic tone with a humorous opening.

This comedy of errors is set in the home of Pervin (***Jasmine Wadia***) and Rustom (***Jal Panthaky***). Pervin's brother Jimmy, (***Porus Pastakia***) lives with them, and Jimmy has been living a lie; not surprisingly, he wants it hidden. Meanwhile, Pervin's domineering, ever-suspicious mother Naju (***Meher Panthaky***) arrives for a visit with her henpecked husband, Phiroze (***Sam Gazdar***), with Pervin's sister Coomi (***Tazeen Cooper***) -- a non Hindi-speaking, self-described Bollywood star. Well, the visiting members of this dysfunctional family also have a secret which they want to keep from the other side. It's this constant battle for secrecy which forms the basis of the comedy in “*Sasoo*.”

Other memorable characters include ***Shirin Chaturvedi's*** Dolly the Maid, who serves as the lynchpin behind Jimmy's subterfuge, Dr. Madon (***Firdosh Balsara***): a dilettante and Jack-Of-All-Trades-And-Master-Of-None, trying to get Rustom to invest in one of his half-baked schemes for easy money. He enlists real Bollywood starlet Vanita Chopra (***Aban Vazir***) to help out Coomi. Finally, Detective Pavri (***Fredoon Golwala***) tries to sort out this whole sordid mess. What the audience came to see was what they got and then some: 3 hours of serotonin-inducing belly-laughs!

The characters were caricatures of every Parsi stereotype you know, without being overly broad or campy, with wonderful performances by all cast members, including veterans and new members.





## FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA (FEZANA)

Registered address: 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521 USA

Administrator: Zenobia Damania admin@fezana.org tel 630-468-2705 ;

www.fezana.org

### FEZANA OFFICERS

President: Bomi Patel, 4296 Mountcastle Way, San Jose, CA 95136, Tel: 408-264-4395, bomifezana@yahoo.com

Vice-President: Katayun Kapadia, 33, preamble Drive, Mt Laurel, NJ 08054,

Tel 856-722-1030 kkatayun@msn.com

Treasurer: Ratan P Mistry, 1258, Water Lily Way, San Jose, CA 95129 USA

Tel: 408-642-1201. ratanmistry@hotmail.com

Secretary: Nahid Dashtaki, 12851 Longden St, Garden Grove, CA 92845 USA. Tel 714 390-4838. ndashtaki@gmail.com,

Asst. Secretary: Shiraz Italia, 8191 Bowcock Road, Richmond, BC. V6Y 1C1 Tel 604 274-4973 shizaitalia@hotmail.com

### FEZANA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Zoroastrian Association of Alberta, (ZAA): President: Neelum Austin, 316-30 McHugh Court N.E. Calgary, Alberta

T2E 7X3 Tel 403-271-1273

bapajji@telus.net

Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (ZSBC): Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 8900 Halifax St., Burnaby, BC V5B 2R5, Canada, Tel: 604-420-3500, President: Homi Italia, Tel: 604-438-2076 Homiitalia@hotmail.com

Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation (OZCF): 4244 Taffey Crescent, Mississauga, ON L5L 2J2, President Jal Panthaky Tel: 905-568-4946, jal\_panthaky@yahoo.ca

Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO): Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr, 3590 Bayview Avenue, Willowdale, ON M2M 3S6, Tel: 416-733-4586, President: Daraius Bharucha, Tel: 905-427-3177, dbharuc593@rogers.com

Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (ZAQ): President: Faranak Firoozi, 4220 Melrose, Montreal, Que, Canada, H4A 2S4 Tel 514-486-6408 farankfiroozi@yahoo.com

California Zoroastrian Center (CZC):

8952 Hazard Avenue, Westminster, CA 92683, Tel: 714-893-4737 info@czc.org

President: Shiva Khorshidian; Rep Dr Sohrab Salamatipour

Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman (TMZA): President: Tahamton Aresh, Tel: 949-759-0519.

Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC): President: Nazneen Spliedt, Tel: 650-624-8888, nazehler@aol.com

Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC) President Vira Burjor Santoke, 19071 Bikini Lane,

Huntington Beach, CA 92646 Tel 714-963-1301, bvhm.santoke@verizon.net

Persian Zoroastrian Organization (California) (PZO): 10468 Crothers Road, San Jose, CA 95127, Tel: 408-251-7408, President: Hooshang Mehrshahi, hooshang@pzo.info; contact@pzo.info

Zoroastrian Association of Rocky Mountain (Colorado) (ZARM): President: Neville Rustonjee, Neville\_rust@hotmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (District of Columbia and Washington DC suburbs) (ZAMWI): President Mehrdad Aidun: zamwi\_president@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF): President: Jahabux B .Daruwala, Tel: 305-792-4225, Address: 21050 Point Place, Apt. # 1205 Aventura, FL 33180 jbdaruwala@aol.com

Atlanta Zarathushti Association (Georgia) (AZA): Representative: Cyrus Aidun : Tel 404-894-6645 Cyrus.aidun@me.gatech.edu; Farzan Bharucha, President,

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (Illinois) (ZAC-Chi): Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Hinsdale, IL 60521, Tel: 630-789-1983, President: Dinaz Weber Tel 630-830-3430 kenanddina@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Kansas (ZAK): President: Daryoush Jahanian, P.O. Box 30011, Kansas City, MO 64112

Tel 630-334-4084 djahanian@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana (ZAKOI): President: Abad Kelawala, Columbus, ohio akelawala@yahoo.com; www.zakoi.org

Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area (Massachusetts) (ZAGBA): President: Aspi Engineer, 2B Prescott Way, Woburn, MA 01801 Tel: 781- 938-0195, aspidengineer@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Michigan (ZAOM) President: Neville Bugli, 42729 Wimbledon Way, Novi, Michigan MI 48377 Tel 248-926-9626 nbugli@sbcglobal.net

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania, New Jersey & Delaware (ZAPANJ): President Freney Ranji, 726 White Horse Pike, Collingswood, NJ 08017 Tel: 856-854-2251 dinyar@msn.com

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (NY City Area) (ZAGNY): 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, NY 10901, Tel: 845-362-2104, President: Gev Nentin 631-462-0763. nentin@optonline.net

Iranian Zoroastrian Association (New York City Area) (IZA): 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, NY 10901, Tel: 845-362-2104, President :Shirin Kosravi, Tel: 631-470-0884, sherrykiamane@hotmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania (ZAPA): President Sarosh Sepai, Tel 724-234-2228 president@za-pa.org Rep Houtoxi Contractor, Tel 412-367-2948. secretary@za-pa.org

Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (Texas) (ZANT): President Zal Parakh Tel: 214-616-1484, zal\_parakh@yahoo.com president@zant.org; www.zant.org

Zoroastrian Association of Houston (Texas) (ZAH): 8787 West Airport Blvd, Houston, TX 77071, Representative: Sarosh Collector, Tel: 713-882-8465, scollector@cdadvisorsinc.com

Zoroastrian Society of Washington State (ZSWS): President: Mitra Khosraviani, Tel: 425-945-1221, zsws1@yahoo.com

### FEZANA CORRESPONDING MEMBERS (SMALL GROUPS)

Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada (ZAAC): Chair: Shirin Jagosh, Tel: 902-835-5221, sjagosh@hotmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Arizona (ZAAZ): President: Perseus B. Munshi, Tel: 480-705-4797 pbmunshi@gmail.com

San Diego Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Hoshang Khambatta, Tel: 858-450-0190, khambatta@sbcglobal.net

Central Florida Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Sarvar Demehri, Tel: 407-767-9799, sarvar1@aol.com

Zarathushti Association of Tampa Bay (ZATAMBAY): Chair: Soli Dastur, Tel: 941-351-2240, dastur@comcast.net

Zarathushti Association of New Orleans: (ZANO): Chair Rohinton & Armin Tarapore, Tel: 504-443-1929, rktarapore@cox.net

Minnesota Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Jehangir Rudina, Tel: 952-898-2980, jerudina@aol.com

St. Louis Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Persis and Mino Mehta, Tel: 314-569-1828, pmhelix@yahoo.com

Cleveland Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Kamal Mehta, Tel: 440-944-1181, knmokersi@aol.com

Zoroastrian Center of Austin Texas: (zcat): Chair: Ketty & Aspi Wadia, Tel: 512-263-3131, kwadia@austin.it.com

Zoroastrian Association of Virginia: (To be ratified): chair: Rummy Mohta, Tel: 804-639-6977, richtrvl@aol.com



## Subscription Rates (US dollars)

	US	Canada	Overseas (Air)
1 year	US \$ 25	Can \$25	US \$ 50
2 years	US \$ 45	Can \$45	US \$ 90
3 years	US \$ 70	Can \$70	US \$120

**Single Issue:** \$5 plus shipping (US - \$5.00, Canada - \$5.00, Overseas Air-only - \$15 for 1 to 3 copies). **Full set of archival Journals**, 1991 - 2010: \$300 plus shipping. "Periodical Rate" may take upto 2 months (for UK, Europe) and upto 4 months (for Asia, Australia, Far East).

## Advertising Rates (in US dollars)

To advertise contact: Dolly Dastoor Tel 450-656-2036 e.mail dollydastoor@sympatico.ca

	Full page	Half page	Quarter Page	1/8 Page
Per Issue	US\$200	US\$100	US\$ 50	US\$ 30
Per 4 Issues	US\$600	US\$300	US\$150	US\$100

Covers: Inside front \$350; Inside back \$300; Outside \$500. **Colour extra**

## FEZANA JOURNAL Subscription/Advertisement/ Sponsorship Rates

### Sponsor an Issue

To sponsor an issue of the Journal, contact

Dolly Dastoor [see left].

**Individual Sponsorship is \$1500**

**Group Sponsorship is \$300 each**  
(five or more sponsors)

All sponsors will be duly  
acknowledged in the Journal.

**All amounts are in US dollars**

**FEZANA Journal depends on your  
subscriptions, donations, advertisements and sponsorship**

**Please check your address label for your subscription status  
Renew for multiple years to avoid book-keeping**

----- Cut Here -----

## FEZANA JOURNAL Subscription/Donation/Address Change Form

Make additional copies as needed. Enclose check or money order **in US dollars**, payable to "FEZANA", and mail to: **Kershaw Khumbatta, 1455 Hwy.6 South, Sugarland, TX 77478, /Fax Credit Card orders to 281-313-8036 (after 6 pm). journalsubscription@yahoo.com** enquiries/updates contact: **Arnavaz Sethna, email: asethna@comcast.net, tel: 281-499-1832.**

Total enclosed (US funds only):

Subscription: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ years  
☐ airmail

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Fund\*

Total amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* Funds are: General, Welfare, Critical Assistance, Religious Education, Scholarship and Fezana Journal

Cardholder authorizes payment by issuer identified below, and agrees to comply with the obligations set forth in the Cardholder agreement with the issuer. Only Visa or Mastercard accepted.

☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD

Expiration date (Mo/Yr): \_\_ / \_\_

Cardholder's Signature. Cardholder's name (Fill out  
(reqd for credit card purchase) address on credit card below).

Billing address on credit card, if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_

### WHEN RENEWING

Please write legibly your name, the credit card #, and the expiry date

Personal Subscription ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Gift Subscription ☐ New ☐ Renewal  
(Fill out donor's name and address in box above)

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Dr \_\_\_\_\_  
Last name First name

Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt.No. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/PIN \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Fax. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check here if this is an address change



Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation  
(Requester Publications Only)

1. Publication Title <b>FEZANA JOURNAL</b>	2. Publication Number <b>1068-2376</b>	3. Filing Date <b>09/30/11</b>
4. Issue Frequency <b>QUARTERLY</b>	5. Number of Issues Published Annually <b>FOUR</b>	6. Annual Subscription Price (if any) <b>\$25.00</b>
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®) <b>8787 W. AIRPORT BLVD. HOUSTON, TX 77071</b>		Contact Person <b>HOSHANG SETHNA</b> Telephone (include area code) <b>281-499-1832</b>
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer) <b>5750 JACKSON ST. HINSDALE, IL 60521-5109</b>		
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)		
Publisher (Name and complete mailing address) <b>FEZANA 5750 JACKSON ST HINSDALE, IL 60521-5109</b>		
Editor (Name and complete mailing address) <b>DOLLY DASTOOR 3765 MALO BROSSARD, QC J4Y 1B4 CANADA</b>		
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address)		

10. Owner (Do not leave names and address each individual own) <b>FEZANA</b>	13. Publication Title <b>FEZANA JOURNAL</b>	14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below
	15. Extent and Nature of Circulation <b>USA, CANADA, U.K., AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, FRANCE, GERMANY, HONG KONG, INDIA, PAKISTAN, UAE, SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA</b>	
	a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	<b>1248</b>
	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	<b>832</b>
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	<b>0</b>
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	<b>0</b>
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail®)	<b>129</b>
	c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15c (1), (2), (3), and (4))	<b>961</b>
	d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	
	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	<b>65</b>
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	<b>0</b>
	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail)	<b>32</b>
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	<b>0</b>
	e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15c (1), (2), (3), and (4))	<b>97</b>
	f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)	<b>1058</b>
	g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))	<b>190</b>
	h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)	<b>1248</b>
	i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)	<b>90.83</b>

diately followed by the corporation, give the address as well as those of

**21-5109**

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership  
☐ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the \_\_\_\_\_ issue of this publication.  
☐ Publication not required.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner  
**Dolly Dastoor Ph.D.**  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
Date  
**September 12/2011**

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).