

FEZANA

SPRING BAHAR 1384 AY 3753 Z

VOL. 29, NO. 1 MARCH/SPRING 2015

JOURNAL

Fravadin – Ardibehesht – Khordad 1384 AY (Fasli) • Avan – Adar – Dae 1384 AY (Shenshai) • Adar – Dae – Behman 1384 AY (Kadimi)

NOROOZ PIROOZ BAD NOROOZ MUBARAK

NAZC Congress: Faith and Unity
Five young mobeds at a panel discussion of
Achievements and Challenges



PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

Copyright ©2015 Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America



FEZANA JOURNAL

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

Vol 29 No 1 March / Spring 2015, Bahar 1384 AY 3753 Z



34



39



44



82

02 Editorial Dolly Dastoor	49 Zor footprints on the Chinese Silk Road- Jenny Rose	81 Informal Discussion -D Sheffield and Y Vevaina
03 Editorial The President	53 Zarathuhshhtis: Days of Future Past A Behi & R Mehri	82 Behind the scene P. Choksey
05 FEZANA welfare Report	57 Parsi Family Study Vorungati	84 Powerful women of Ancient Iran, Fariba Prighaibi
7 SCHOLARSHIPS	59 Jungalwalla Memorial Lecture	88 Entertainment in Pictures xx
30 CONGRESS NAZA 2014, Behind the Scene T Damania	64 Behind the scene S. Gandhi	91 Awards at NAZA 2014
34 Retrospective: N.Gandhi	67 Children Congress .V Kaikobad and N Dotiwala	95 In the News
37 Retrospective B. Tata	71 Poster session T Pourbahrami	100 Interfaith and Interralia
39 Behind the scene- V. Santoke	73 Pre-congress weekend; . Khushehehr Italia	102 Personal Profiles
41 Keynote Welcome N. Godrej	77 Challenges and Achievements of Young Mobeds . S Dastur	105 Milestones and Matrimonials
44 Keynote Address Parisa Khosravi		107 Obituary
46 Holistic Health Panel		

Editor in Chief: Dolly Dastoor, editor(@)fezana.org

Technical Assistant: Coomi Gazdar

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

Language Editor: Douglas Lange

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

Cover Design: Feroza Fitch, ffitch(@)lexicongraphics.com

Publications Chair: Behram Pastakia bpastakia(@)aol.com

Columnists: Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi: rabidis(@)gmail.com; Teenaz Javat: teenazjavat(@)hotmail.com; Mahrukh Motafram: mahrukham83(@)gmail.com
Copy Editors: Vahishta Canteenwalla, Yasmin Pavri, Nazneen Khumbatta

Subscription Managers: Arnavaz Sethna: ahsethna(@)yahoo.com; Kershaw Khumbatta: Arnavaz Sethna(@)yahoo.com



Photo Courtesy
Jo Ann Dastur
See page 80

Fravardin – Ardibehesht – Khordad	1384 AY (Fasli)
Avan - Adar – Dae	1384 AY (Shenshai)
Adar- Dae- Behman	1384 AY (Kadimi)

SUMMER 2015:

Transmission of Zarathushti Values
 Guest editors Hovi Shroff and Fariba Prighaibi
 Collaborative issue with Chehrenama (CZC)

*Opinions expressed in the FEZANA Journal do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA or members of the editorial board.
 All submissions to the FEZANA JOURNAL become the property of the publication and may be reproduced in any form.*

Published at Regal Press, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

FEZANA Journal Vol 29, No 1 ISBN 1068-2376

www.fezana.org

(USPS 021-495) published quarterly by FEZANA 8615 Meadowbrook Dr., Burr Ridge, IL 60527. 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, 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527.

Editorial

A Word from the Editor

OF ICONS, GENIUSES AND MAVERICKS

The Seventeenth North American Congress in LA was a great success. It brought an unprecedented attendance of 750 people from 14 different countries as far apart as Argentina and Vanuatu Island. Of course the biggest contingent was from USA (691) followed by Canada (76). Some of the statistics are very encouraging. Almost 247 were first timers, and 525 of the delegates were under the age of 55. This bodes well for the future of the community on this continent.

Our Zoroastrian icons, Nadir Godrej and Parisa Khosravi gave impressive and thoughtful welcome address and keynote address respectively. Some masterful presentations were given by scholars, Zane Dalal, Jenny Rose, Yuhan Vevaina, Dan Sheffield. The health panel had some very powerful medical luminaries of North America. The FEZANA awards winners were quintessential figures for the community.

This congress introduced new programs and created new legacies. There was something for all age groups: a children's congress ably managed by Vehishta Kaikobad and Naasha Dotivala, a pre congress youth event, the brainchild of Khushchehr Italia. The poster session of drawings on religious themes by children, an innovative idea of Trity Pourbahrami, the teen track, another first for this congress, organized by Shazneen Gandhi. But for me the show-stopper of the congress was the panel discussion of five young mobeds on the achievement and the challenges they face in their daily lives and in the community. This panel was well orchestrated by Ervad Soli Dastur and Hutoxshi Contractor. With such articulate young mobeds the future is safe. (See cover for the photo of this panel)

And then there were **maverick** sessions: the children's congress ended with a puppy party and finger licking ice cream meant for children but enjoyed by parents as well. The local talent of our young artists, Persian and Parsi, put on a fantastic entertainment, dances and songs, "nataks" and the "maja masti" sessions.

Since you have probably read about the congress in social media, on You tube, in our sister publications, the Journal will not repeat all. Instead we asked Arzan Sam Wadia to go behind the scenes and interview some key persons to find out what makes the congress tick. The articles featured in this issue are grouped around the interviews with four people



with emphasis on our **FUTURE**, our next generation.

The congress lived up to its theme of **Faith and Unity**. The panels were judiciously chosen of both Iranian and Parsi Zarathushtis and the entertainment and cuisine was from both cultures. For once it felt like a big family, with no divisions as in the past. This speaks volumes of the vision and skill of the organizers.

What a joy it has been putting this issue together. It would not have been possible without the co-operation and responsiveness of all the contributors. The list of scholarships and scholarship winners is growing each year and their achievements are a matter of pride for all of us.

So as we start our new Zarthushti year let us carry forth the momentum generated by this congress, and solidify the path of Faith and Unity.

Norooz Phirooz Bad; Norooz Mubarak

Dolly Dastoor

A Message from FEZANA President

Navroze Mubarak

Norouz Pirouz Bad

On behalf of the FEZANA Executive, I wish all Zarathushtis and their families Navroze Mubarak/ Norouz Pirouz Bad. May the New Year bring peace and joy to all as we continue to work towards a knowledgeable and unified community in North America and worldwide.

The XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress in Los Angeles, California from December 29-31, 2014 had an array of interesting and informative sessions that showcased the theme of this Congress: **Faith and Unity**. The Program Committee had collated an array of dynamic speakers who challenged the intellect of the congress attendees with lectures as well as interactive panel discussions on topics related to our religion, history, culture and contemporary existence. For the first time, the Congress offered a “Teen Track” consisting of interactive sessions, and engaged teens in learning about their religion and culture using the tools and technology prevalent in their everyday lives. The youth and teen delegates had their smart phones/devices and enthusiastically participated in the interactive workshop style sessions that facilitated an immediate exchange of ideas and opinions from the audience.

This Congress exemplified the joint efforts of two stalwart member associations of FEZANA: The Zoroastrian Association of California and the California Zoroastrian Center. I thank the members of both organizations for working together to plan, organize and conduct such a memorable Congress. I would like to thank the Co-Chairs of this Congress: DhunMai Dalal, Khushroo Lakdawalla and Darayus Mistry, the various committee heads and all the dedicated volunteers for their long hours of hard work, commitment and dedication to make this Congress a SUCCESS.

One of the important goals of this Congress was to facilitate friendships among Zoroastrian youth, to catch up with old friends and make new ones. It was a pleasure to see the adults, seniors and youth heartily enjoy the social events at the Congress that reflected the entertainment style and social traditions of the cultures that have nurtured us: Persian, Indian and American.

Editorial



The FEZANA session had twenty FEZANA stalwarts including myself brief the delegates on the status of FEZANA and its activities. Committee chairs gave status updates of what each committee did. The session concluded with an invitation to the audience to participate in FEZANA activities both as participants and in positions of organizing and volunteering.

Delegates were treated to a red carpet experience as only Los Angeles could offer. We all had experiences at this Congress that will help us continue on our journey to nurture our faith and work with communal unity in North America and worldwide, to preserve our identity and history and forge new beginnings to a bright and glorious future.

Katayun Kersi Kapadia

President, FEZANA

Calendar of Festivals

Calendar of Festivals		MARCH 2015 to SEPTEMBER 2015	
FRAVARDEGAN/PHANJEH/HAMAPATHMEDAYEM Gahambar			
<i>Five Gatha Days</i>		Monday March 16 - Friday , March 20	(F)
CHAR-SHAMBE SOORI (Heralding the New Year)			
<i>Tuesday Prior to Naurooz</i>		Tuesday, March 17	(F)
NAUROOZ or JAMSHEDI NAUROOZ (New Year)		Saturday, March 21	(F)
<i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd</i>		Sunday July 19	(K)
		Tuesday August 18	(S)
AVA ARDVISOR NU PARAB		Monday, February 23	(K)
<i>Mah Avan, Roz Avan</i>		Wednesday, March 25	(S)
JASHNE ARDIBESHTGAN		Wednesday , April 22	(F)
<i>Mah Ardibesht, Roz Ardibehesht</i>		Wednesday, August 20	(K)
		Saturday, September 19	(S)
ATASH-NU-PARAB		Tuesday, March 24	(K)
<i>Mah Adar, Roz Adar,</i>		Thursday , April 23	(S)
MAIDYOZAREM GAHAMBAR		Thursday, April 30 - Monday, May 4	(F)
<i>Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Khorshed-Dae-pa-Meher</i>		Friday, August 28-Tuesday, September 1	(K)
		Sunday Septemebr 27-Thursday October 1	(S)
ZARATHUSHT-NO-DISO (Death anniversary of Asho Zarathushtra)			
<i>Mah Dae, Roz, Khorshed</i>		Saturday, April 25	(K)
		Monday, May 25	(S)
DAE MAH NU JASHAN			
<i>Mah Dae, Roz Fravardin</i>		Sunday, May 3	(K)
		Tuesday, June 2	(S)
MAIDHYAREM GAHAMBAR			
<i>Mah Dae, Roz Meher-Bahram</i>		Thursday, April 30 - Monday, May 4	(K)
		Saturday, May 30 - Wednesday, June 3	(S)
PIR-E-SABZ Festival			
<i>Mah Khordad, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>		Sunday, June 14 -Thursday, June 18.	(F)
PIR-E-BANU Festival			
<i>Mah Tir, Roz Meher-Bahram</i>		Saturday, July 4 - Wednesday, July 8	(F)
MAIDYOSHEM GAHAMBAR			
<i>Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed-Dae pa-Meher</i>		Monday, June 29 - Friday, July 3	(F)
JASHNE TIRGAN			
<i>Mah Tir, Roz Tir</i>		Wednesday, July 1	(F)
FRAVARDINGAN/MUKTAD/HAMAPATHMEDAYEM Gahambar		Monday March 16-Friday March 20	(F)
<i>Five Gatha Days</i>		Tuesday, July 14 - Saturday, July 18	(K)
<i>Five Gatha Days</i>		Thur August 13-Monday August 17 (Pateti)	(S)
KHORDAD SAL (Birth anniversary of Zarathushtra)			
<i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Khordad</i>		Thursday, March, 26	(F)
		Friday, July 24	(K)
		Sunday, August 23	(S)
FRAVARDIN JASHAN			
<i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin</i>		Wednesday, April 8	(F)
		Thursday, August 6	(K)
		Saturday, September 5	(S)

S=Shenshai; K=Kadmi; F=Fasli)

“The greatest good you can do for another is not just share your riches,
 but to reveal to him his own.”

Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881)

FEZANA WELFARE REPORT
FEZANA WELFARE COMMITTEE

Houtoxi Contractor, Co-chair

huty.contractor@gmail.com


Hosi Mehta, Co-chair

hosimehta@aol.com


Freyaz Shroff, Co-chair

freyaz@kumiv.com

We wish our readers, donors, helpers a healthy, happy, contented, and prosperous Navroze—may your Faith be always bigger than your Fears.

Life is so delicate and precious, when everything is going well we take it for granted, we live like we are immortal, we forget that it is only our Fravashi that is immortal, and our bodies do get old, weak and need extra care.

Life can change in a split second, when something goes wrong in our body, a few missed heartbeats, a blood clot in the wrong place, a fall... These incidents do not just change our life but the lives of all around us, our dependents, our friends, and our co-workers.

Most of the requests our welfare committee receives are related to health problems. So when we wish you good health, we wish so much more.

We are blessed to have a generous community, whenever we have sent out appeals we have had very good responses and the folks who receive that help are always so grateful that we have a caring, compassionate community.

Most of us love to help for the right cause but never feel that one day we could be on the receiving end. However, the unexpected can happen to all of us, circumstances can change. Giving and receiving are two hands, when we give, we receive so much more. That is the way of nature; that is the way of life. A river is beautiful, pristine, and clean when it flows but, when it stops flowing, it gets stagnant, dirty, and smelly. The same goes for wealth and all that we have.

Is this not a different way of asking to donate to the welfare fund? We all feel good when we can make the life of others easier.

Every month we get appeals, we verify them to the best of our ability and find a way to help, sometimes it is monetary, sometimes it is guidance in the right direction and sometimes it is just lending a patient ear.

We thank Ahura Mazda for keeping us on the giving end and we thank all our donors for supporting all we do.

TEACHING ZOROASTRAINISM: TEACHING THE 21st CENTURY LEARNER-NEW CURRICULA, NEW TECHNIQUES

Daraius Bharucha, chair of the FEZANA Religious Education Committee presented the first comprehensive Curriculum Document for Religious Education Programs for students from ages 6 to 16 at the XVII the North American Congress in Los Angeles, December 2014.

The Curriculum was authored by Daraius Bharucha; OCT and Edited by Dr Lovji Cama.

The Zarathushti Religious Studies course introduces students to an exploration of the Zarathushti Religion as it is practiced around the world. It attempts to inculcate and provide students with an awareness of the nature, place, and function of religion in identity formation. The course also endeavours to equip students with developing critical thinking skills that help them to make meaning of their beliefs, practices and culture lessons

The course comes with a matrix of 6 strands to help in class planning

- 1 Origin, History, Mythology, Legends
- 2 Beliefs, Rituals and Practices
- 3 Prayers, Language and Sacred Texts
- 4 Calendars, Festivals and Celebrations
- 5 Living with a Contemporary Manifestations
- 6 Research Inquiry and Communications skills

The comprehension curriculum and corresponding program planning matrix is available on the FEZANA website www.fezana.org. This is the first step in formalizing religious education on this continent.

BHARUCHA BAUG EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
APPEAL RECEIVED
FROM J.N. PITHAWALA, PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIAITON
TO DONATE TO THEIR EDUCATION AWARD PROGRAM WHICH
RECOGNIZES THE
ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE BAUG,
TO ENCOURAGE THEM
TO REACH GREATER ACADEMIC HEIGHTS EACH YEAR.

For more information bbmbra@gmail.com or call

Mumbai 011 91 22 2670 1544



FEZANA Scholarships

EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS SCHOLARSHIP (EXISS)

THE WINNERS FOR THE 2014 SCHOLARSHIPS ARE

Natasha Irani, an accomplished tennis player from Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Aurad Kamkar an accomplished table tennis player from Los Gatos, California, US.

The FEZANA Excellence In Sports Scholarship (EXISS) Fund is now accepting applications for 2015-2016 year. We encourage you to apply for 2015 EXISS scholarships.

The objective of the Excellence in Sports Scholarship (EXISS) Fund is to provide financial support to young Zarathushtis (between the ages of 10-30, living in North America) who are performing exceptionally and at highly recognized levels in any sport. The purpose of the scholarship is to enable the recipients to get world-class training and/or study with experts in their field and thus fine tune and enhance their talent and capabilities. The deadline for applications is Friday, May 29th, 2015.

If you or someone you know may benefit from this scholarship, we encourage you to apply. For more details, please visit << <http://www.fezana.org/exiss-fund> >> or contact Niloofar Balsara at exissfund@fezana.org.

We thank Sheroy Dadachanji for chairing this committee and thank him for his contribution. The new chair will be Niloofar Balsara.

Niloofar Balsara is a resident of Vancouver, Canada and is the wife of Moobed Firdos Balsara. Her husband and son (Arzan Balsara) have served the community in Vancouver since the past 14 years. An HR professional, she is the Head of Talent at HSBC Bank, Canada. Niloofar is also a published author of Children's books and loves reading and traveling. We welcome Niloofar to the FEZANA family as Chair of the FEZANA Excellence in Sports Scholarship (EXISS).

Moobed Faridooon Zardoshty Religion Education Scholarship

This FEZANA scholarship, set up by Moobed Zardoshty's daughters and administered by the FEZANA Education, Scholarship and Conference Committee is awarded to any Zarthusti student studying for a graduate degree in Zoroastrianism at a credited university. The award is renewable for three years.

Students interested in applying for the scholarship should contact Dr Lovji Cama to obtain the necessary application form. Applications may be made any time during the year and the scholarship approval process will take about two months.

*Dr. Lovji Cama, Chair, FEZANA Education, Scholarship and Conference Committee,
ldcama@gmail.com 201-569-7359*





FEZANA Scholarships

FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS (2015-2016)

Applications are invited for the

FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI (MMK) ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE - THE FEZANA SCHOLAR.

FEZANA 25th ANNIVERSARY ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

MORVARID GUV ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

PURVEZ AND ABAN RUSTOMJI ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

BANOOBAI AND MANECKSHAW KAPADIA (BMK) ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

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

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Scholarships for the academic year 2015-2016 will be awarded in September 2015.

ELIGIBILITY:

Applicants must complete the application form and provide documentation for:

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

AWARD CRITERIA:

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

The Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowed Scholarship of \$5000 and The 25th Anniversary FEZANA Scholarship will be awarded to post graduate students for scholastic excellence.

The Purvez and Aban Rustomji Endowed Scholarship of \$5000 will be awarded to qualified undergraduate student who demonstrates financial need and academic achievement.

The Morvarid Guiv Endowed Scholarships of \$1000 will be awarded to one graduate and one undergraduate student who demonstrates financial need together with academic excellence.

The Banoobai and Maneckshaw Kapadia Endowed Scholarship of \$2000 will be awarded for undergraduate studies to a student with good academic standing who demonstrates financial need.

APPLICATION:

Application forms are available from the FEZANA website at

www.fezana.org or from Dr Dolly Dastoor academicscholarship@fezana.org

Completed application forms should be sent electronically by July 15, 2015 to

academicscholarship@fezana.org



FEZANA Scholarships

FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS—2014

Education is one of the most important predictors—usually, in fact, the most important predictor—of many forms of political and social engagement—from voting to chairing a local committee to hosting a dinner party to trusting others. R. Putnam

Education and training continue to fuel the engine of social mobility and contribute to social cohesion and integration in our ever more diverse societies and cultures. The benefits of education go beyond the economic returns---contributing also to better health, citizenship, and lower crime rates.

Investment in our youth is an investment in the future of the Zarathushti community. The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason to hope. You have given hope to our youth. And your faith and trust in the FEZANA Academic Scholarship program by establishing endowment funds is sincerely appreciated. Thank you.

Your continued financial support in this economically difficult period and your encouragement is of the utmost importance to maintain this program and sustain the hope of the next generation.

Dolly Dastoor Ph.D
Chair, FEZANA Academic Scholarship program

MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP—THE FEZANA SCHOLAR (\$5,000)

FARIN BAKHTIARI

California State University, Northridge (CSUN), Master's in General Experimental Psychology



I was born in Kerman, Iran and moved to the United States with my family five years ago. In May 2014, I graduated with honors with a bachelor's degree in psychology from California State University, Northridge (CSUN). Currently, I am a graduate student majoring in General Experimental Psychology at CSUN. I am a supervisor in a research lab that examines how family factors relate to young adults' development. Being interested in Zarathushti families. I have collected data from young adult (i.e., 18-30 years old) Zarathushtis (Parsi and/or Iranian origin) immigrants in the United States and Canada. Specifically, this study examines family factors (e.g., parent-child relations, family qualities), discrimination, and acculturation in relation to Zarathushti emerging adults' adjustment (e.g., depression, rumination, anxiety, happiness, stress, self-esteem, and quality of life).

My research is a part of my effort to make my visions for the Zarathushti community a reality. We need to better understand who we are and how our distinctive experiences affect our adjustment in this modern era. I want to bring more awareness about Zarathushtis to non-Zarathushti people, especially to those who interact with us. Also, by creating more awareness among non-Zarathushtis we can channel more resources (e.g., parenting education, support groups) to our community members who need it most.

I feel very fortunate for the support I have received from the Iranian and Zarathushti communities through



FEZANA Scholarships

various honors, such as the 2014 *Mahdokht Majidi Ahy Award of Excellence in Education* and 2014 *Graduation Award* by the Association of Professors and Scholars of Iranian Heritage, the 2014 *Dr. Houshang Khatibi Scholarship* by the California Zoroastrian Center, and the 2013/14 *Banoobai and Maneckshaw Kapadia Endowed Scholarship* by FEZANA. At CSUN, I have been privileged to receive the 2014/15 *Associated Students Scholarship in Honor of Jolene Koester* as well as the 2014 *Undergraduate Qualitative Research Award* by the Psychology Department.

I am especially happy and honored to be chosen as the **FEZANA Scholar of the Year for 2014-15** and to be awarded the ***Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Scholarship for Academic Excellence***. I am confident that I can give back to our community by conducting research, presenting and publishing the results in scholarly outlets (e.g., conferences, journals), and providing family life education for Zarathushti families. I am proud to be a part of the Zarathushti community that cares for the youth and supports their educational goals. (My email: farin.bakhtiari.2@my.csun.edu)

FEZANA 25th ANNIVERSARY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (\$3000)

MICHAEL HENRY

Columbia University, Medical Center, New York, Medical Student



It is an amazing honor to receive the FEZANA 25th Anniversary Scholarship. I am excited to have the support of the Zoroastrian community as I embark on this long journey to pursue a career in medicine and global health.

My interest in global health began when I traveled to Honduras during my first year of college at Penn State. We established a mobile clinic to diagnose basic conditions and hand out medications, but it quickly became apparent that our actions were not sustainable, and that many of the conditions were due to poor infrastructure and could not just be treated medically. A friend and I started the “Global Water Brigades”, and over the following years ran a number of trips to Honduras and Ghana with 85 students (and even more went in the years following our graduation) to work on sustainable water systems as long-term solutions to water borne illness. I further pursued my interest in global health by working in a laboratory studying transmission models of whooping cough, helping to design affordable ceramic water filtration units for use in East Africa, and shadowing medical students in Tanzania. This culminated in my return to Tanzania after graduation on a Fulbright Fellowship to work on a malaria research team for a year before starting medical school at Columbia University.

When I finally emerge as a doctor and practitioner of public health, I look forward to showing, through my actions, the Zoroastrian values of “Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds.” In the course of following my calling to work in underprivileged areas, I hope to be able to forge connections with younger Zoroastrians to introduce them to service opportunities; working for the greater good, even outside the Zoroastrian community, is a good way to show what our values are and increase awareness of Zoroastrianism. In the future, I like to visualize the Zoroastrian religion as reaching out to serve the world and, in the course of doing so, seeking to include people from a variety of backgrounds.

Photo above Michael Henry (left) with Dr. Lee Goldman, Dean of Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons



FEZANA Scholarships

MORVORID GUV ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (\$1000)

AZINA MEHTA

Canadian college of Naturopathic Medicine, Toronto, Third Year Graduate Student



I am extremely grateful to Fezana for awarding me the "Morvord Guiv Endowment Scholarship". This scholarship will help me in pursuing my degree in Naturopathic Medicine at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in Toronto. I am in my third year of studies as part of a four-year intensive post-graduate program; which blends modern scientific knowledge with natural and traditional forms of medicine including: acupuncture, botanical medicine, homeopathy, counselling, physical medicine, and clinical nutrition. I am excited to use my past skills in nursing, combine it with my knowledge in naturopathic medicine, and utilize both these pillars to bridge the gap between conventional and alternative medicine.

My vision for the Zarathushti community would be for it to grow further in strength and to support charitable causes. Charity to others has always been the strength of the Zarathushti community and I wish that we continue to be charitable not only to our Zarathushti brethren but also towards the larger society we live in. While our community has held a strong sense of identity in the past

and managed to preserve its religion under very trying circumstances, it is a community of dwindling numbers. Therefore, I hope in the future more people could come forward to support events to provide a good mix of social and religious gatherings in order to preserve our heritage and provide an avenue to pass it onto the future generation. Once again I thank FEZANA for their generous support.

FEZANA SCHOLARS (\$2000) GRADUATES

SHIVA GOJGINI,

University of California, Los Angeles, Doctoral Candidate, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering;



My name is Shiva Gojgini and I am honored to be one of the recipients of a FEZANA Scholarship. After completing my undergraduate and master's degree from Amir Kabir University and Sharif University in Iran, I am now a fifth year PhD student in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at the University of California, Los Angeles Henry Samuel School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. I have developed a three-dimensional presentation platform to introduce pro-vascular growth factors to their biological target thereby eliciting an increased therapeutic effect of those growth factors.

Zoroastrian youth can and should shape the future only through organizations like FEZANA that supports students and youth, like me, to achieve our goal and also to encourage us to follow their lead to be able to thrive and nourish the Zoroastrian community and become a more pronounced united community in all aspects including: art, religion, and science. I am really thankful for this opportunity that FEZANA gave me. (Shiva is also the recipient of the Vakshoori Foundation Scholarship for 2014-15).



FEZANA Scholarships

SHAHZAD BALSARA

The University of Texas – Arlington, Mechanical Engineering (MS- Thesis)



I chose Mechanical engineering as a field of study, because of the “sheer glamour that is attached to it.” Words like Mercedes Benz, Tesla, BMW, Audi, Ferrari, and Toyota have fascinated me, bringing to mind pictures of high speed, technologically advanced and highly luxurious automobiles. I have always fantasized being a part of this fantastic field of engineering. I have a Diploma and Bachelors in Mechanical Engineering from Mumbai University. Further, I believe that knowing the functional aspects of business is as important as having technical knowledge, which is why I decided to take up Masters of Management Studies/MBA. I have always maintained an A grade (+3.5 GPA). My past internship experiences played a vital role in some of the subset streams of Mechanical Engineering such as automotive, aircraft and refrigeration. Further to attaining my objective of specializing in automotive race technology, I am a full team member with the Society of Automotive Engineers (UTA-FSAE) with my university race team as a cooling system lead.

The scholarship will help me financially to support my tuition fee and in awarding me with the recognition in my community. It indeed does help boost my confidence while pursuing my course work as well as a sense of positive and supportive environment.

On completion I will endeavor to return the funds awarded to me so that they can be used for other, future deserving Zoroastrian students. As a prospective member for the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (ZANT), I will take part in events, stay connected with the community, promote and raise funds for our valuable Indian Mobeds who are not financially sound, based on my personal observations. Lastly I will definitely look forward to have a Parsi life-partner in order to preserve our community.

BEHROOZI ARIA

Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, Carolinas Campus in Spartanburg, SC, first year medical student



I am a first year medical student and also hold a degree in Chemical Engineering from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC. I worked for four years with an engineering contractor under contract with the U.S. Department of Energy.

While my past profession in engineering was rewarding, it limited the opportunity to personally connect with those who I am working to serve. I find medicine fascinating as it combines emotional, physical, and intellectual elements with aspects from subjects as far-reaching as engineering and art. Osteopathic medicine places significant emphasis on caring for the well-being of a patient not only physically, but also mentally and emotionally. This holistic view is imperative to enhance the medical practices and procedures we currently have in place. It is a mode of thinking that values the input of the patient and in turn helps them feel supported by their physician. This mindset is an extension of how I was raised in a Zarathushti household; it is a method of professional medical training that connects to our culture.

As a student doctor and future physician I will continue to let our three guiding principles help support me; having good thoughts, good deeds, and good words towards others. Our faith was conceived with the awareness that an individual's daily behavior reflects our overall belief. I am proud of my heritage and look



FEZANA Scholarships

forward to integrating my Zoroastrian values into everyday experiences as I work to serve patients from all ethnic and religious backgrounds.

UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS, PURVEZ AND ABAN RUSTOMJI ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$5000)

FARZAD SUNAWALA

Louisiana State University, Petroleum Engineering



Receiving the Purvez and Aban Rustomji Endowed Scholarship is not just a privilege, but an honor. With the birthplace of this scholarship coming out of Houston, and growing up with the Rustomji's in the joint home of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston, is just an extraordinary feeling. Most of all I am not only accepting this scholarship as a grant towards my financial expenses for my education, but to represent the ZAH. This secondary home to me has given me religious classes, volunteering opportunities, academic workshops, and a group of lifelong friends and family.

Ever since I was young, math and science have been my strongest subjects, which led me to choose a career path in engineering. Petroleum engineering is what I chose to specify in because the oil and gas industry intrigued me greatly. A petroleum engineer is employed by an oil company to design, test, and implement methods to extract petroleum products from the earth and sea floor. I have been doing extensive research on the LSU Petroleum Engineering Research and Technology Transfer Laboratory (PERTT Lab) giving me the opportunity to research and do routine maintenance on a live simulation of an oil well. LSU is the only school that gives me this opportunity, as no other school in America offers this service. I plan to graduate in four years with a B.S. in Petroleum Engineering and hope to get recruited by one of the large commercial companies such as Chevron, Exxon, BP, or ConocoPhillips.

Transfer Laboratory (PERTT Lab) giving me the opportunity to research and do routine maintenance on a live simulation of an oil well. LSU is the only school that gives me this opportunity, as no other school in America offers this service. I plan to graduate in four years with a B.S. in Petroleum Engineering and hope to get recruited by one of the large commercial companies such as Chevron, Exxon, BP, or ConocoPhillips.

KAPADIA ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$2000) FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND ACADEMIC STANDING

ZIBA COLAH,

University of Houston, Biochemistry



My name is Ziba Colah and I am pursuing a bachelors in science specified in Biochemistry at the Honors College in the University of Houston. I am studying in an eight-year program coordinated with University of Houston and Baylor College of Medicine with the goal to pursue a career in neurosurgery. I am greatly honored to receive the Banoobai and Maneckshaw Kapadia Endowment scholarship. This scholarship gives the opportunity for students like myself to excel and focus on academic work without having to worry about the financial burden of attending a university. As a member of a vibrant Zoroastrian community in Houston my vision for the community as a whole is to have a cohesive group of people dedicated to learning and understanding Zoroastrianism fully through religious texts and practice.



FEZANA Scholarships

MORVORID GUV ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$1000)

EIRAJ M ZANDI

California State University, Long Beach, CA, Political Science .



My name is Eiraj M Zandi and I am incredibly grateful for receiving the Movord Guiv Trust Endowed Scholarship. This will be of tremendous help to me in my pursuit of a degree in political science, with a concentration in global politics. But, this degree is simply the steppingstone that I will use in my long-term goal of attending law school. This scholarship will greatly help with paying for my rising tuition and textbook fees, which makes me feel very privileged and blessed to be awarded such a prestigious scholarship. My vision for the Zoroastrian community is an emphasis on growth. I envision the community at large branching out further throughout California and other states as well. I want to see the Zoroastrian community gain more members belonging to different ethnic backgrounds. This would definitely help bring more significant attention to the history and culture of the Zoroastrian religion. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the committee members of the Movord Guiv Trust Endowed Scholarship for placing their faith in me and granting me this opportunity to help further my educational goals. I will never forget the kindness and generosity that you have shown me.

FEZANA SCHOLARSHIPS UNDERGRADUATES (\$2000)

NATALIE KANGA

University of California, San Diego, Life Sciences



The FEZANA scholarship has helped grant me the opportunity to study at UC San Diego. With this community support, I will be able to pursue my dreams of combining the fields of psychology, medicine, and music to study the developing brain and how it deals with emotions and reacts to external problems. My goal is to help children through specialized counseling and medical treatment, including musical composition therapy.

My vision for our Zarthushti community is to strengthen bonds between Indian and Iranian Zoroastrians. As our generation ages and English becomes a primary and common language, I envision united functions with Iranians and Parsis.

A perfect example of how stronger ties will benefit our community is our current search for a new home for the Northern California community center and Agiary. Parsi and Iranian Zarthushtis are working together to fundraise for a space for our beloved community gatherings. My vision is to have a tighter-knit community with a new home, and my wish is to work toward a united community of Parsi and Iranian Zarthushtis.

My accomplishments include being selected as Valedictorian of my graduating class (Commencement speech link: <http://youtu.be/-tCSW1xExj0>). I received the Presidential Award for completing 100+ hours of community service in one year, the Jefferson Award for impacting the community through my work with mentally disabled children; I was elected president of Jazz Band, president/founder of Band Club when Jazz Band was discontinued, president of the California Scholarship Federation, and Captain of the Varsity Volleyball team and Club team.



FEZANA Scholarships

TINA UNWALA

Pennsylvania State University, Engineering



Receiving the FEZANA scholarship award has given me great encouragement to continue my studies at a collegiate level. The support from my Zoroastrian community has provided a means to continue my success and to take advantage of the vast opportunities available, as I plan to study engineering during my time at the Pennsylvania State University. For three years, I was the President of the Red Cross Club, as I organized fundraisers for Hurricane Sandy and Typhoon Haiyan, volunteered at local food pantries, and planned a shoe drive for Soles4Souls. I have also been designated as an AP Scholar, a member of the National Honor Society, and I have earned achievements in mathematics, music, and for an overall GPA. Currently I am an active member of the UNICEF Club, Women in Engineering Program, and the Society of Women Engineers at Penn State University.

During my next four years of study, I hope to see our Zoroastrian faith preserved and our population increased. Forming Zoroastrian organizations within the United States is an effort that has bonded our community together—young and old families have the opportunity to not only connect, but to influence the upcoming generation. We must also use the power of social media to connect the young Parsi generation, encourage discussion amongst our youth, and recapture and educate this generation on our rich, Zoroastrian history.

HOOMAN KASRAEI

Santa Monica College, Mechanical Engineering



Receiving this scholarship has brought great joy to me. It will ease the financial pressure of paying for school, allowing me to focus on work and my studies. I am working on receiving my undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering and currently plan to go to medical school afterwards. Having both engineering and medical backgrounds will allow me to be of better use to the community and the younger generations. I hope to see the community further grow and prosper, while at the same time remembering their roots by giving back. Furthermore, the Zarathushti community always has and always will treat everyone as friends, inviting everyone to embrace the culture, heritage, and cuisine.

I am originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, but moved to California for my senior year. In middle school, I was a third and fifth place National Science Olympiad Finalist. In high school, I was the senior class president, club treasurer for Technology Student Association, and the co-founder of an electric bike team. At competition, the electric bike team came in second place. I recently became a nationally certified pharmacy technician.

While in high school I took part in community-based events. I went to retirement homes and caroled during Christmas. During Halloween, I took part in festivals for children so that they could trick or treat safely. For Easter, I went to an elementary school and helped set up an Easter egg hunt. I helped people learn how to play basketball and gave advice whenever they had questions.



FEZANA Scholarships

THE PERFORMING AND CREATIVE ARTS SCHOLARSHIPS (P&CAS)

The 2014 Performing and Creative Arts Scholarship (P&CAS) have been awarded to two talented individuals. Each will receive \$1000 to further their education and training in their field of study.



Burjis Cooper

BURGIS COOPER I study Music Education and minor in Music Composition at the University of Delaware. I chose this field because of my own love for music and because I saw the many tangible benefits from a good arts education. In my schools, I had the privilege of having an excellent choral and instrumental education which increased my sensitivity to beauty and to other cultures. It pushed me to see all subject areas as another art waiting to be discovered. I see many low income schools not having music programs as good as what I was fortunate enough to have; I hope to make a large part of my mission as a teacher figuring out low-cost, high-result ways to involve children from difficult socio-economic backgrounds in music. And, while my training and greatest love lies in classical music, I understand through my work as a media composer and recording engineer, there is more than one way to become in tune with the world of music. I hope to encourage students to involve themselves in all types of creation. In a time of constant consumption, I love to help people create. burjis@udel.edu



Khushnuma Savai

KHUSHNUMA SAVAI I am in the Masters of Fine Arts in Visual Effects program at Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, Georgia, specializing in integrating Computer Generated characters to a Live- Action plate. I was born in Surat, Gujarat and obtained my Bachelors in Computer Application from Sinhgad College of Science, Pune, Maharashtra, India. Being passionate about arts, I simultaneously received my advanced diploma in 3D Animation and Visual Effects from Maya Academy of Advanced Cinematic (MAAC) in Pune and a Post Graduate Diploma in Computer Application from Sikkim Manipal University (by distance learning) before coming to the United States for my Master's in Visual Effects at SCAD.

It has been an amazing experience here. I was selected as a Student Volunteer at SIGGRAPH 2013, which is the biggest conference for the Computer Graphics industry and then, in 2014, I was selected as a Team Leader

for the same conference, which was a great opportunity and honor. I am really grateful to FEZANA for considering me as one of the scholarship recipients for the Performing and Creative Arts scholarship and helping me to get a Masters degree in a field of my liking. kpsavai@gmail.com

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2015

P&CAS is accepting applications for Scholarships for the year 2015. This scholarship is open to all US and Canadian residents who are studying in the field of the performing and creative arts (music, drama, stage craft, literature, poetry, and fine arts like painting and sculpture). If you are studying in any of these fields, please apply for this scholarship.

Applications are available on www.fezana.org and due by July 1, 2015. For additional information contact Nazneen Spieldt, Chair, P&CAS committee at 650-624-8888 or nazehler@aol.com

We thank **Sherazade Mehta** for her significant contributions as chair of the P&CAS committee for several years, we welcome **Nazneen Spieldt** as the new Chairperson.



FEZANA Scholarships

EMMY AWARD FOR PHOTOJOURNALIST KAINAZ AMARIA

A few months ago, Kainaz Amaria of Washington D.C., and her team from NPR Visuals won a News & Documentary Emmy Award in the “New Approaches: Documentary” category for their project Planet Money Makes A T-Shirt (<http://planetmoney.com/shirt>).

The “T-Shirt Project” as her team calls it, is an interactive documentary in which they take the audience on a global journey to see and meet the people that make a simple T-Shirt. They flew drones over Mississippi; got mugged in Chittagong, Bangladesh; and met people whom they will never forget — the actual people who make our clothing. The project was also recognized for digital innovation by other journalism organizations including the Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia Award, the Scripps Howard Foundation and Pictures of the Year International. (Photo left: Kainaz with her Emmy)



Born in Mumbai, her parents migrated to the San Francisco Bay Area when she was 3 years old. She graduated from Boston University, with a BA in Political Science and International Relations and a Masters degree from Ohio University in Visual Communication.

Both degrees helped her career track, but what helped her more were the internship opportunities and entry-level positions that she got in newspapers and magazines. She always wanted to be a photojournalist and was unshakably stubborn in sticking with what she wanted to do. She started her career as a photojournalist - making little money, working for daily newspapers and temping on the side. She learnt how to hustle, doing eight assignments a day all over the Bay Area. Nothing came easy. She did free internships to gain experience and went to as many workshops and conferences as she could.

In graduate school she took the opportunity to teach, which helped in forming her later career. In December 2009 she won a Fulbright Nehru Scholarship, a one-year research grant to document the dwindling Parsi Zoroastrian community in India. She produced “*Being Zoroastrian*” a ten-minute short film. (<https://vimeo.com/65067357>). While in Mumbai she worked as a freelance photojournalist and her clients included The New York Times, Vogue India, and Reuters. This was an invaluable experience and allowed her to move to and live in Bombay - something she had always wanted to do, both professionally and personally.

Kainaz says “In my late twenties when my peers were making good salaries and getting married, I was moving across the country to go to graduate school with everything I owned packed in a Honda Civic. When I came out of grad school, I was 30 and interning for the St. Petersburg Times. And when I was 31, I moved across the world on a grant-funded year-long assignment. I moved back to the US to work for NPR on a temporary six-month assignment. Somehow all the pieces aligned but not without many lonely and exhausting days. I wouldn’t have it any other way - because at the end of the day I can say I fought hard to be here and don’t take any one day for granted”.

She currently works as a supervising editor for NPR’s Visual team lives in Washington D.C.



FEZANA Scholarships

CYRUS R FATAKIA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS 2014

This is our 7th year of Scholarship Awards for our Students, and we are pleased to announce the following recipients of the Cyrus R Fatakia Scholarship for the year 2014-2015.

BEHROZE DALAL:

Behroze Dalal is enrolled as a Junior at the Good Samaritan College of Nursing in Cincinnati, Ohio in the Neonatal, Intensive Care Nurse Course. She is above average in her academic ability, organizational skills and personal integrity. She has dedicated her time in helping the elderly at various nursing homes volunteering her time at the Baltimore-Washington Medical Center and at the Fairfield Mercy Hospital. She received a Scholarship from the Ohio Nurses Foundation in 2013 for academic excellence. Behroze is a bright and hard-working student who shows much promise and enthusiasm and is very deserving of this Scholarship. ***She is the recipient of the 2013 FEZANA Purvez and Aban Rustomji Endowed Scholarship and 2014 FEZANA Morvorid Guiv Endowed Scholarship .***

BEHNAZ SHAHUKAR:

Behnaz Shahukar will be a Freshman at the Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington. Her goal is to earn a BA in Music Education. Behnaz has done community service at the Nativity House, for the homeless population of Tacoma through operation "Keep 'em warm n fed", and at the Tacoma Lutheran Retirement Community to help the elderly at the Lutheran Home. She received the Michelle Gaussoin Memorial Scholarship in 2013-2014, the Outstanding Senior String Musician (Viola) in 2014; the Bernice AB Keyes Charitable Trust Scholarship, 2014; and the Solo Ensemble WMEA State Contest Superior Award, 2010 thru 2014.

ZERKXIS ZARRIR BHANDARA:

Zerkxis Bhandara will be attending the California State University in Fullerton. He is an exemplary young man who is a caring, trustworthy, and dedicated to the service of the Zoroastrian community, as a Zarathushti Mobed. In 2012, at the North American Zoroastrian Congress, Zerkxis received a well-deserved Community Services Award from the North American Mobed Council. He is planning to graduate with a Major in Religious Studies and pursue a career in Secondary School Education. We are indeed proud to award our Scholarship to this fine, up-standing, young man - our very own Mobed, Zerkxis Bhandara.

EIRAJ ZANDI:

Eiraj Zandi is a Senior at the California State University, Long Beach, CA. He is a Political Science Major with a concentration in Global Politics, and a Minor in Communication Studies. He was on the President's Honor's List at Cal State University Long Beach in 2013. He has helped teenage groups to raise funds for the less fortunate, in both Iran and in the United States. He has volunteered as an unpaid Intern campaigning for John Goya, to gain experience in the political arena. Eiraj plans on pursuing a Master's Degree in Political Science, as a stepping stone to get into Law School and eventually campaign for Public Office. We are very happy to award the Cyrus R Fatakia Scholarship to this very enthusiastic and ambitious young man. ***He is the recipient of the 2014 FEZANA Morvorid Guiv Endowed Scholarship***

BEZON RUSTOMI:

Bezon Rustomi is from Sunny Hills High School in Fullerton where he graduated with a 4.44 GPA. He will be a Freshman at the University of California in Riverside, and hopes to eventually earn a Degree in Medicine. Bezon competes in, and teaches Taekwondo, showing leadership qualities in this field of Martial Arts and has earned his 4th degree Black Belt in Taekwondo. He is a great Instructor, and a knowledgeable, responsible and passionate human being with an impeccable character, who has demonstrated a love for young children and has earned the respect of his peers and his fellow instructors. Bezon has also volunteered pack bags and distribute food to the "Giving Children Hope" program for underprivileged youth in Orange County.

Congratulations to all of the above candidates! We wish you the very best of luck and much success in your chosen careers.

The Cyrus R Fatakia Scholarship Committee



FEZANA Scholarships

congress2000legacy



THE CONGRESS2000LEGACY IS AN AWARD PROGRAM OF THE ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON

The congress2000 legacy is an award of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston.(ZAH) Each year ZAH gives out two awards

The 2000 Congress Legacy Award was established as a result of funds generated from the success of World Zoroastrian Congress 2000 and additional grants received. The award recognizes young ZAH students who are studying at the University level and who have achieved excellence in their scholastic studies, in extra-curricular activities and who have made substantial contribution to community affairs.

NATALYA HAVELIWALA Words cannot describe how grateful and honoured I am to receive the Zoroastrian Association of Houston's Legacy Award. Since I moved to Houston in 2001 from Pakistan, the ZAH community has been like a family to me. The ZAH community gave me the opportunity to grow as a leader, learn selflessness through volunteering and push myself academically. With this award I will challenge myself even further by obtaining a B.S. in kinesiology, Motor Behaviour from Texas A&M University and hopefully get into a program to where I can achieve my goal as a physical therapist. My two biggest passions in life are assisting others and physical wellness, so receiving this award has helped me take a huge step towards what I love to do. I am just so appreciative of what the ZAH community has given and taught me, and I plan on implementing what I have learned in every aspect of my life .

The Cyrus Rohinton Desai Award was set up by the Desai family in memory of their son, a courageous young Houstonian who lost his battle with cancer. It was Cyrus's ardent desire to go, even for a day to college but sadly this was not meant to be..That is why this award is given exclusively to a person who is going off to college for the first time. This award also recognizes ZAH students who have achieved excellence in their scholastic studies , extra curricular activities and who have made substantial contribution to community affairs.

FARZAD SUNAVALA: The ZAH has been a second home to me and has given me religious classes, volunteering opportunities, academic workshops and a group of lifelong friends and family. Ever since I was young, math and science have been my strongest subjects, which led me to choose a career path in engineering. I chose Petroleum Engineering because the oil and gas industry intrigued me greatly. A petroleum engineer is employed by an oil company to design, test and implement methods to extract petroleum products from the earth and sea floor. I have been doing extensive research on LSU Petroleum Engineering Research and Technology Transfer Laboratory (PERTT Lab) giving me the opportunity to research and do routine maintenance on a live simulation of an oil well. LSU is the only school that gives me this opportunity as no other school in America offers this service. I plan to graduate in four years with a B.S. in petroleum Engineering and hope to get recruited by one of the large commercial companies such as Chevron, Exxon, BP or ConocoPhillips.



FEZANA Scholarships

We would like to recognize the distinguished panel of judges selected by Dr Farrokh Mistree from major learning institutions across the USA. This year the judges were: Dr Beheruz N, Sethna; Dr Poras T. Balsara; Dr Yezdi H. Godiwala, Dr Tinaz Pavri; Dr Farah Shroff and our own ZAH Youth representative on the committee Mrs Pearline E Collector. We are fortunate to have such a dynamic panel of judges from across North America and who care for your students.

The ZAH Executive committee and the congress 2000 Legacy committee congratulates our winners. We believe these students deserve to be recognized as innovators and leaders for tomorrow's global community. By supporting the next generation of great minds we pay tribute to the success of the World Zoroastrian Congress we had in 2000 from which the initial funds were generated.

This year has been an eventful year for us at the Legacy committee. In 2005, Aban Rustomji and Homi Davier began the start-up process and paper work and in 2007 they brought in Dr Farroukh Mistree and Pearline Collector to form the first core team. Aban wanted to step down last year but was persuaded to stay on for one more year. It is with great regret that we respect her wishes. Her contribution to the committee will be missed. However just like broadway, the show must go on and Percy Behramsha and Vispi Sagar have graciously agreed to join us.

We would be remiss if we did not appreciate the continuing donations made by Trinity, Rohinton and Anahita Desai in memory of Cyrus. Kudos to the Desai family.

We have started work on a Financial Grant based scholarship program. It is intended to start this additional award in 2015. Look out for application and details on our web page at www.zah.org/congress2000legacy. We started with \$90,000 and after giving out all the awards over so many years we are now at a total balance of \$96,000 which is phenomenal. We thank our investment management team who have made prudent, careful and strategic investments to let us have no loss in initial investments. Our policy has been to only use the earnings derived from the capital at hand and we cannot get this accomplished without a major contribution and/or member support.

There is an urgent need for another sponsor family. Please step forward and let us lean on you as we do on the Desais. We would like to identify and locate new funds by requesting our ZAH families who want to bequeath funds and have an award set up in the memory of a family member and /or an institution. Please contact Homi Davier to set this up.

With our best wishes,

THE LEGACY COMMITTEE

The 2014 congress2000legacy College Seminar- Dr. Farrokh Mistree

The Congress 2000 Legacy team organized a very useful Seminar that was held on 20 Sept, 2014, especially designed for our College-bound students and their parents. Dr Farrokh Mistree flew down from Oklahoma to deliver this session to a packed and engaged audience. Approximately 45 attended this well-presented session lasting for over three hours! This was an incredible feat since the atmosphere in the library was quiet and the audience attentive even though they had just returned after volunteering at the Houston food bank!

Topics like "Which college do I pick", "How do I pay for college", "What scholarships are available", "Dorm or Apartment" kept the audience interested in this interactive session.

Farrokh started off by asking each student to list at least one question they had. He wrote down each question meticulously and at the end of the session repeated every question and they were all answered through the session. - structured very professionally.



FEZANA Scholarships

At congress2000legacy it is the norm for all to participate and our new kid on the block Percy Behramsha took the lead in setting up and seeing through this session. The pre-seminar work was well executed with all documents (to be discussed) being posted on the ZAH web site with communication sent out to all attendees in order for them to come well prepared.

The item of interest was, that there were an equal number of adults with the children, the detail with which Farrokh handled the entry to college, a new life, its apprehension, its mysteries, do's and don'ts was interesting for all age groups. Overall the response and feedback was very positive with some parents even suggesting that such sessions be done every year.

Mistree's immediate comment was "I was most impressed with the quality of engagement of both



NATALYA HAVELIWALA GETS HER AWARD



TANAZ SUNAVALA GETS FARZAD'S AWARD



FEROZE BHANDARA INTRODUCES
DR BAGHERPOUR



HOMI DAVIER SAYS ADIEU TO ABAN RUSTOMJI
& DR BAGHERPOUR GIVES THE AWARD



FEZANA Scholarships

the kids and parents. I was particularly impressed by the notes that were taken by the college bound kids and their responses to questions that required them to think. This was an excellent set of students. I was touched by one entry in the card: "Thank you for opening my eyes"

The session was in the ZAH library and the pictures of the session display the value of this lovely venue for which we need to thank Aban Rustomji and her team. Finally, how can we ever end this before we thank the ZAH for the support they have given to our students for ages!

As it commonly stated in the USA "We are blessed"..



PAST CONGRESS LEGACY AWARDEES ARE:

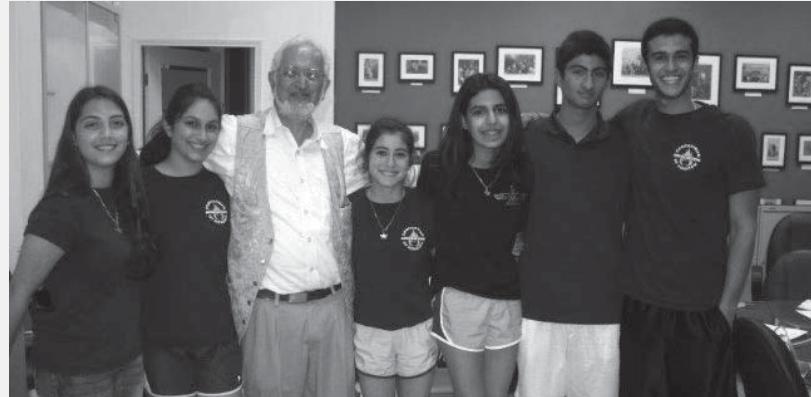
2007 - Veera Sidhwा	& Nikita Bhappu	
2008 - Darius Byramji	& Zarina Pundole	
2009 - Naomi Bhappu	& Hormazd Minwalla	for the Cyrus Rohinton Desai Award
2010 – Zal Bhathena	& Bahrom Firozgary	for the Cyrus Rohinton Desai Award
2011 - Viraf Nariman,	& Mitra Khumbatta	
2011 -	Fram Haveliwalla	for the Cyrus Rohinton Desai Award
2012 - Cyra Byramji	& Cyrus Byramji	for the Cyrus Rohinton Desai Award
2013 - Shayan Bhathena	& Ervad Rayomand Katrak	for the Cyrus Rohinton Desai award



FEZANA Scholarships



THE SESSION IN PROGRESS.....



AAPRO FARROKH GETS A GIFT FROM THE KIDS & HE IS THRILLED!!!!!!



FEZANA Scholarships

ZSBC SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDS

ZSBC Directors and members of the Scholarship Committee (Homi Italia, Bella Tata, Fariborz Rahnamoon, Dinaz Mizan, and Farrokh Namdaran) congratulate Robin Asgari, Kazmin Khapoliwalla, and Shayan Zohrabi for receiving ZSBC's 2014 Scholarship Awards during the late Jamshid K. Pavri's celebration of life on Oct 12, 2014. These are given out annually to those students who have completed Grade XII and have not only achieved good marks but also been active in our community and met other criteria laid down by the Committee.

(l to r): Homi Italia, Kazmin Khapoliwalla, Fariborz Rahnamoon, Shayan Zohrabi, Dinaz Mizan, Homa Ashtari (Robin Asgari's mother since Robin could not make it), Farhad Iranfar (ZSBC's President) Bella Tata and Farroukh Namdarian.



MEHRABAN & PARIDOKHT ZARTOSHTY EDUCATION FUND SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDS

We can be so proud of our youth, who have been studying and working hard to better their prospects, including volunteer work. Thank you to all of the youths who have contributed towards the well-being of our Zarathushti community despite many scholastic and personal issues. We urge all our youth to give some of their time to our community programs here, as it cannot be left to just a few enthusiasts. This year's scholarships, sponsored by the late philanthropist Mehraban Zartoshty and his wife Paridokht, were awarded to Nisa Kabolizadeh, Kiarash Khodabakhshi, Rozmin Iranir, and Nazneen Kasad. This scholarship is for those in the second year of their graduate studies and thereafter.

The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia awards scholarships to those who have completed Grade XII and are going on to their first year of college, university, or technical institution. Congratulations to Nisa, Kiarash and Nazneen. Members on the Board of this Education Fund are Homa Zartoshty, Bella Tata, Shirin Abadi, Khodadad Lohrasb, Kourosh Mehin, and Fariborz Rahnamoon.

Mehraban and Paridokht Zartoshty Scholarships

(l to r): Fariborz and Bella Tata with Nisa Kabolizadeh, Kiarash Khodabakhshi, Nazneen Kasad and Rozmin Irani





FEZANA Scholarships

ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, INC.

THE FALI CHOThIA CHARITABLE TRUST
10300 Farnham Drive, Bethesda MD 20814
301 564-3726 / 301 774-0841



The Fali Chothia Charitable Trust was established in 1988 to help provide scholarships to needy Zarathushti students. Awards are based on financial need, educational achievement, and community service. The trust is established under the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (ZAMWI), and makes awards to students from all parts of the US and Canada.

The US Chapter of the World Zoroastrian Organization supports the Fali Chothia Trust's scholarship program by contributing to this worthy cause. Donations made to the trust are tax exempt, and go directly toward the corpus of the fund. Individual members of the Board of Trustees absorb all administrative, mailing, and other fund-raising costs.

If you wish to make a donation to this worthy cause, please send a check made payable to "ZAMWI/Fali Chothia Charitable Trust" to: 10300 Farnham Drive, Bethesda MD 20814.

THE FALI CHOThIA CHARITABLE TRUST IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

THE RECIPIERNTS OF 2014-2015 AWARDS

ARIA BEHROUZI is pursuing a medical degree at the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Spartanburg, SC. After obtaining a BS in chemistry from North Carolina State University, and serving as a triage volunteer in an emergency department, Aria decided he could best serve the needs of his community by providing holistic and preventative care as an osteopathic doctor. (**2014 FEZANA Scholarship**)

SHAHZAD BULSARA is working toward a master's degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Texas. He has a long-standing fascination with all things fast, and hopes to utilize his education and skills in developing technologies for the automotive industry. He is also keenly aware of the problems faced by the Zarathushti community and is hoping to be instrumental in helping to alleviate them. (**2014 FEZANA Scholarship**)

SHAHEEN CONTRACTOR is pursuing an MS in sustainability management at Columbia University. Her love for nature and the environment began on her grandparents' farm as a toddler, continued through her volunteer work at a zoological park as a teenager, and led to her career choice as an adult. She is particularly interested in discovering a balance between environment and development, and using that knowledge to contribute to an environmentally sustainable future.

RUSTOM DALAL is starting a master's program in international economics and finance at Brandeis University. He has strong academic and professional achievements to his credit, from completing his chartered accountancy at the age of 21, to teaching at IIM Ahmedabad at 23. He has been involved in Zoroastrian community affairs, and has a long list of extra-curricular activities he is committed to.

AYESHA JAMASPi is working toward a Ph.D. in industrial-organizational psychology. She hopes to conduct research in the area of performance management, identifying factors that induce early work burnout. She hopes to use this data to create models to assist corporations and employees maintain a healthy work-life balance.

ZENIA TARAPORE is pursuing a master of teaching degree at the University of Toronto. After graduating with honors, Zenia decided to pursue teaching to fulfil her passion for working with people and her love of children. She has taught extensively to all age groups, from volunteering in kindergarten classrooms to tutoring university students.



FEZANA Scholarships

VAKHSHOORI FOUNDATION

PROMOTING LEADERSHIP AMONG ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH IN ACADEMIA, PUBLIC LIFE, AND THE ARTS

VAKHSHOORI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-2015

Mr. Arash Gobal (\$8,000)

PhD in Mechanical & Aerospace,
University of California, Davis, CA, USA

Ms. Shiva Gojgini (\$8,000)

PhD in Chemical Biomolecular,
University of California, LA, CA, USA

Ms. Shaheen Jamshed Contractor (\$4,000)

MS in Sustainability Management,
Columbia University, NY, USA

Mr. Jazeel Firdos Limzerwala (\$4,000)

PhD in Biomedical Sciences,
Mayo Clinic, MN, USA

Ms. Delna Ava Weil (\$4,000)

Master of International Policy Analysis,
Stanford University, CA, USA

Ms. Nicole Shroff (\$2,000)

LLB in Law,
London School of Economics, London, UK

Mr. Armin Zohoor (\$2,000)

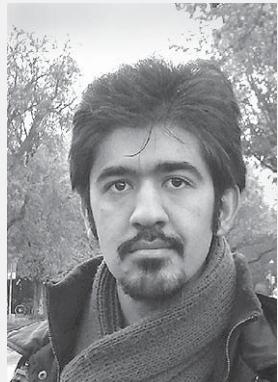
MS in Civil Engineering,
San Jose State University, CA, USA

Ms. Farah Naz Vimadalal (\$1,000)

BS Biology,
Sacred Heart University, MA, USA

We were extremely happy with the quality of our applicants this year. Each winner has shown exceptional leadership in his or her respective academic field, community, and life in general. Here are their biographies in brief. We invite you to visit www.vakhshoori.org to view short video clips that some of the winners have provided detailing their personal views and life experiences.

KOOROSH VAKHSHOORI
MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



ARASH GOBAL was born and raised in Tehran, Iran, attended Sharif University of Technology and in 2013 obtained his Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering. He then moved to the United States and is attending the University of California, Davis, for graduate studies in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. His main subject of research is Additive Manufacturing Technologies (also known as 3-D printing). This technology has the potential to revolutionize the manufacturing industry and could improve the worldwide accessibility of manufactured products significantly. The idea of improving the quality of life in remote areas was a major motivation for Arash to choose this field of research.

Arash had been involved in the Zoroastrian community of Iran as an active member of the Zoroastrian Students Association (*Kanoon Daneshjooyan Zartoshti*) participating in social activities and organizing events like the annual Zoroastrian music festival, annual religious congress and competitions (*Manthra*) and the annual Zoroastrian Olympics (*Jaam-e Janbakhtegan*).

Arash encourages his fellow Zoroastrian youngsters to follow their passion, not to get discouraged by minor drawbacks as one of the most precious Zoroastrian teachings is to be in pursuit of happiness. Arash wishes everyone to apply these invaluable ideas in their lives to make the world a better place for themselves and people around them.



FEZANA Scholarships



SHIVA GOJGINI is a fifth year PhD student in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at the University of California, Los Angeles Henry Samuel School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. She has developed a three-dimensional presentation platform to introduce pro-vascular growth factors to their biological target thereby eliciting an increased therapeutic effect of those growth factors.

Shiva completed her undergraduate and master's degrees, in chemical engineering, at two of the top ranking universities in Iran, Amir Kabir University and Sharif University.

As a Zoroastrian, Shiva has always been proud and eager to share her knowledge with Zoroastrian students and during her undergraduate studies she was an active member of the Zoroastrian youth committee (*Kanoon*). She was part of the organization of two major Zoroastrian sporting events (*Jaame Jan bakhtegan*) and the religious event *Mantra*. For this she was honored as one the best Zoroastrian students in the committee by her fellow members. (2014 FEZANA scholar)



SHAHEEN CONTRACTOR received a bachelor's in Business Administration from the Symbiosis International University, India. She is presently at Columbia University, NY for a Masters degree in Sustainability Management, with a focus on rural development and environmental sustainability.

At Symbiosis, she excelled both in academics with a GPA of 3.45 and extracurricular activities, winning numerous awards in athletics and playing a leading role in organizing their international college fest, Sympulse.

Her love for the environment goes back to the time she visited her grandparents farm as a child and was enchanted with the surroundings. She worked as an environmental researcher at the LEAF Initiative from 2012–2014 and published articles on agriculture and food security. She then completed a postgraduate diploma in environmental law from the National Law School of India University, a course that opened up her mind to the complexities of environmental sustainability and the legal parameters of the same. Her work and research has sensitized her to the urgent need for reforms required to address the problems faced by the underprivileged in the fields of agriculture, food security, poverty and education.

She has interned with a number of NGOs and orphanages, including Teach for India Program and the BSSK Orphanage. These experiences have helped her understand the local and regional issues that stem from social inequalities that exist in society today.



JAZEEL LIMZERWALA is currently a first year PhD student at the Mayo Clinic Graduate School, Rochester, Minnesota. He completed his BSc and MSc degrees in biotechnology at the University of Mumbai. He excelled in academics and sports in his school, playing national level soccer since thirteen and professional soccer from sixteen. He was the captain of his state soccer team and shouldered the responsibility of guiding and inspiring people from a young age.

During his undergraduate years, Jazeel has been actively involved in various activities of his department and college including organizing various intercollegiate festivals and doing social work. He was among the few students selected to perform a research project during his second year; the project got wide appreciation in the city and at a national conference. He has a humble attitude and passionate work ethic, which he believes are key aspects to becoming a leader



FEZANA Scholarships



DELNA WEIL was born and raised in Oak Park, a suburb of Chicago. She studied comparative literature and psychology at Barnard College in New York City. While in New York, she continued her classical piano studies at the Manhattan School of Music, led a Saturday morning music program for children from disadvantaged communities, and served as a conversation partner for foreign exchange students at the New York International Center. Inspired by her experience in Argentina, she wrote her thesis on issues of national identity. After graduation, she continued her pursuit of cultural knowledge and exchanged as an English teacher in a small rural community in France.

Returning to the U.S., Delna channeled her interest in education for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education at the University of Chicago Center. While working as an editor on the newest edition of Elementary Mathematics, she reflected on the importance of quality materials and curriculum for young learners, and the lack of access to such tools for the youth. Her work with marginalized youth at Chicago nonprofits such as Hostel International, Open Books, Chicago Cultural Association, and Allowance for Good, helped her decide to pursue graduate studies in International Education Policy Analysis at Stanford University.

As a graduate student at Stanford, Delna is evaluating the successes and short comings of the newly implemented National Skills Development Plan in India, particularly on low-income people attempting to find work in the informal economy.



NICOLE SHROFF, born and raised in London, England is currently completing an undergraduate law degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and will soon commence a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice.

She has a training contract at an international law firm to practice commercial law in the world's major financial, business and regulatory centers. With current trends indicating a rebalancing of work to Asia, Africa, and other developing countries, Nicole wants to contribute to major deals and experience different jurisdictions, businesses and cultures. She is an avid writer, having recently written an article regarding gender diversity at the bar and hopes to represent female progression in the legal profession. Her aim is to inspire young women and the Zoroastrian youth to pursue a career in commercial law.

Nicole's early childhood experiences in Mumbai, India inspired her to causes effecting social change. She volunteered at Oxfam and Envision that aimed to combat the effects of destitution in the UK. As the Regional Runner-Up prize-winner at the Jack Petchy Public Speaking Competition, she spoke about poverty and promoted Zoroastrian ideals of a life based on good deeds. With her role at the LSE "Agents of Change" project, she continues to raise awareness of gender inequality and liaises with global non-profit organizations to secure volunteering opportunities for LSE students.

She has written an article on Zoroastrian dualistic theology, the Avesta and ideals of spiritual resplendence; she hopes this will encourage young Zoroastrian's to take an interest in their rich heritage and culture.

Nicole is grateful to the Vakhshoori Foundation for this Scholarship and looks forward to using her skills to promote active social involvement, both within and outside the Zoroastrian community.



FEZANA Scholarships



ARMIN ZOHOOR was born in a Zoroastrian family, in Tehran, Iran, graduated from high school and moved to Canada to pursue civil engineering at Ryerson University. During his first year, Armin worked hard to achieve a high GPA to get on the dean's list and obtain the Dean's scholarship and Bursar Scholarship. In his second year, Armin worked as a Teaching Assistant (TA) for an electronic circuit course, and worked on a transportation impact and parking demand research project with the City of Toronto. For this, he received the YSGS award. In Armin's third year, Armin worked with a professor to develop software (named Emme3) used for traffic analysis and trip generation. For this contribution to the project, he was awarded the Ryerson gold medal. After graduating from Ryerson, Armin moved to the United States and continued the Master's program in civil engineering at San Jose State University. In his first year, Armin got the honor of working on a project that included cost-estimating a three story commercial buildings and its modeling in 3-D, 4-D, and 5-D. He has learned a new way to design and build more efficient buildings for energy-savings and water conservation. Currently, Armin is working as a TA while earning a Master's degree at the San Jose State University.



FARAH VIMADALAL is from Hartford and Glastonbury, Connecticut and moved to Weston, Massachusetts when she was in sixth grade. She grew up in a Zoroastrian family. Her father is a mobed from a long line of mobeds of India and her parents drove her from Connecticut to the ZAGNY religious classes in New York. When she moved to Boston she attended the ZAGBA religious classes. In her formative years she was fortunate to be surrounded by two amazing Zarathushti communities of Connecticut and Massachusetts giving her lifelong friends and a second family.

Currently a freshman at Sacred Heart University, Farah is studying biology and hopes to study medicine. During her junior year of high school, she worked in the Department of Public Health at Harvard University, in Boston, with underprivileged communities conducting field surveys for a research project involving the warning labels on cigarette packets and how they affect people. After her research internship, she felt responsible and proud that she was part of a study that would promote the creation of new labeling regulations for cigarette manufacturers, which would then impact the very people that she helped complete the surveys.

As a Girl Scout, she has completed her Bronze, Silver, and the highest Gold award; she has served on the Girls Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts CEO Girls Advisory Committee. Being motivated by her close relationship with her grandmother, Farah lead and created a Weather Hazard Awareness/Educational Program for Senior Citizens as part of her Gold Award project. The program could help them for weather-related emergencies—ZAGBA and the Zarathushti children in Boston supported her project. Farah believes that young Zoroastrians have a lot of opportunity to create an impact in our community. She is a recipient of several commendations and awards from Weston High School for Applied Discrete Math, Science, Sportsmanship and Community Service.

VAKHSHOORI SCHOLARSHIPS 2015-2016

The Vakhshoori Foundation invites young Zoroastrians to apply for scholarships for the academic year of 2015-2016. These scholarships range between \$10,000 and \$1,000. For more details and an application form, please visit the foundation web site at www.vakhshoori.org.

From Behind The Scenes: Tete-a-tete with the Organizers



ARZAN SAM WADIA

Getting 760 Zarathushtis from all over North America and the world together in one place over three days is no mean feat. And yet North American Zarathushtis have made it a habit of doing this every two to three years. These Congresses are professionally run and every Congress raises the bar up a notch for the next host. In Los Angeles it was no different. The Zoroastrian Association of California put together

a fantastic show in association with and support from the California Zoroastrian Center. To the regular attendee, the Congress can sometimes seem one big abstract entity. But to those in the know, it is anything but that. It is people like you and me, who put in countless hours of hard work, dedication, time, and money for the benefit of the attendees.

And in most cases, it is the story of these volunteers that remain unsaid and unrecorded. FEZANA editor Dolly Dastoor came up with the idea of recording some of these volunteer stories, and bringing out the person behind the event, so to say. I got the opportunity to interview four key people who were involved with the Congress.

Over the next few pages, you will find some fascinating stories as these four people share their successes, reminisce about their time leading up to and at the event, and also share some of their own disappointments as well.

The hope is that through these interviews you will get a behind the scenes view into the volunteers that make events happen. By no means is this a comprehensive list of everyone that should have been interviewed. However they cover a cross-section of our demographic and in a way highlight the slowly but surely changing role young Zoroastrians are playing in shaping the North American Zoroastrian leadership in the coming decades.



Slide showing Arzan's online properties and Zoroastrian resources.

Arzan Sam Wadia is an architect and urban designer, currently living in New York City with his wife, Shirrin. Arzan also runs a technology consultancy business catered to the CAD and BIM industry. Arzan is the Chair of the Information Technology Committee of FEZANA and is a Board Member of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York. Arzan is the co-founder of Parsi Khabar (www.parsikhabar.net) an online news portal about Parsis: The Zoroastrians of India. He is an active Rover Scout of India's oldest Scout Group the Sethna's 18th West Bombay.

From Behind The Scenes: Tete-a-tete with the Organizers

Arzan Sam Wadia

Interview with

TEHMI DAMANIA, President, Zoroastrian Association of California; host of the XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress 2014, December 31st, 2014



From Left : Parvez Erani (Jt. Secretary), Prochi Mistry (Program Chair) Deelnavaz Tarapore (Jt. Secretary), Rooky Fitter (Treasurer), Perinne Medora (Vice-President), Merzi Limath (Youth Coordinator), with ZAC President Tehmi Damania (front and center with flowers).

Arzan Sam Wadia (ASW): Tell me about yourself. Where did you grow up and how did you find yourself in Los Angeles?

Tehmi Damania (TD): I grew up in Contractor Baug in Mumbai, India; Maneck, my husband, and I lived in the United Kingdom for eighteen years. It was always Maneck's dream to move to the United States and in 1986 we got our green cards and came to the United States. At that time, jobs were not great. I worked in a bank and Maneck worked for an airline. We decided that we would go into the printing business, which we did in December 1986. The initial years were tough. We were busy, but also started feeling lonely and wanted to be in touch with our community—so we joined ZAC. A few years later I could spare a little time, and ZAC was looking for a home of its own. It was Tehmton Arjani's dream and I wanted to support it. I started looking at different properties. We got the community to support the idea, and after years of work we finally have our own center. By this time, we had retired and sold our business. I devoted my time to ZAC

and we spent a lot of time getting the center up to standard.

ASW: What really is the driving force behind your involvement in the community?

TD: When I was a small child, my father would tell me bedtime stories about what it meant to be a Zarathushti. He wasn't really religious, but he instilled in me this idea of being a Parsi. At boarding school I became a bit disillusioned because I started asking myself questions about inclusiveness in our community; questions to which I did not have answers. Although we were in England for eighteen years, we never went to the center there... never. Working with Air India we had a lot of friends from India who came over and stayed with us, so we never felt the need to be a part of the community in England. But, when we moved to the United States, we felt isolated during the first few months and, by not having people over, we felt that something was missing. Therefore, we got involved. The bottom line is that I had the time and I put it to good use.

ASW: As we near the Congress' end, how has this event turned out for you from the time you won the bid until now?

TD: Honestly, at the start I was dead against it. I thought it was not the right time economically. Our center was new and we wanted to develop it. When I took over as President from Vira Suntoke, I did announce that the ZAC Board will be there to provide our support, but we will not be able to run the Congress. At that point, Khushroo Lakdawala and Darius Mistry stepped forward and said they would take responsibility. Dhunmai Dalal was already gung ho about it and so the three of them became co-chairs and set the ball rolling. For the first year or so, we were out of it. The Congress team went about laying the organizational groundwork. Then, at the last Congress in New York, Khushroo and Darius felt that I should get involved, and the community rallied, saying that the fiduciary responsibility was ZAC's and I should be involved. Khushroo, Darius, and I participated in conference calls, where we worked things out and planned the event.

ASW: In planning of the event, what were some of the high points? What would be some of the things that exceeded your expectations?

TD: It was very scary, because we were not sure if this would work. Travel is expensive in December. The registration prices were high and response rates were initially very slow. But, then our Public Relations Team did a fantastic job and the Congress sold out. We had a fantastic team of volunteers who were not even our regular ZAC volunteers. Sometimes we wondered "who are these people?" But, it all worked out. Everyone pitched in and did a fantastic job. Working with CZC has been a great highlight. Initially, we didn't have their support—that was scary. The Iranians are more than the Parsis in numbers, and we wanted them to come on board and bring their financial and delegate support. But, as the event's planning proceeded, CZC became fully on board. They brought in a lot of entertainment and then families started registering and getting involved. So, in the end, it was great.

ASW: If you had to do it all over again, what would you change?

TD: I think the event has been great. I would change nothing [laughs]. The Congress has been run like a business, and sometimes people did not like that. All the co-chairs have business backgrounds in their professional lives, so running things in a business-like way was natural. We had budgets, deadlines, and we wanted it to work. People told us that this was a community event; however, we explained that we wanted to make sure that things were run well so that people would have a good time.

ASW: How did the Youth Pre-Congress idea and the Teen Tracks come about?

TD: A lot of youth registered for the overall Congress because of the Pre-Congress Youth events. The credit goes entirely to Khushchehr Italia and her team of four or five young volunteers. At first we were getting a little worried because they were getting carried away. We knew that the youth would love to meet. Our concern was: Would our youth be able to pull it off. But Khushchehr said, "Don't worry; let us do things and the youth will come." We emphasized that this wasn't really a youth Congress and they can do whatever they liked prior to the Congress, but after that they are part of the community and they should be with us. I think it was a fantastic success.

ASW: Now that people like Khushchehr and her team have proven themselves, how would you go about keeping them involved with ZAC?

TD: Our youth tend to feel that they don't need ZAC to get together. We now have the center, but they don't get it! To them I say: After you are done with the beach party or the ballpark trip, come to the Center. It is there and it is yours. Make use of it. Once they start associating the Center as their home, they will come to it more often.

ASW: What advice would you pass on to Vancouver?

TD: I think Vancouver had a different idea about how they would put up people around a central venue. That would be interesting and it would reduce attendee costs and make it affordable, which should attract more people.

I would also urge them to keep the balance in terms of what is discussed. We were sure that we did not want any controversy. We have a few very orthodox members in our community. And then we have the ultra liberals at the other extreme. We did not want to stifle opinion, but we just did not want to argue over religion. It was a struggle and I think we hit the right balance.

Another event that should continue was the World Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra. There was some opposition about why and how come there were so few Zoroastrians in the orchestra. However, with Firdosh Mehta's help and support we worked through the issues. Somehow the money was raised and the Orchestra happened.

ASW: Thank you Tehmi. It's been wonderful talking to you, I've had a great time over the past three days.

TD: Thanks Arzan.



Volunteers hard at work assembling the registration bags

NORTH AMERICAN CONGRESS: A RETROSPECTIVE

NAVROZ GANDHI

I usually attend North American Zoroastrian conferences with a mixture of interest to learn more about my faith and desire to socialize. However, this time I was asked to do a “Retrospective” session at the end of the Congress, so I had to socialize less and pay more attention to the sessions than usual. Kudos to the Congress organizers for accomplishing what neither of my parents had been able to get me to do at prior Congresses!

As usual, the three days passed much too quickly. From the traditional Iranian welcome to the invocation of Ahura Mazda’s blessings performed at the start by 25 Mobeds and Mobedyars led by Ervad Zarrir Bhandarra (photo below) to the final New Year’s Eve gala night, the Congress was filled with interesting sessions and wonderful entertainment that showcased the talent and role models within our North American Zarathushti community. Whether it was the children singing *It’s a Small World* to open the Congress, the performers who participated in the evening productions of *An Evening in Persia* (pg xxx) and *Majah Masti* (World Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra) performing for us, the 750+ delegates enjoyed themselves thoroughly and—like the true fun-loving Zarathushtis that we are—wanted more!



From left Mojgan Ariane,
Yasmin Anoshiravani ; Arezoo
Dinyar

While great entertainment is not new for a Congress, this Congress did have quite a few things that previous ones did not have. First, there was the sheer number of attendees: 750+ delegates with nearly 70% UNDER the age of 55. Of these 750+ individuals, over 33% had never been to a Congress before. This Congress used interactive sessions that were immensely popular, collected the largest number of eyeglasses for *Operation Eyesight* than any Congress, had a *Children’s Congress* for ages five through twelve (including a puppy party and ice cream social) (pg 70), a *Teen Track* for teenagers (thirteen through eighteen), and a pre-Congress weekend for the youth (pg 73). The organizers even had a relaxation room with carom boards and table tennis, Reiki group healing sessions, provided assistance for the elderly, and treated us all to a minor earthquake just so that we could have the full southern California experience! However, consensus among the out-of-town delegates was that the organizers should have replaced the earthquake with slightly warmer temperatures if they wanted to truly impress us.

In this Congress, I observed eight themes, some heard in prior Congresses and discussed further, some an evolution of themes heard before, and some new, requiring additional discussion.

WHERE SHOULD WE EXPEND OUR EFFORTS—CATEGORIZING EACH OTHER OR WORKING TOGETHER?

This Congress seemed to have an audience less interested in discussing who can claim to be a Zarathushti and more interested in discussing how to build a community that is cohesive and serves the needs of its members. Perhaps this was the result of the younger age of delegates, our maturation as a community, or just the plain fact that, given our history over the past 1000+ years, we Zarathushtis know how to adapt and





Jashan performed by 25 mobeds and mobedyars from all over North America led by Ervad Zarir Bhandarra

survive in a diaspora. It could also be that there is more separation today than there has ever been before between the North American community and those in Iran and India. Time, distance, and perhaps the issues going on in the Indian Zoroastrian communities may all be contributing factors. Regardless of the reason, as Nadir Godrej remarked in his poem which he read at the opening of the Congress, “a balm of tolerance gives immunity; allows enjoyment of faith and unity” (pg 41).

UNDERSTANDING THE TEACHINGS AND THE ROLE OF RITUALS AND TRADITIONS IN ZOROASTRIANISM

There seemed to be a strong desire by participants at this Congress, especially the youth, to separate the teachings of Zarathushtra or the Gathas, from the religious practices, traditions, and customs. *Asha* was repeatedly brought up in the desire to use reason, analysis, and thought to determine what is right. However, as some Mobeds and delegates raised during the young Mobed session (pg 77) the Mazdayasni faith is not solely about reason and analysis. There is a difference between using one’s *Vohu Mana* (good mind) to progress down the path of *Asha* and *Asha* itself. Spirituality and the energy that traditions and the practice of the faith provide should not be summarily discounted simply due to reason and analysis. Likewise, the desire to learn and enlighten oneself about the evolution of practices, rituals, and traditions, should not be viewed as a negative process. While delegates seemed to voice many opinions on this issue, it was clear that more education is needed on this theme.

LEARNING ABOUT OUR HISTORY

The Jungalwala lecture by **Dan Sheffield** seemed to provide some information for delegates related to evolution in our practices. This lecture provided a historical context of how the language used in our texts and culture evolved from Pahlavi to English via Persian for those living in Iran and via Sanskrit, Persian, and

Gujarati for those living in India. This session segued nicely with one provided by Fariborz Masseh, a venture philanthropist, who explained how in his experience he has observed “a genetic predisposition to love your culture—and by extension, to romanticize the past—regardless of your background.” This led delegates to discuss evolution versus assimilation in the context of a diaspora both in terms of our history and our future.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN COMMUNITY BUILDING

Quite a few sessions were devoted to educating youth and adults in religious education. Some were basic and extremely popular such as *Zoroastrianism 101—at least 20 basic things you should know but may not* (Mobed Shazadi). Others were more advanced like those described previously. There was a strong desire for standardized and easily-available religious education material for associations and parents to use. (Daraioush Bharucha provided a framework.) There was also a desire by delegates to learn more about the historical context and scholarly research on Zoroastrianism, including new discoveries and archaeological findings (Jenny Rose, pg 49). Education was viewed by many delegates as a way to appreciate and understand their faith on a personal level, as well as to reduce the amount of hearsay that sometimes permeates discussions within their local communities.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND THE ASSOCIATION IN COMMUNITY BUILDING

Of course, with the discussion of education came a discussion regarding educators. There was a lot of discussion about parents being the primary educator within the community—from being a role model (i.e., children learn from what they observe, not what they are told) to investing time and energy early on in a child’s life to ensure a sense of Zarathushti identity, belonging, and nurturing. Recurring sentiments included making religious education as important as school education and other activities that inevitably compete for time in a child’s life. Additionally, the role of the community and local association was discussed. There seemed to be some consensus about communities focusing less on enforcement and more about education and knowledge, providing examples of Zarathushti life, providing better role models for youth, and providing an environment of cohesion amongst its members. In sessions such as the *State of the Online Zarathushti*, (Arzan Sam Wadia) the use of technology was discussed to facilitate access, thereby making distance among members and between associations somewhat less of an issue. Discussions were also had regarding how to make online communication more productive, informative, and instructive rather than having people simply express their beliefs or engage in random arguments (Yezdi Tantra). Finally, with regards to educators, delegates wanted to discuss how to develop good teachers within their local communities. While the material itself can be made more interactive and engaging, incorporating technological advances, a child’s interest in learning—regardless of whether it’s a non-religious or religious subject matter—can often boil down to the teacher.

CHARITABLE GIVING AND THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY COHESION

The Congress did try to provide an update to delegates of charitable giving by the community at large. From *Operation Eyesight* to the discussions on the religion to a presentation by the WZO (Darayus Motiwala), there was discussion regarding raising funds and getting more human capital donations (i.e., the donation of time and involvement by members). Getting more done with the same amount of funds, lessons learned, and the desire to discuss in greater detail the tangible results of donations seemed to engage delegates. And, there was consensus that more volunteers in local associations with strong leadership would lead to more activities and getting things done. Getting to this optimal situation is, of course, more complicated—especially with the youth—but, there seemed to be a sense that cohesion in a community is a critical foundation for this to occur.

CHALLENGES FACING OUR YOUNG MOBEDS

A session about the challenges that young Mobeds in North America face was presented at the Congress (panel discussion led by Ervad Soli Dastur, pg 77). However, based on the discussion and questions during the session, it seemed like a larger discussion may be warranted at both local associations and future Congresses. The balance of career, family, and religious responsibilities and the training of young Mobeds and Mobedyars is in need of more attention for the diaspora to continue to grow and function.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COHESION

The theme of community building and cohesion, while interspersed in the prior themes, was its own clear theme throughout the Congress. The youth expressed a desire for more integration between Parsee and Irani Zarathushtis through both informal and formal social events such as Z-camps. It is my observation that there seems to be more unity with each passing year. While the path may not be unidirectional, the trend certainly is—and it's positive. Education plays a great role in unifying individuals, especially the youth who have less reason to hold on to practices and beliefs that are outdated or insular.

My final observation on this Congress was how much effort it takes for a community to put one together, the strong leadership and organization skills it requires, and the potential ability it has to energize and bring community members closer together. The co-chairs, Khushroo Lakdawala, Darayus Mistry, Dhunmai Dalal, and volunteers of the 2014 North American Zoroastrian Congress did a wonderful job, and hopefully the sense of community spirit on display inspired other communities in North America. With their example and with the program in mind, I left the Congress thinking about how I lead my life, my knowledge about my faith, and my participation in my local Zarathushti community. Perhaps, faith and unity lie more in my actions, words, and deeds, than in those of others.

Navroz Gandhi is the President of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington INC. (ZAMWI) and is on the advisory board of The National Public Radio Station in Washington DC. . He is a private investor having worked at J.P. Morgan.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE 2014 NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS -- LOS ANGELES

BELLA TATA

If the Los Angeles Kings could win the Stanley Cup, why shouldn't our Zarathushti friends in LA come up with a winning congress? And they certainly did. Heartiest Congratulations!

What started out with some negativity on the part of many on the high cost of registration for the XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress, it turned out to be a realistic figure. A metropolitan city, like Vancouver, is not cheap and to fit in so many activities, meals, entertainment, and so forth, was probably a very difficult thing to do unless there were the participants, people with big hearts and sponsors. Congratulations and well done, DhunMai Dalal, Khushroo Lakdawala and Darayus Mistry (Congress Co-Chairs), Shida Anoushiravani, California Zoroastrian Center and Tehmi Damania, Zoroastrian Association of California, FEZANA, and all the volunteers. I am a strong believer in leadership, and leadership won the day as the right teams could be harnessed to pull the heavy wagon.



Registering at the hotel and getting rooms was smooth and the ambience was good. The face of the hotel had the Congress information lit up on both sides of the staircase, rather than just a banner. was a nice surprise, The Opening Ceremony was entertaining, with the national anthems of the US and Canada beautifully rendered. The program was well-constructed to fit, thanks to Vira Santoke, into the theme of "Faith and Unity," and most



of the topics were interesting. However, many good presentations overlapped, making it impossible for a person to be at concurrent sessions of interest. The sessions were mostly run on time, but the main ballroom seemed far too big to house many of the sessions which were held there. Speakers like to see as full a house as possible.

A couple of things which I found disappointing were the way the exhibitors had their tables in various locations, rather than close to one another so that participants could walk from one exhibitor to another—if not in the same room, at least in rooms adjacent to one another. They did not get full value for their tables and some of them had their tables moved to other locations on some days. The brochure was too spread out and heavy, but beautifully done—a piece of art to be preserved over the years. The gift bag was a bit difficult to manage as many people came with just their carry-on luggage and had to find ways of taking this large extra piece back (though the contents were appreciated).

Breakfast timings were in a bit of disarray and the food on the whole was not the best. This was no fault of the organizers, as this was in the hands of the Hilton Hotel, which probably had less staff during the holiday period. Gala night food was a disappointment. Also, having people make up their own tables of ten was difficult as many registrants were attending for the first time and did not know others.

On the whole, the entertainment was good. The Persian night was interesting though it could have been a little shorter. However, special mention must be made of the World Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra that performed beautifully despite the sudden illness of its conductor, Farobag Cooper—Adil Mehta stepped in gallantly as conductor. I know a lot of hard work went into getting this performance together and great credit goes to FEZANA and the twenty Zarathushti artists of the orchestra and the soloists Meher Pavri, Aravan Taraporewala, Tina Siganporia, Neville Bharucha, Mahfrin Santoke, and the young violinist Sarosh Mistry. The selection of pieces was interesting. Great job!

It is easy to be negative and difficult to find sufficient praise. Almost everything was good, including the assistance given to the elderly, the parallel youth program prior to the congress, and the Teen Track for ages thirteen through eighteen. The organizers were most helpful and I believe the theme of Faith and Unity certainly did stand out. No one and nothing can be perfect, but the fact that everyone I met enjoyed the Congress, was able to network with old friends and make new ones, look forward to the next day and events planned, is what makes something memorable. If one can walk away thinking that one has learnt at least one important or interesting thing which will be remembered till dementia kicks in (hopefully not for any of us!), that in itself is well worth the time and money spent. With the 2017 NAZC coming to The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia, these were valuable days for those of our society who attended. Thank you to the scholars and presenters who brought in some new thoughts and ideas, we hope that they will be able to provide guidance in the future to those aspiring to follow in their footsteps.

BELLA TATA Past President

THE ZOROASTRIAN SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

FROM BEHIND THE SCENES: TETE-A-TETE WITH THE ORGANIZERS

Arzan Sam Wadia

INTERVIEW WITH VIRA SANTOKE, PROGRAM CHAIR XVII NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS 2014, DECEMBER 28TH, 2014



Arzan Sam Wadia (ASW): Tell us a bit about yourself. Where do you come from? How did you land up in LA?

Vira Santoke (VS): I am originally from Dadar in Mumbai. Burjor, my husband came to America as a student. On one of his visits back to India, we met; got married and that is how I am here in the Los Angeles area for the last 30 years and counting.

ASW: What drives you to volunteer work? What is the underlying ethos behind your active participation in the community?

VS: I always volunteer for causes I believe in and support my community. I volunteer with ZAC, TMZA, and the Mazdeyasnies Connection, as well as with the Philharmonic Orchestra. My parents and grandparents were always involved with the community; hence, it comes naturally to me.

ASW: Coming to NAZC2014, as the Program Chair you have one of the most difficult tasks. What were some of the challenges and how did it all pan out?

VS: I was honored when the Congress chairs invited

me to be the Program Chair. Contrary to my early concerns; it turned out to be a fairly smooth journey, much easier than what I expected. My objective from the start was to have a balanced program in terms of issues and topics covered with a mix of traditional and liberal speakers. We wanted it to cater to different age groups and address not only religious but also social issues and topics of interest like health and business.

ASW: Tell us a bit about how the theme “*Faith and Unity*” came about. And what were the first steps in getting the Program Committee going.

VS: The theme was in place before I got on board. However the theme is pretty all-encompassing and easy to navigate through the program choices. For our very first meeting, we had twenty-three people attend as volunteers. Within a couple of meetings, the size doubled. That was a great sign for us. From that group, we formed a core group for logistical decision-making. However, the entire large group was involved in speaker selection etc. The Iranian Zarathushtis from our co-host, CZC, were with us every step of the way, throughout this process. We had an initial pool of 130 suggested speakers. Then invitations went out to 65 speakers and 62 of them confirmed. That made me really happy. In terms of time allocation for each session, I personally wanted each session to be an hour long, but the Committee wanted to reduce it to 45 minutes to accommodate more speakers. .

ASW: Within the overall program, what is one personal highlight you would like to share? And what would you recommend to ZSBC, in Vancouver, to continue or further.

VS: There was no particular item to highlight. We wanted to cover topics that had not been addressed before. The panel on Zoroastrian parenting is one such example. We also made a conscious effort

Congress NAZC 2014

to have divergent views amongst the panelists. And, very importantly, a mix of Parsi and Iranian Zarathushti speakers. Some panels, like the Medical panel, had both Parsi and Iranian doctors. For the Young Mobed panel we could find only one Iranian mobed from Texas. I would encourage the Vancouver Congress to continue the Young Mobed Panel.

ASW: Your observation about lack of Iranian Mobeds is a little distressing. Do you think that there were no young Iranian Mobeds able to participate in the panel because of difficulty of time and schedule, or is it because there are none around in that age group?

VS: We asked CZC and all our Iranian volunteers to recommend and refer young Iranian mobeds but we had no success locally. We have one young mobed but he is of mixed Parsi and Iranian parentage.

ASW: So if you had a chance to do this all over again, both as Program Chair and personally; what would you do differently?

VS: We would have loved to have a venue with a larger capacity. We had a lot of people who wanted to attend because their families were speaking or performing. We had a tough time saying no to everyone. We did allow speakers to bring family members for their talks or session when they requested us. I would urge Vancouver to book a larger venue.

ASW: So in some ways that is an affirmation that North American Zoroastrian Congresses are doing something right; selling out entire Congresses.

VS: Yes that is correct. We are really proud that we could sell out months ago. What really helped us selling the Congress was the Youth Program that Khushchehr Italia organized. Vancouver should really continue that.

ASW: What do you see as the lasting legacy of the Congress for the local ZAC community?

VS: I think there will be a lot of bonding and

lasting friendships. Working with my committee of 40 people brought some great new friendships. The ZAC community should continue small and big events. It will also keep the community members sitting on the fringes to become more involved. Events such as this also bring about more camaraderie between the Parsi and Iranian communities here locally. We hope that there will be more events between ZAC and CZC. We have had some combined events and we hope to have more of these in the future.

ASW: Any other thoughts?

VS: My hope is to see more collaboration between co-religionists with disparate cultural identities to come together and do things together. The language barriers do exist, but we hope they will be overcome in the years ahead.

ASW: Wishing you and everyone a fantastic Congress and a happy new year 2015

VS: Wish you the same. Hope you have an amazing time over the next four days.

**No two leaves are alike,
and yet there is no
antagonism
between them or
between the branches on
which they grow.”**

—Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
(1869-1948)

KEYNOTE WELCOME BY MR NADIR GODREJ



Nadir Godrej receiving the congress gift from CZC President Shida Anoushiravani

Photo: Jasmine Driver,
Parsiana

Some fear Zoroastrians may not last
And yet they had a glorious past.

The Achaemenians come to mind.
More noble rulers are hard to find.

We often find that might is right
But they believed that right is might.

All faiths found their rule was fine
By and large they were benign.

They were fair to one and all.
They made all the barriers fall.

Was it strategic or tactical?
High principled or practical?

Did Asha inspire their belief?
No doubt they found much relief

Since tolerance, led of course,
To the use of much less force.

It should be noted that this tribal
Accommodation's in the Bible-

The reconstruction account
Of the Temple on the Mount

And the return from deportation
Of the entire Jewish nation.

And influenced by our thought
Zoroastrian ideas were then brought

Into the Judaeo-Christian tradition
And more than just a little smidgen

Both then and later through Essenes.
We often worry about our Genes

And fear that they may all be lost
And try and save at any cost,

Though all don't think that is fair.
Some costs, most wouldn't want to bear!

But why not think in terms of memes?
To me it most certainly seems

That some solace one can surely find
In good thoughts in a non-Zoroastrian mind!

But if, as now, so many fear,
Indeed someday we'll disappear

The world will then be bereft
Of all Zoroastrians but will be left

With good thoughts providing might
To all engaged in the good fight.

For centuries the Achaemenians thrived
But we can't say that they survived.

As for the Zoroastrian story
Once more we reached Imperial glory.

The Sasanians however were beset
By challenges with which they met.

And Christians from the West
Quite often put them to the test.

And Buddhists too were on the rise
And often they were faced with cries

Of heretics of every hue,
Constantly something new.

And I suppose it's only fair
The priests became quite doctrinaire.

Though historically it is a stretch
I will still try and sketch,

With imperial metaphors
As our intellectual spurs,

Two pictures of religious thought.
In one picture truth is sought

Through spiritual lessons taught
And deeper meaning that is sought.

The literal word is carefully vetted
And metaphors are interpreted.

Whereas in the other picture
One literally follows scripture.

Our prophet enjoined us to think
Thoughtless faith leads to the brink.

Should religion guide our way
Or deal with ritual minutiae?

In India we are in a mess.
You've done better, I must confess.

Your Mobed Council guides you well
And as far as I can tell

Issues are resolved without dissent
And this has most surely meant

That faith which may well cause a rift
Has not done so and that's a gift

Your Mobed Council gave to you
Much credit is therefore due

To Ervad Dastur and Ervad Bagli
For things could get very ugly

If theological disputes caused splits.
We would be at the end of our wits.

Theology is often disputed
And cannot by logic be refuted.

And faith which is ideally a link
Can often cause unity to sink.

Our beliefs indeed should be strong
But we shouldn't assume others are
wrong.

Some benefit we should give
And learn to live and let live.

Respecting the other's right to think
Makes religion a stronger link.

And scholars who have been tracking
Religions often see unity lacking.

Thus multiple splits are the order of the
day
And schismatic violence often the way.

The balm of tolerance gives immunity
Allows enjoyment of faith and unity.

For years Zoroastrians were obscure
And though, of course, we can't be sure

We probably would have stayed that
way
If the British hadn't come to stay

In India. Now the Parsi skill

At making ocean worthy ships
That could go on trading trips

Endeared them to the powers that be
In the giant East India Company.

They acted as go betweens
And soon became men of means.

By the travel bug, some were smitten
And duly ended up in Britain.

Dadabhai Naoroji was one such
And in his life achieved so much.

But here what I would like to cite
Is his concern for the plight

Of Zoroastrians under Persian rule
Imperialists of a different school.

As an MP he sought out the Queen.
And Victoria duly deigned to lean

On the Shah, then visiting
And he agreed that they could bring

Our Dadabhai to visit him.
The situation was very grim

But the Jazyia tax was lifted soon

And Naoroji got a special boon-

A Parsi representative
Who could visit and then give

A report on their condition.
Hataria undertook this mission.

The communities were then in touch
The Iranis benefitted much

And always showed their gratitude.
Though perhaps the Parsi attitude

Was early on at its best.
And here of course we will test

If we can have true unity
Through both parts of our community.

The Zartoshty brothers and Arbab Guiv
I most sincerely do believe

Had their philanthropic attitude
Partly from a feeling of gratitude.

And I would also like to share
The immense contribution of Fahrang
Mehr.

The Rivetnas, Rohinton and Roshan
Once had the excellent notion

Of aggregating each association
Into the FEZANA federation.

The journal was also their creation
And we hold them high in our
estimation.

And FEZANA's gone from strength to
strength
I can't comment at much length.

But all your leaders are very dear
And all of them deserve a cheer.

FEZANA's recognized by UNO
As an official NGO.

And when human rights are violated
We ensure perpetrators are berated.

With the Yazidis we have a tenuous link
And yet we raised quite a stink

When they were brutally attacked.
Other good causes will be backed.

In India there is a great fear
That Parsi's will soon disappear.

Now many things are being tried
In an attempt to slow the slide.

And Jiyo Parsi's the latest in the list
More breeding's basically the gist.

Many propound the supposition
That we could widen the definition.

We've always had an aversion
To any kind of conversion.

With both in the fold there's no doubt
But often many marry out.

Historically we would rather
Have the lone parent be the father.

But some would rather take a bet
On greatly widening the net.

In Bombay we haven't gone that way
And so we can't really say.

In Delhi it hasn't worked so well
But in North America as far as I can tell

There is a modicum of success
And wide acceptance is I guess

The reason why it could succeed.
The rest of us should take heed.

Some trends we can clearly see.
"But the future ain't what it used to be,"

As Yogi Berra famously said.
Will the trends mean we will be dead

Or will we show that we are wise
And find a way again to rise?

The next few days will be great
As all of us deliberate.

Let us overcome our fears
And live at least a thousand years

Nadir Godrej is the Managing Director of Godrej Industries Ltd. He holds a Master of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from Stanford University and an MBA from Harvard school. Besides his professional assignments, Mr Godrej was the former president of the Oil Technologists' Association of India , Indo –French Technical Association, current president of Alliance Francaise de Bombay . He is the recipient of several Life Time Achievement Awards. Mr Godrej's interest in poetry and linguistics has led him to author Life and Other Poems , a collection of English and French poems



Yasmin Kevala

Senior Real Estate Specialist
Sparkman Realty, Inc.
Cell: **813-380-0064**
E-mail: yasminhomes@verizon.net

**Tampa Bay Area
in Florida is
ideal for
Retirement and...**

Yasmin, a Parsi from Bombay, understands your needs and values. Yasmin has helped South Asian immigrants to secure **Primary or 2nd Homes** in the Tampa Bay area, which offers year-round temperate climate, a relaxed lifestyle, convenient airports, cultural centers, temples, entertainment parks, universities, professional sports, and much more.....

- Affordable houses in **ALL** price ranges.
- Great housing deals for **ALL** age groups.

Contact Yasmin: 813-380-0064 or
yasminhomes@verizon.net

More details on: TampaBayUpscaleHomes.com



Congress NAZC 2014

Keynote Address:

FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS AND PASSIONS, PARISA KHOSRAVI

KESHVAR BUHARIWALLA

The XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress, held in southern California from December 29–January 1, began with the stage full of Mobeds and our prayers recited in unison. A beautiful Jashan brought tranquility and clarity to the events that would unfold over the next three days. The Opening Ceremony commenced with welcome remarks from Katayun Kapadia, FEZANA President, Bomi Patel, FEZANA Congress Chair, Tehmi Damania, President, Zoroastrian Association of California, and Shida Anoshiravani, President, California Zoroastrian Center. The International Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel was now completely full and the audience was eager to begin its Congress journey.

Nadir Godrej, Managing Director at Godrej Industries Ltd., delivered the Keynote Welcome. He took us on an exceptional voyage with his ‘poetic magic’. His 199 lines of rhyming lyrics captured our Zoroastrian history from the Achaemenian times, to the rise of Parsis during British rule, the lifting of the Jaziya tax in Iran and through to our current North American successes, with oh so much in-between! It is a must read. Let us all make the last two lines our creed, “*Let us overcome our fears, And live at least a thousand years!*” His Keynote Welcome is printed in its entirety on page 41

Parisa Khosravi, Senior Vice President of Global Relations for CNN Worldwide, delivered the Keynote Address, with the theme of “*Follow Your Dreams and Passions.*” Parisa’s work has garnered countless recognitions and esteemed awards: the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, Edward R. Murrow Award, Peabody Award, and Emmy Award just to name a few. Her distinguished career spanning nearly 30 years at CNN is a testament to following your dreams and passions and then excelling in your chosen endeavor.

Parisa began her address by relating a story about Zoroastrians and the guiding principle of honesty, which she described as her family’s foundation. The most poignant moment in her talk came when she described her parents, Ardeshir and Parvin Khosravi. Parisa called her father the “true achiever and pioneer because of his hard work and honesty.” Mr. Khosravi served in Iran as a Governor, Deputy Governor General and finally as the Deputy Minister General at the national level. To ascend to this national position as a minority was truly a historic achievement. As the applause began, so did the standing ovation for Mr. Ardeshir Khosravi, who was present in the audience. (photo page 45)



Parisa Khosravi
Sr. VP Global Relations, CNN Worldwide

Parisa knew precisely when she made the decision to become a journalist. She relates the story of seeing live coverage of the hostages upon their arrival in Germany, soon after they were released from Iran. She noticed that the journalists were running around, right in the middle of all the action. Journalism was to become her calling. Some questioned Parisa's decision to join CNN right after graduation from college. Parisa could have accepted other job offers, some for more money, but she knew CNN was the path for her. Parisa described how covering international events has changed over the years. Live shots during the first Gulf War required a 2000 pound satellite dish; today, live shots can be done using cell phones! Through the years, Parisa's passion and strong editorial instincts steered much of CNN's international coverage and growth.

Though there have been many accolades and awards, Parisa describes the concern for the safety and security of those who worked for her as her main priority. She explains that sending reporters and teams into harm's way was a challenge she took seriously and for all her effort, she was affectionately named "Mother Parisa." Through her work, Parisa has met many dignitaries and Heads of State. However, her good fortune of meeting two Popes over her career was an extraordinary experience. Parisa recently announced her retirement from CNN. She stated that this is not a retirement from work, but rather an opportunity for her to give back in other ways.

In the course of her keynote address Parisa took us on her amazing life's journey, enthraling us with her experiences and her accomplishments. Her message to the young folks in the audience was clear: ***"Just because you follow your passion, does not mean it will be easy. Once you put in the time, then you earn your success due to your own merits."*** Parisa ended by reciting a poem wishing Iran prosperity and freedom.



Parisa Khosravi with Mr. Ardesir Khosravi

P a r i -

s a's passion and strong editorial instincts steered much of CNN's international coverage and growth.



Photo courtesy CNN and Jasmine Driver, Parsiana

Keshvar Buhariwalla lives in Flower Mound, Texas with her husband Kali and their three sons, Zaal, Cyrus and Hormuz. She is active in the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (ZANT) and enjoys participating in her local book club and running group.

YOUR HEALTH JOURNEY—HOLISTIC HEALTH

PARMIS KHATIBI

The adage “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is especially true when applied to health care. The key to better health does not lie primarily in more effective health care, although that is both important and desirable. To become healthier and reduce the growth of spending on medical care, we must create a seismic shift in how we approach health and the actions we take. We need to expand our focus to address how to stay healthy in the first place and how to prevent disease. Remember, it is much easier to prevent disease than to treat disease!

We had a very diverse, robust panel of healthcare experts with us at the North American Zoroastrian Congress who took us on a journey that focused on proactive, practical ways to utilize an integrative approach to health including diet, movement, rejuvenation, spirit and dietary supplements. Our panelists empowered our audience with the knowledge to help them reduce their risk for illness and heal them from diagnoses and to gain optimal wellness.



We started the panel discussion with **Dr. Cyrus Mody**, a prominent neurologist in private practice, who educated us on Alzheimer's disease and dementia. We learned that to ward off Alzheimer's and dementia, we really need to provide our entire body with exercise. Did you know that physical exercise reduces the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease by about 50%? We exercise our bodies, but do we really exercise our brains? Do you learn something new that stimulates your brain every day? Whether it be learning a few new words in a foreign language or reading the newspaper upside down and then pausing and asking yourself, what did I just read? This take-home message about exercising our brains is key to staying cognitively strong and healthy. Moreover, having a healthy diet consisting of vegetables, fish, legumes, wine, tea, and chocolate are key in helping prevent Alzheimer's disease. Lastly, have an active social life! Staying socially active may protect against Alzheimer's disease so one should make their social life a priority by doing activities such as volunteering, taking group classes, or joining a club.



We next had **Dr. Farhad Contractor** talk about breast cancer and its prevalence in Zoroastrian women. Here are some daunting statistics. Every 60 seconds someone dies of cancer. Cancer takes the life of one of every four people in the US. In a lifetime, one in two men and one in three women are expected to develop cancer. Shockingly, cancer diagnoses worldwide are projected to increase by 45% in the next 20 years ranging from 1.6 million in 2010 to 2.3 million in 2030. I want to mention that 50% of cancer diagnoses could be prevented with the implementation of lifestyle changes known to decrease cancer risk. Many women are not aware of the profound effect that lifestyle changes can have on breast health. For example, an analysis of study data published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology showed a significant improvement in survival rates among women with stage 1 breast cancer that both exercised for at least 30 minutes per day and maintained a diet that included five servings of fruit and vegetables. And new research published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute shows that exercise can also prevent the disease. Researchers found that just 30 minutes of daily cardiovascular exercise (think moderately brisk walking) can reduce the risk of breast cancer between 40% and 60%. Exercise reduces a woman's risk of dying from breast cancer by about 50% and it reduces her risk of getting the disease in the first place by up to 60%. This would be considered a miracle drug if it were in a bottle. Lastly, comprehensive management of cancer must address the carcinogenic influence of our greater physiology, specifically systemic inflammation, imbalanced immunity,

insulin resistance, an increased bio burden of toxins, and an unregulated stress response. A transformative approach to cancer utilizes the understanding of the interdependencies found in our physiology in order to identify, and then restore, optimal function to the key determinants of tissue and cellular health. And, women, don't forget to do self-breast examinations and get your mammograms once a year as warranted by your age!



We next transitioned over to heart health and had our very own Los Angeles-based cardiologist, **Dr. Freny Vaghaiwalla Mody** talk about cardiovascular disease. Over two thousand Americans die each day of cardiovascular disease and 1 in 6 deaths are from coronary heart disease. What really determines health or disease for most of us is our lifestyle! Anger increases your risk of heart attack by 230%. Prevention is our foundation! Sleep, emotional and mental balance and stress resilience, spiritual and social balance, physical activity and structural balance and environmental protection are key to preventing heart disease.



Dr. Parshan Namiranian talked to us about our sleeping habits. Do you snore loudly? Do you feel tired even after a full night's sleep? These might be symptoms of a potentially serious sleep disorder called sleep apnea in which breathing repeatedly stops and starts and you might have it without even knowing it! At least 10% of people older than 40 years of age snore regularly and significantly. Loud and intermittent snoring is found in almost all patients with Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). In OSA, if you go untreated, you can get high blood pressure, heart attacks, heart failure, stroke and deadly arrhythmias. Your risk factor for OSA increases if you are obese, have a collar size greater than seventeen inches and have issues with your upper airway anatomy. If diagnosed with OSA, there are a few modalities from weight loss to using a continuous positive airway pressure machine to certain medications and oral appliances that can help provide relief of obstructive sleep apnea. Thanks to Dr. Namiranian, we know why sleeping habits are so important to our overall health and if we snore, we should ask our physicians to make sure it is not a sequel of an underlying health issue.



We ended the health panel discussion with a very lively and robust talk by **Dr. Nikan Khatibi** about some of the healthy habits among the world's elite centenarian populations—that is, those living more than 100 years of age. During his investigations of journals, books, and literature searches, he found that most published data alluded to the five areas of the world with the highest concentrations of centenarians: Loma Linda, California; Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; Sardinia, Italy; Ikaria, Greece; and Okinawa, Japan. To summarize what Dr. Khatibi presented, in essence the key to becoming a centenarian is to consume a plant based diet, put family first, have a sense of purpose every day, drink more red wine, get more sunlight, and be physically active.

Some final thoughts. I believe with all of my heart that we are what we eat... You can't put bad gas in a car and then expect it to win the Indy 500. We are no different. Our diet affects everything we do - starting with digestion and absorption (for better or worse), and the downstream effects that our diet has on our level of inflammation, our ability to handle stress via hormone production, regulation of blood sugar and cholesterol, sleep quality, hormone balance, bone strength, muscular tone, weight management, skin elasticity and tone, brain function, and prevention of chronic disease. Hippocrates was right when he said "Let food be your medicine and medicine be your food."

Lastly, the secret to your success is found in your daily routine. You'll never change your life until you change something you do daily. To achieve change in your life, simply plug new routines into your day and stick with them until they become habits. The concept amounts to a grown-up version of the rule my mother instituted when I started first grade: Finish homework first, and then you can play outside. The bigger payoff is that these new habits can, in turn, become keystones supporting other, seemingly unrelated changes.



Congress NAZC 2014

Change one habit, and maybe you will feel better, your family life will be happier and your social life will improve. And, remember, life is meant to be lived fully. Life, with all of its beauty and ugliness in tow, is meant to be an exuberant manifestation of our soul. Life is a most precious gift, with each life unique in all of creation.

Wishing you a life to be lived with reverence, exuberance and integrity

Dr. Parmis Khatibi is an anticoagulation and antithrombotic clinical specialist at University of California Irvine Medical Centre as well as clinical Adjunct Professor for the University of California, San Francisco, School of Pharmacy and USC School of Pharmacy. Parmis Khatibi dedicates her time to political and philanthropic causes. She has served on the Board and as committee member of Blind Children's Learning Centre, California Women's Leadership Association, Invisible Children, American Red Cross of Orange County, Zoroastrian Youth Of North America, Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans, Farhang Foundation.

KERSHAW K. KHUMBATTA, P.C.
Certified Public Accountants
Business and Individual Tax Planning,
Accounting and Tax Preparations,
Federal and State Payroll Processing & Tax Audits.
Yearly internships available

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

ZOROASTRIAN FOOTPRINTS ON THE CHINESE SILK ROAD

JENNY ROSE

Recent archaeological discoveries in Central Asia and China have revealed an 'eastern Iranian' articulation of the Zoroastrian religion which has not yet been fully explored. This eastern Iranian form continued in the region to the northeast of modern Iran until the early 8th century CE. It was from that region, particularly the area known as Sogdiana, that the religion made its way into Chinese territory by the 4th century CE, where it endured for the next six centuries.

Dr. Jenny Rose's recent presentation at NAZC explored some of the finds in northern and northwestern China that demonstrate a significant Zoroastrian presence there during this period. (Most of the information that she introduced relating to Sogdians in their homeland can be found in the *FEZANA Journal* referenced below). Dr. Rose's talk began with the journeys of the Chinese imperial envoy, *Zhang Qian*, who, in the late 2nd century BCE, met with several Iranian-speaking peoples to the west of China - the Sogdians, Ferghanans, Bactrians and Parthians. These encounters led to the establishment of a trade network between Iran and China, along routes to the north and south of the Taklamakan Desert.



FIG. 1 Tang *mingqi* (tomb figure) of Central Asian groom on a horse.

Zhang Qian took gifts of silk, gold, and iron weaponry to the Parthians, and not long afterwards, the Parthians sent an embassy to the emperor, *Wudi* (110-100 BCE), bringing the *pipa* (Persian lute) and entertainers. Ensuing trade exchanges with China were of great benefit to the Parthian military: *Plutarch* (c. 46-122 CE) wrote that when the Parthians fought *Crassus at Carrhae in 53 BCE*, they terrified the Romans, dazzling them with their 'glittering armor' and 'banners of silk and gold that shone like fire.' The Chinese military also benefited from this trade alliance: *Zhang Qian* returned with horses and alfalfa seeds to feed them; and a later delegation of Sogdians brought horses from Ferghana to China as gifts for the emperor. Chinese legend spoke of these horses as 'heavenly, flying horses' that were of 'dragon's seed' and 'sweated blood.' Tang dynasty (618-907 CE) tombs contained terracotta figures of these horses, and of the Sogdian grooms and trainers who accompanied them to China. These horsemen were depicted with Phrygian caps, curly beards (often red), and long noses (Fig. 1).

5th and 6th century Chinese sources describe the arrival of many Sogdians in inner China, to the east of Dunhuang. In Chinese towns that had a sizeable Sogdian population, the emperor appointed an official to be in charge of Sogdian commercial and social affairs. This official was known as a *sabao* – a title from the Sogdian word for 'caravan leader.' The *sabao* also looked after religious matters, but it is not clear whether he functioned as a priest.

The most significant recent finds relating to these Sogdian communities have been several unusual funerary monuments, unearthed in the city of Xi'an. These monuments contain epitaphs and imagery identifying the deceased as both Sogdian and Zoroastrian.



FIG. 2 An Qie's Funerary Couch and Gateway, Shaanxi Historical Museum.

One such monument is the funerary bed of a *Sabao* from a prefecture near Xi'an. His epitaph states that he was named *An Qie*, the son of a Sogdian immigrant from Bukhara, and that he died in 579 CE, at the age of 61. The iconography on the doorway tells us that *An Qie* was a Zoroastrian: three camels in the center hold up a table on which stands a fire holder, and in each lower corner is a priest with *padan* conducting the funeral rituals. The priest has bird legs, wings and feathered tail. The same image appears on other Sogdian

graves from northern China, and is thought to represent the presence of Sraosha. In *Videvdad* 18.14-15, Sraosha is associated with the rooster, whose crowing announces the dawn of the fourth day, and banishes evil.

Elsewhere, Sraosha guards the soul during the three days after death, and helps the soul to cross the bridge on the fourth day (Y 57.25, MX 2.124).

The twelve stone relief panels of An Qie's couch are painted in color: red, black and white, with a gold background (Fig. 2). They show vivid scenes of An Qie's lifestyle as a *Sabao* in the Chinese capital in the late 6th century. An Qie is depicted wearing a Central Asian caftan and hat with a fur brim, conducting negotiations with other high-ranking men – in a pavilion, at a stately banquet, on horseback, and playing dice.



FIG. 3 Wirkak's Sarcophagus (south side), Xi'an City Museum.

Another type of Sogdian funerary monument was a stone house-shaped sarcophagus, found at Xian in 2003 (Fig. 3). The outer walls of the sarcophagus are covered with carvings that still have traces of paint and gilding. This tomb also belonged to a *sabao*, and it tells us in both images and words not only about his lifestyle but also about his beliefs. A bilingual Chinese-Sogdian epitaph above the 'door' of the tomb tells us that the deceased's name was *Wirkak*; that his ancestors had come from *Kesh* (*Shahr-i Sabz*, in Uzbekistan); that his

grandfather had also been a *sabao*; and that his wife, *Wiyausi*, was also of Sogdian origin. Wirkak had died in 579 CE in his 86th year, and his wife a month later; their three sons had then built their tomb, 'in a suitable place' in Xi'an.

'Windows' carved on each side of the door of Wirkak's tomb, show musicians playing instruments, as if to welcome the couple into the 'house of song,' and below each window, to the left and right of the door, is a fire tended by a bird-priest, almost identical to that over the gateway entrance to An Qie's tomb. The eastern wall of the sarcophagus illustrates the judgment of the soul. Two Zoroastrian priests with *padan* and *barsom* stand at the entrance to the Chinvat Bridge, which is guarded by two dogs.¹

Records for Xi'an mention the restoration of a Zoroastrian temple there in 631 CE, for the reception of a Zoroastrian priest, probably Sogdian, but possibly Persian, since the first envoys from the Sasanian court came to China overland in the mid-5th century CE. *Peroz, the son of Yazdegerd III*, the last Sasanian king in Iran, arrived in Xi'an in around 673 CE with a retinue of courtiers, priests, and warriors. Peroz's statue is one of 61 foreign dignitaries outside the tomb of the Tang emperor *Gaozong* (r. 649-683). His inscription reads: '*Peroz, King of Persia, Grand General of the Right Courageous Guard and Commander-in-chief of Persia.*'

The acceptance of Zoroastrians in inner China came to an abrupt end in the mid-9th century, when the emperor Wuzong declared that *no* foreign religions could be practiced. After that, we have few details of any Zoroastrian activity in inner China until the Parsis began to trade through Canton in the late 18th century.

(Endnotes)

1 For more details on this illustration, see Jenny Rose, *Zoroastrianism: An Introduction* (I.B. Tauris, 2011); pp 153-157.

Jenny Rose teaches Zoroastrian Studies in the Department of Religion at Claremont Graduate University. She holds a doctorate in Ancient Iranian Studies from Columbia University, New York . She is the author of *Images of Zoroaster: the Persian Mage, through European Eyes: Zoroastrianism An Introduction and Zoroastrianism: A Guide for the Perplexed*.

RECAPTURE THE TASTE OF TRADITIONAL PARI
SNACKS
BADAM BATASAS
DAR NI PORI WITH ORANGE PEEL
AUTHENTIC BHAKHRAS

For prices, please contact Dilnavaz Meer
"MAMA MEER," SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 2005.

Tel: 281 491 8436
fmeer@comcast.net

ZARTHUSHTIS: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST



Mobed Dr. Ardesir Behi
Vancouver, BC Canada



Dr. Rastin Mehri
Vancouver, BC Canada

In Iran, their home country, Zarathushtis identified themselves as *behdêns*, or the followers of the *Good Religion*, and despite living amongst majority Hindus and Muslims in India and in Iran respectively, they maintained their own culture based on religious and regional ties of identification. This cultural phenomenon—*Zarathushtiness*—would not so easily dissipate with the advent of the modern world. The Parsis brought with them from Iran a solid sense of their own ethnicity; and whilst Zarathushti religious beliefs and practices were amending in India and in Iran, particularly after secularization in the twentieth century, there appeared schisms within different Parsi and Iranian Zarathushti groups: ethnic, political, and cultural identities, that have persisted through different epochs and into the succeeding generations.

On a grassroots level, this ethnicization may indeed be traced all the way back to early literary productions extant in Middle Persian or Pahlavi texts. It is our contention that the first institutional expression of this ethnic identity based on the religious and Zarathushti ties of identification came at the height of the mid-tenth century. Zarathushti self-understanding as people was expressed in innumerable Middle Persian/Pahlavi texts. One of the most intriguing of these is the *Abar Madan i Shâh Vahrâm Varzâvand*, an unique, impassioned and polemical text describing hardship that was experienced by the Zarathushti community in Iran after the Islamic conquest of the region, and the subsequent punitive laws that were put upon the adherers of the ancient religion.

The text, which is published in the corpus known as the *Pahlavi Texts*, highlight the popular myth of the return to Iran the quasi-messianic figure *Shâh Vahrâm Varzâvand* or the ‘Victorious King Bahrâm’, and his reestablishment of the Zarathushti religion as the dominant religion in Iran. Various editions of this text have been examined, translated and discussed by a number of scholars such as H. W. Bailey (in his *Zoroastrian Problems* 195–196 [transcr. and transl.]); Mary Boyce, “Middle Persian Literature” (1968, p.50 with fn.8), J. C. Tavadia (in “A rhymed ballad in Pahlavi” [in *JRAS* 1955, 29–36]), and by François de Blois (in his *Persian Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey* (in part 1: Poetry to ca. A.D. 1100. London: Luzac, 1992, p. 45) who comments that this text is a poem rhyming consistently in –ān, and that it bewails the Arab conquest of Iran and pines for deliverance; it thus clearly belongs to the early Islamic period.

It is believed that such Zarathushti teleological narratives sprouted up both during and after the first wave of Parsi migrants who left Iran. Parsis settled in India, wherein they later laid the foundation for what may be called the formal organizations known as the Panchayets.

It is our contention that the salience of the *Shâh Bahrâm* myth amongst Parsi immigrant communities in India and in the diaspora was an outgrowth of the Zarathushti identity. Common background and historical memory enabled Zarathushtis of diverse trades and economic sectors in both Iran and India to find common narrative and political aspirations that has remained pervasive overtime. A key factor in both the maintenance of a Zarathushti culture and political aspiration of the immigrant community was the noted teleological narratives.

۲. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را باید از این جهان بگیرند.

۳. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را بگیرند.

۴. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را بگیرند.

۵. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را بگیرند.

۶. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را بگیرند.

۷. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را بگیرند.

۸. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را بگیرند.

۹. سه ایشان که فرید و دلخواه (میرزا) بود که نهادن کردند که در جهان این دلخواه را بگیرند.

In the name of God On the coming of the victorious King Bahrâm

When shall a page arrive from the land of the Hindus, (announcing) the arrival of the King Bahrâm, from the lineage of the Kavis. For he (shall come) with thousand elephants ahead, he shall stand ahead of them holding elaborated flag/coat-of-arms in the style of the Sassanid kings. The believers (Zoroastrians) shall then march their army ahead. An intelligent man ought to be sent as interpreter (dragoman), so that he may go to the land of the Hindus and describe what we have seen at the hand of the Arabs. Upon one group, they have caused religious affliction and have murdered our King, and under them they have (adopted) demonic religion, and eat bread like a dog. They have usurped the kingship from the Sasanids, neither by arts nor by virtue, but via abhorrence and deceit. They conquered and forcefully took from the people (their) women and sweet things, estates and perfumed gardens. They have instituted poll tax, they left multitude without leader, and extracted a large territory.

See how much evil that Lie (Wicked Spirit) has thrown into the world, for nothing is worst than that (Lie). May he come from amongst us, that King Bahrâm from the lineage of the Kavis; may we bring as much anger as Rustam brought anger of hundred Siyâwushes! May we throw down masjids, and set up (sacred) fires, may we cleanse the world of wicked idols! May the demonic creatures be annihilated from the world!

Concluded in peace, happiness.

Indeed, the most lasting expression of ethnic Zarathushti identity in Iran, India and in the diaspora today is the religio-cultural aspiration. Emerging as an organizing movement spearheaded in 1860s by Manekji Limji Hataria, a notable Parsi émigré living amongst the Zarathushti community in villages in Kermân and Yazd, this nascent Zarathushti identity made great inroads as the basis for the new education, bringing Zarathushti and Iran-centred history and narratives to both Iran and Parsi communities worldwide.

Despite attempts to unite the entire Zarathushti community under the banner of Zarathushti peoplehood, united under an “umbrella structure” of Zarathushti identity, Parsi and Iranian divisions have often prevailed in the diaspora. At the same time, when it came to supporting the communities and *Dar-i-Mehrs* in Iran, India and in the diaspora, avid voices from both Iranian and Parsi communities are often in

agreement and for conciliation.

It is our contention that re-examination and re-telling of the rich popular and common – albeit teleological – narratives extant in both communities will be a very useful force in unifying the Parsi-Iranian divide in the diaspora and bringing the community closer together.

Rastin Mehri holds a doctorate from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He holds two Bachelor Degrees in Arts and in Humanities and a Master's Degree in Biblical Studies from the University of British Columbia. He is a faculty member at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Douglas College in New Westminster, BC, Canada.

Mobed Ardeshir Behi, holds a doctorate in Biotechnology, Software systems, and Biomaterials from Iran, Canada and UK. He has propagated his knowledge to the general public and to our youth through services to the Iran Anjoman –e- Mobedan, the Fravahar organization and other community youth organizations. He chaired the International conference in Vancouver “In the year 3750:Thus spoke Zarathushtra”. He is the author of “Zarathushti Prayers” a book directed towards the youth of our community He is a postdoctoral fellow at University of British Columbia in Biomaterials & Nanotechnology.

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF YOUNG MOBEDS
IN NORTH AMERICA, PANEL DISCUSSION (FULL REORT PAGE 80)**
MODERATORS ERVAD SOLI DASTUR AND HOUTOXI CONTRACTOR
COVER PHOTO COURTESY JO ANN DASTUR

Bios

ERVAD DR SOLI DASTUR born as the last of 11 children in a priestly family from Udvada, he trained at The M.F. Cama Athornan Institute and completed his navar, martab and Samel ceremonies in Udvada Iranshah Atashbehram. After completing his B Chem Eng., in India, he completed his graduate studies at Northwestern University, Evanston. He worked for P&G for 30 years and consulted for 5 more after retirement.

Since January 2011 Soli has conducted 17 teleconferences of Zoroastrian religious classes and published 90 weekly scripture extracts with translation.

At NAZC 2010 Soli was awarded the Rohinton Rivetna Outstanding Zarathushti Award. He is married to Jo Ann for 48 years.

HOUTOXI CONTRACTOR, born in Ahmedabad, she worked for Tata Consultancy Services in Mumbai before joining her husband in Pittsburgh, PA. She lived there for 35 years before moving to California to be near her daughters and grandchildren.

Active in the Zarathushti community she served on the Board of Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and was the President . She is the co-chair of the FEZANA Welfare and Unity committee. She volunteers her time for several other organizations like Easter Seal Society and Allegheny General Auxiliary. She was a Founding member and president of the Tri-State Indian Physicians Auxiliary. She recently completed her mobedyar training

Parsi Family Study

Parsi Family Study, a new genetic-epidemiological study in Parsi Zoroastrians, was launched at the recent 17th North American Zoroastrian Congress (NAZC) held in Los Angeles, CA. Conceived by Dr. Saroja Voruganti, this study aims to identify genetic variants that increase the risk of metabolic disease in families of Parsi Zoroastrians, thereby developing a unique genetic resource for disease gene discovery and better treatment strategies. Previously, Dr. Voruganti and colleagues conducted a pilot study to assess the socio-demographics, medical history, lifestyle habits, and disease prevalence in Parsis in North America. This study generated great enthusiasm and interest in the Parsi community and a total of 206 people (90 men and 116 women) from Austin, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, and New York participated. The data generated as a part of the pilot study has been analyzed and a manuscript based on the results is expected to be published soon.

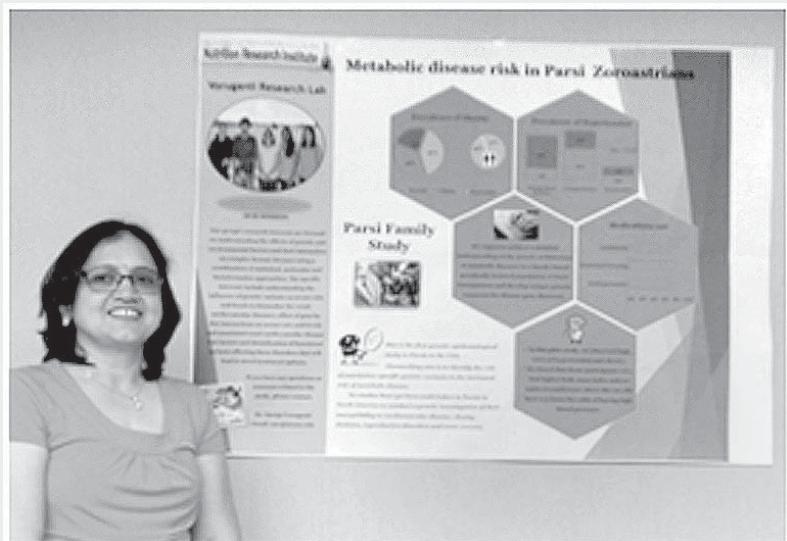
As a follow-up of the pilot study, the new Parsi Family Study will extend to investigating how genes influence the prevalence of diseases and their risk factors in the Parsi community.



participated in this initial phase of recruitment and provided saliva samples (for extraction of DNA and RNA); blood spots (for biomarker measurements); lipid levels, HbA1c, and uric acid measurements; blood pressure, body composition, and other related data. This was a very good turnout considering the fact that the recruitment was conducted over three days while the Congress was in progress.

The participants in this initial recruitment included 71 males (46.7%) and 81 females (53.3%) ranging from 13 – 83 years in age. It was very encouraging to see a large number of younger community members

SAROJA VORUGANTI





(including 8 pre-teens and teens and 45 participants in the 18-29 years age range) participating in the study. Most of the younger generation was not only interested in participating, but was equally interested in knowing their measurements and the associated health risks. Some of the youth who participated brought their parents, and in some cases, parents who participated managed to convince their children to participate recognizing overall benefits that this genetic study could offer to the Parsi community.

Genetic-epidemiological studies conducted to discover genes require large numbers of participants (at least 1000). While the initial recruitment at NAZC was a great success, this study needs continued support

and participation from the community, including from all the folks that participated in the pilot study.

Photo above volunteer Jimmy Dholoo with grandson Kamran

Dr. Voruganti's team expects to conduct additional recruitment sessions and will reach out to various regional Parsi organizations for assistance. We thank the community for the support so far and are looking forward to continued support.

Dr. Voruganti and her team express their sincere thanks and appreciation for the interest and support demonstrated by the community. Dr.

Voruganti would like to recognize and acknowledge the efforts and support of the organizers of NAZC, particularly Ms. Vira Santoke, Ms. Tehmi Damania, and Ms. Shazneen Gandhi, in promoting and helping with the recruitment. Dr. Voruganti would also like to thank Mr. Firdosh Mehta, Ms. Aban Rustomji, Dr. Dolly Dastoor, and Mody family (Dr. Cyrus, Dr. Freny and Kaizeen) for their continued support to the study. ***Photo left Volunteer Aban Rustomji***



Saroja Voruganti holds a doctorate in Nutritional sciences from the University of Texas, Austin, and her post doctoral work was in genetic epidemiology, at Texas Biomedical Research Institute, San Antonio. Her work is focused on identifying genetic factors and their effect on their interaction with environmental factors on the development of complex diseases. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Nutrition, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC

**KHORSHED JUNGALWALA MEMORIAL LECTURE
17TH NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS
LOS ANGELES , DECEMBER 30, 2014**

**LIVING THE GOOD RELIGION AMONG OTHERS:
COSMOPOLITAN ZOROASTRIAN THOUGHT FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO
MODERNITY**

DANIEL SHEFFIELD

BEING ZOROASTRIAN IN A COSMOPOLITANISM WORLD

On February 28, 1768, a young Parsi boy named Peshotan set out with his father by ship from the Indian port of Surat, bound for Iran via Muscat in Oman. The day's voyage began smoothly enough, but at sunset, the boat found itself in the midst of the proverbial "perfect storm" as the waves of the Arabian Sea grew so high as to evoke the mythical Mt. Qaf itself. Writing of this event many years later in his autobiography, composed in neat Persian verse, Peshotan relates,



The wind howling from left and from right, it was as though the day of Judgment had arrived.

The strong lines of the ship split; everyone had taken to beat their breast.

The ship rose and plummeted—it was as though the whole world were taking refuge with its Creator.

A man cried 'Khuda' in Persian another 'Ram' in Hindi. A third said 'Allah' in Arabic.

From a corner, someone was whispering 'Tangri,' in Turkish and another yelling 'O God' in English.

Some Africans were saying 'Molango' in Swahili. A cacophony had arisen from all over.

Yet, since, everyone had brought God to mind in this manner, toil and hardship evaporated with the wind.

(*Mulla Firuz, Din-Khirad, First Dastoor Meherjirana Library MS F82, f. 11r*)

Hearing the ethnically and religiously diverse crew of the ship invoke the name of God, each in their own language, was a powerful experience for young Peshotan. Indeed, it was one that would stay with him for the rest of his life. In that single moment of terror, divisions of identity melted away, leaving only a single raw moment of resignation to the divine will.

Thankfully Peshotan and his father reached Muscat, and continued on their journey to Yazd in Iran. In Yazd, Peshotan received an education as a Zoroastrian priest. Returning to India at the age of twenty-two, Peshotan became known to posterity by his honorary title of Mulla Firuz, the first Kadmi high priest of the Parsis of Bombay. Many years later, Firuz writes,

Though a Hindu says 'Ram' and an Arab 'Ilah,' both of them are on the path to the same goal.

Whether you say 'God' or 'Tangri,' the meaning is not different.

The words are one in meaning; it is simply the pronunciation that differs.

(*Mulla Firuz, The George-námah, (Bombay: R. Prera, 1837), I: 6.*)

At a young age, Mulla Firuz was confronted with a basic question that still presents itself to Zoroastrians all over the world. What does it mean to be a Zoroastrian in a world filled with religious diversity, a world in



Figure 1: Mulla Firuz (1758-1830)

affected by the cultures which surround them. In the pages of a cookbook, the *zereshk polow* and *kababs* of Iran are found alongside Gujarati *dal chawal* and English custards. Nestled away in a cabinet in the First Dastoor Meherjirana Library in Navsari, the institution where I conducted much of my doctoral research, lies a very important Persian manuscript—the oldest known cookbook belonging to a Zoroastrian, a text called the *Khulasat al-Makulat wa'l-Mashrubat*, “The Essence of Edibles and Potables,” copied on behalf of a certain Khurshedji son of Hurmuzji, son of Bhikhaji son of Meherji on the 7th of 27 September 1838 by a Muslim scribe, Sayyid 'Abdullah b. Nurullah al-Qadiri.

Remarkably, our oldest known Parsi cookbook does not describe what we would normally think of as Parsi cuisine—instead, it offers hundreds of recipes for what we might rather think of as North Indian or Mughlai dishes—*roghan josh*, *pulaos*, *kababs*, *sharbats*, and the like. Khurshedji was evidently a Parsi foodie with a taste for the exotic. The recipes include some of the very earliest of their type in India call for ingredients imported from the New World—pineapples, chili peppers, custard apples, ingredients which are now taken for granted, but were still unusual in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Just as Zoroastrian taste in the culinary realm has evolved along with the worlds in which Zoroastrians found themselves, so too did Zoroastrian taste in literature. Most scholarship on Zoroastrianism has tended to focus on literature composed in the ancient languages of Avestan and Pahlavi. Yet the millennium following the

which Zoroastrians constitute just a tiny fraction of that diversity? In thinking about his place in the world, Mulla Firuz began to formulate an ethic of cosmopolitanism. For contemporary philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah, the term cosmopolitanism evokes two interconnected strains of ethical thought: “One is the idea that we have obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kind, or even the more fundamental ties of shared citizenship. The other is that we take seriously not just the value of human life but of particular human lives, which means taking an interest in the practices and beliefs that lend them significance” (*Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, (New York: Norton, 2006), xv). In other words, to think about our relation to the world beyond us, we must consider the universal—that which connects us all as citizens of the world—while maintaining respect and appreciation for the differences that make us who we are as individuals. In order to think about this question, I will outline some of the ways in which Zoroastrians historically have come to interact with the world around them.

COSMOPOLITAN TASTE

Leafing through a typical Zoroastrian cookbook reveals a multi-layered history of the ways in which Zoroastrians have been

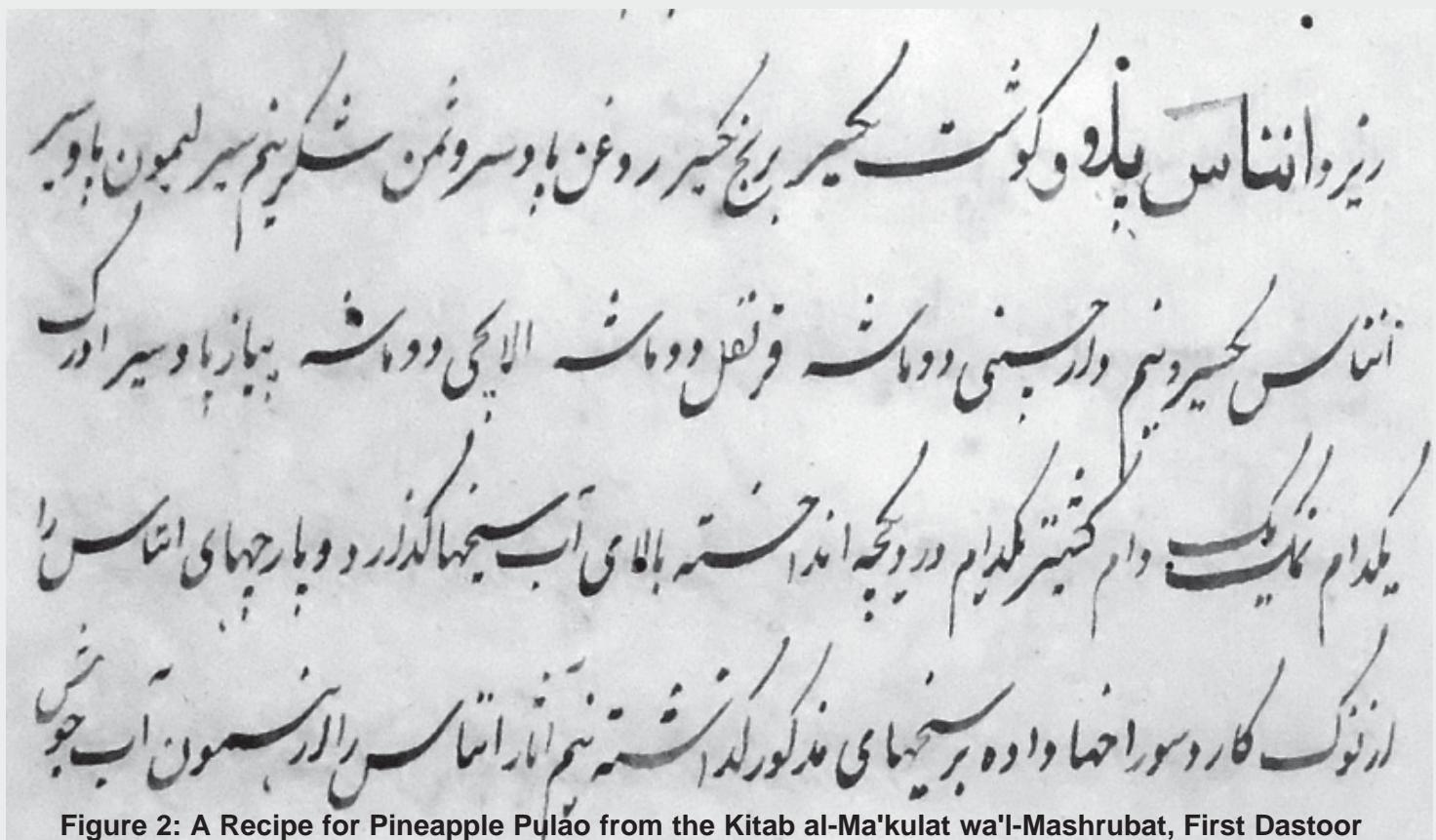


Figure 2: A Recipe for Pineapple Pulao from the Kitab al-Makulat wa'l-Mashrubat, First Dastoor Meherjirana Library Navsari Manuscript S-18

heyday of Pahlavi in the ninth century down to the widespread adoption of English in the nineteenth century reveals a “paradigm shift” in Zoroastrian thought in which Zoroastrians came to interact extensively with the religious groups around them. When Zoroastrians adopted New Persian (*farsi*) as a language for literary composition in the thirteenth century, the texts which underlay the formative Classical Persian canon had already been composed in the Eastern Iranian world. Foremost among these was the *Shahnama* of Firdawsi, completed in 1010 CE, a text which exerted great influence on all Zoroastrian writers in New Persian, from the first Zoroastrian author to write in New Persian, Kayka'us b. Kaykhusraw, all the way to the modern period. Other early poets too enjoyed continued popularity among Zoroastrian authors, like Khwaja'Abdullah Ansari of Herat (1006–1089 CE), the author of famous *munajat*—devotional poems; and Ilyas b. Yusuf Nizami Ganjavi (1141–1209 CE), whose narrative poetry paved the way for lyric and mystical epic. By the Mongol period, when Zoroastrians began to write in New Persian first in Rayy and Khurasan, then in Kirman and Yazd, an educational curriculum was being put in place throughout Mongol domains, heralding the institutionalization of Persianate knowledge-systems which eventually linked the widespread Persian-speaking world together through shared epistemology, shared literature, and shared taste.

Meanwhile, Zoroastrians in India began to write in Sanskrit and the oldest recorded forms of the vernacular Gujarati language at almost exactly the same time that Zoroastrians in Iran had begun to write in New Persian. Like New Persian, Sanskrit was an established language in which distinctive forms of thought were expressed by the time that Zoroastrians had begun to adopt it. Though Sanskrit was itself a not-too-distant relation of the Avestan language, the intellectual traditions of India and Iran had already developed in distinct and separate ways for more than two millennia by the time that Zoroastrians came to translate their ancient texts into Sanskrit. We know little about how Zoroastrians came to write in Sanskrit, yet the evidence would suggest that these authors participated in educational networks alongside non-Zoroastrians. In Western India, Zoroastrians,

Vaishnavas, and Jains composed texts in the same language and the same script, even including the same short poetic lines (*shlokas*) in the colophons of their texts. Along with Sanskrit, Zoroastrians in India had also begun to participate in the local literary culture of Gujarati, one of the vernacular languages of Western India. Zoroastrians were likely educated together with and read the compositions of members of the other communities with whom they shared their homeland.

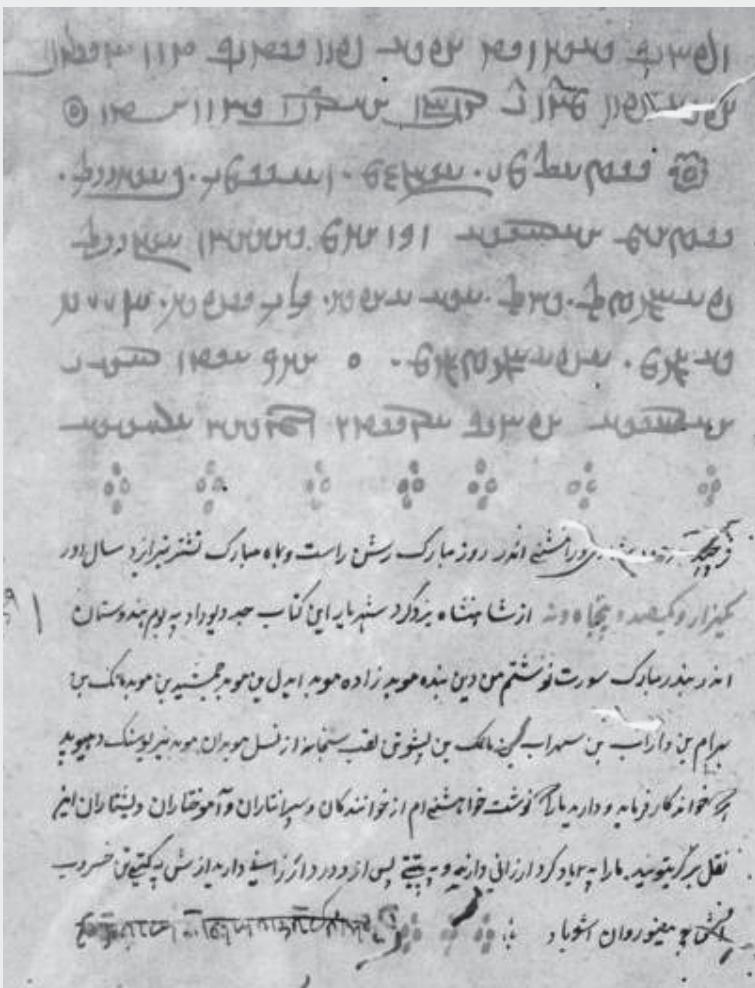


Figure 3: The Colophon of Manuscript G42, First Dastoor Meherjirana Library Navsari, which illustrates the simultaneous use of four languages (Pahlavi, Avestan, New Persian, and Gujarati) by Zoroastrian scribes.

As Zoroastrians in Iran and India came into contact with each other in the fifteenth century, the literary worlds of Persian and India began to interact in complex ways. Just as berry pulao and dhansak are equally at home in a Parsi kitchen, so too Zoroastrian poets were equally conversant in the Persian and Sanskrit traditions. In mid-seventeenth century Surat, the poet Ervad Rustam Pešotan Hormazdyar began to compose a series of epic poems (*akhyanas*) in Gujarati. In 1679 CE, Ervad Rustam adapted for the first time a selection of stories from the Persian *Shahnama* to Gujarati verse in a work entitled *Siyavashnamu*, “The Book of Siyavash.” Yet his adaptation was no simple word-for-word translation from Persian. Rather, Rustam creatively combined his education in Persian and in Sanskrit to tell an Iranian story for an Indian audience. Among other things, Rustam was interested in food. Describing the feasts of the ancient Iranian king Kaykhusraw, Rustam could not help himself but to imagine a delicious Parsi feast: “There were excellent *khaja*, *lađu*, *jalebi*, and *ghebar*, and the table was filled with fruits and sweets.”

Rustam’s works reveal an education in *rasashastra*, Sanskrit literary theory. His works are suffused with the tropes of Indic poetry. Retelling the episode of Siyavash and Kaykhusraw from the *Shahnama*, the text locates the action in a decidedly Indic setting. When the warriors Tus and Gudarz spy a Turanian maiden, the future mother of the hero Siyavash, the poet Rustam describes her beauty in an erotic mode:

Your head ornament is the full moon and the new moon.
From it rains so much light in this desolate desert.
The dot on your brow is set with Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus.
Who fashioned your nose-ring, that lantern in the night?
It is as though your earrings are inlaid with pearls and rubies.
Your neck ornament was put on by the lord himself.
Your bangles and wristlets glitter about like lightning.
The anklets on your leggings clink.

(*Siyavashnamu*, ed. T. D. Anklesaria, (Bombay: Fort Printing Press, 1873), 12–13).

Though relating the story of the Iranian national epic, Rustam Pešotan Hormazyar's lines here bear closer resemblance to those of the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa than to those of Firdawsi. Likening the beauty of the maiden to a highly ornamented dancing girl, Ervad Rustam evokes what a Sanskrit aesthetician would refer to as *shringara*, the feeling of erotic longing. Through creative deployment of literary tropes familiar to his audience, Ervad Rustam renders the remote Iranian past palatable for a seventeenth-century Parsi Gujarati audience.

COSMOPOLITAN ETHICS

Within the literary worlds of Iran and South Asia, Zoroastrian authors both read and were read by their Muslim, Hindu, and Jain neighbors. While these communities had come to share a common literary space through the cosmopolitan use of Persian, Sanskrit, and vernacular languages, the question of how they were to behave with each other in the real world remained an open one. For Zoroastrians, the treatment of non-Zoroastrians historically revolved around the notion of pollution, that non-Zoroastrians did not observe Zoroastrian purity regulations and were therefore to be avoided in daily life. Yet in the early modern period, remarkable new ideas about religious pluralism had begun to be formulated. In sixteenth-century Shiraz lived a man who called himself A'ar Kayvan. A mystic at the head of a religious order which he called the *kish-i yazdani* (the Religion of God), Kayvan preached that a widespread return to the ancient religion of the Iranians was imminent. Blurring the boundaries between Zoroastrianism and Islam, he declared that the *Zend-Avesta* and the *Qur'an* were equal guides to religious truth. A prominent figure in the intellectual landscape of both Safavid Iran and Mughal India, Kayvan interacted with the major figures of the "School of Isfahan" movement in Iranian philosophy as well as Shaykh Abu'l Fazl and Fayzi at the court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar, who ultimately incorporated elements of Kayvan's religious philosophy into the famous *din-i ilahi*.

Kayvan held that just as the world's languages originate from a common origin, the religions of the world are related. They are translations of the same divine message, all equal paths to salvation. This being the case, the Kayvan's followers were reportedly commanded to seek out and befriend others of different religious backgrounds as part of their religious practice. One should be civil and friendly to strangers regardless of their religious convictions:

The following is what this group calls "The Mixing of Cultures and "Table Manners": When strangers to their doctrine are introduced to their assembly, they do not mock them; they praise the conduct of their doctrine, and they accept what they say, not neglecting even the smallest bit of politeness and generosity, according to their principles. According to their belief, one can approach God through every religion. If those of other beliefs should present them with something disagreeable, for instance, if they proselytize to them to approach God, they do not worry much about it. Moreover, they do not command that one should change from the doctrine to which one belongs, as they do not consider anything besides the alleviation of human suffering to be obligatory. (*Dabistan-i Mazahib*, ed. Rahim Rezazade Malek, (Tehran: Tahuri, 1983) I: 47-48.)

Notably, Azar Kayvan taught his followers a principle that he termed *sulh ba hama* "Civility with All." In my research, I have argued that this term was borrowed by the Mughal Emperor Akbar as *sulh-i kull* "Universal Civility", which famously became an integral element of his imperial image as a cosmopolitan sovereign ruling over a kingdom composed of Muslims, Hindus, Jains, Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. In the late sixteenth century, the Universal Civility of the Mughal Court was so distinctive that the Ambassador of Queen Elizabeth to the Court of Akbar, Sir Thomas Roe, praised the ability of the different castes of Indians to work together without intolerance as being something good for business, arguing in British Parliament that the English themselves should adopt a similar policy regarding foreign labor. Roe's speech in Parliament concerning Akbar's cosmopolitanism was later discussed up by contemporaries of the English philosopher John Locke, whose 1689 *Letter Concerning Toleration* was a foundational text of the Early Enlightenment. Through their participation in the intellectual worlds around them, Zoroastrian thinkers in early modern Iran and South Asia played an integral role in the history of modern cosmopolitan thought.

Since the time of Azar Kayvan, Zoroastrian thinkers from Mulla Firuz to Dastur Maneckji Nusserwanji Dhalla have adopted positions of cosmopolitan religious pluralism. This ideal is today exemplified in the extensive interfaith efforts of many members of the community. What I have tried to illustrate through this short paper is that Zoroastrian thought did not simply turn inward and remain constant after the fall of the Sasanian Empire in 651 CE; rather, it continued to evolve through interactions with the broader world. Throughout the medieval and early modern periods, distinctive idioms of Zoroastrianism emerged in Iran and South Asia which continue to play a role in how contemporary Zoroastrians interact with the world around them. Tracing the changes in the way in which relationships between Zoroastrians and non-Zoroastrians have been conceived allows us better to understand what it means today to be a Zoroastrian in a diverse yet interconnected world.

Daniel Sheffield teaches Zoroastrian and Islamic Studies at Princeton University, where he is Link-Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow in the Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts. He has just completed his first book manuscript, *Cosmopolitan Zarathustras: Religion, Translation, and Prophethood in Iran and South Asia*. He maintains a website at <http://www.dansheffield.com/>

FROM BEHIND THE SCENES: TETE-A-TETE WITH THE ORGANIZERS

ARZAN SAM WADIA

INTERVIEW WITH SHAZNEEN GANDHI, SECRETARY, XVII NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS 2014

January 15th, 2015

Arzan Sam Wadia (ASW): Tell me a bit about yourself. Where did you grow up and how did you find yourself in LA?

Shazneen Gandhi (SG) : I grew up in Bombay and have lived in Toronto, Boston, New York, and Tokyo before moving to LA in 2006. I am a lawyer by profession, but for the moment, only practice my cross-examination skills on my two kids. ☺

ASW: How did you come to be involved with ZAC and the Congress?

SG: We made friends in the ZAC community, a very welcoming and supportive Parsi community, soon after we moved here. And a few years later, I began to teach the religion class, so my family was relatively active in the community. Initially, I was reluctant to volunteer for the Congress—it's a huge undertaking—but my father-in-law (Homi Gandhi, current FEZANA Vice-President) encouraged my involvement. He has worked tirelessly for the community, and I felt somewhat inspired to follow his lead.

ASW: What motivates you as a volunteer? It is, as you will attest, a tireless and sometimes thankless job. So what drives you?

SG: I started volunteering to teach because I had some good ideas that I shared with the person who was teaching then, and he asked me to join in. And I enjoy teaching. I've never had the chance to volunteer much before LA because I was working and had a lot of other commitments. The Congress came up at a point in my life, when I had the relative luxury of time—I thought why not do something? I love the Parsi community, it has given me a lot! Even as early as my time as a kid in Khareghat Colony, I have seen groups of Parsis get together and put on events and accomplish amazing things for many great causes.



Getting involved in the Congress was a chance to experience that and to get to know people in LA better, and hopefully, make a contribution. Ultimately, all the work on the Congress represented a tremendous growth opportunity for me, so I am glad I did not shy away from it.

ASW: Leading up to the Congress, what are the big positives that you will walk away with?

SG: The Congress selling out so early in the year was a nice surprise and a high point for all of us, especially the people who worked on the PR campaign. But even before the event sold out, I felt that the best thing that would come out of this experience, for me, would be the type of lasting friendships that are born out of long meandering conversations, tough arguments and *koyla* (nonsensical) jokes, when you're working late at night to figure things out in the service of something bigger.

ASW: With the event behind you, what will you say are the personal high notes from the three-day extravaganza?

SG: For me, it was really wonderful to see others like me, people with young children, attend the Congress in such record numbers. For years, I've heard from our elders how "the next generation"—meaning people in their 30s, 40s, and 50s—should get involved in community affairs, and how they don't show for things like the Congresses. And I felt that if we accommodated the needs of these people—made the event as affordable as we could, provided great programming and care for their kids, etc.—they would come. So I was involved in making this Congress the most family-friendly Congress yet. And it was a fantastic high for me to see that these efforts were enjoyed and appreciated. It was so fortuitous that I was in a position to help Dinsha Mistree bring to life his fantastic idea of an impromptu fireside chat with Vevaina and Sheffield. That was a wonderful chance for us to ask any and all questions that came to mind of two young scholars of Zoroastrianism, who responded with enthusiasm and knowledge and, perhaps most importantly, tremendous candor.

ASW: And so if you had to do this all over again, what would you change, personally and for the event?

SG: On a personal level, maybe I would take on less, or define boundaries more clearly [laughs]. In the context of the event itself, I think some of the things that we tried for the very first time presented a lot of lessons to be learned. First, never order fish at a Hilton [laughs]. I'm joking about that, of course. But examples of things to think about and may be re-work would be the poster session (I would highlight something like that more); do more PR for the teen track to drive greater attendance and open up the Puppy Party (who knew it would be so popular?). Next time, bigger room, more puppies, more ice cream, everyone welcome! [laughs].

ASW: What would you have done differently on the volunteering efforts or were there things that the entire organizing team could have done differently.

SG: Putting together an event of this magnitude involves a lot of moving parts. Of course, with the benefit of hindsight, you know there are things you could have done differently. But I think this is a question for people to reflect upon for themselves. I would have preferred it if things had been run in a more business-like manner. But in the community/ volunteer context there are a lot of personal relationships and a lot of emotion that must also be taken into account. So executing in a business-like manner is easier said than done.

ASW: What would you like to tell Vancouver? The do's the don'ts?

SG: I would encourage them to keep the Congress family-friendly: price breaks for families, children's care and programming, teen track, and a youth weekend, so that it appeals and is accessible to a broad spectrum of people in the community. I would also tell them to publicize their offerings so that expectations are informed. And finally, I would recommend building that rapport with the community through working on



Congress NAZC 2014

the event—be responsive to inquiries, ignore innuendo, do outreach through your PR, be supportive of the endeavors of other Zoroastrians by using the event to showcase what they are trying to do. I would tell them not to be tied down to what Houston or New York or LA did before them, but to build upon it instead.

ASW: Any tips on how to get the local community involved in volunteering?

SG: I think the people who step up first are the same people who always step up. But a Congress needs a LOT of people so it's a great chance for people to get involved for the first time. In focusing on creating a great event for the larger Zarathushti community, the host community should not miss the opportunity for community building among its own. Being inclusive, welcoming and going out and asking people to help is necessary. Not only our friends, but putting out calls in newsletters for people with certain skills can bring new people to the fore. And asking people to do things they are good at and enjoy and have time to do, allows the event to benefit from some stellar work, and allows the volunteer to feel valued and like they've made a difference. So it leads to an overall positive experience that can have the ripple effect of getting more people involved in volunteering.

I also think that the older generation, which naturally tends to be tasked with decision-making, should be a bit more positive and open to collaborating with the newcomers, who naturally come with new ideas. A lot of their fears, especially in the Parsi community, are grounded in past experience, and this overwhelming belief that our way of life is being eroded and will be eradicated. This is understandable, but... When I was working on this Congress, I came across a quote of Nelson Mandela's: "May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears." This is my wish for our community as well.

ASW: You bring up an interesting point about inclusiveness. How many of the Congress volunteers are also involved in the day-to-day running of community affairs at ZAC and CZC.

SG: I don't know. If I were to make a wild guess, it would be 70% regulars and 30% new ones. That's why I think outreach is important to get new people involved. And once they step up, getting to know them, collaborating with them, making them feel included and working towards a positive experience for all goes a long way in building community and making people want to stay involved.

ASW: What do you think is the lasting legacy of this Congress?

SG: Time will tell but a few things come to mind: We created a conversation about the things that matter to our community in North America. The dialogue was about the things that concerns us all, the things that bring us together and not about what tears us apart. When it was about religion, it was about our history and heritage and philosophy; not dogma. We built on what had been done before in providing programs for our children by providing a teen track. And we engaged all our young people in a way that is meaningful to them—with more opportunities for social interaction and less preaching—to foster a greater sense Zoroastrian identity. This Congress was inclusive, anyone could attend, we provided programming for all ages, and the sessions covered a wide spectrum of interesting subjects. I think the legacies will be born out of this.

ASW: Any closing thoughts?

SG: Is there anything more to say? [laughs] I was wildly impressed by the generosity and support we had—not just financially, but in terms of time, talent and spirit—from people who were *not* members of our host community in Southern California. You were, and continue to be, a fantastic support for us, Arzan. So were Vehishta Kaikobad and Nasha Dotivala of Houston. Many others also helped us in various different ways. And, of course, the countless delegates from all over, who were nothing but kind, understanding, encouraging and supportive to us about everything related to the Congress. We are really privileged to be part of such an amazing community.

ASW: Thank you Shazneen.

SG: Thank you, Arzan.

THE CHILDREN'S CONGRESS 2014

The inception of a Children's Congress, otherwise known as the "Mini" Congress, took place in Houston during the NAZC in 2010. Its success gained momentum and made its way to New York during the NAZC 2012, and eventually the NAZC 2014 held in Los Angeles.

The "Mini" Congress in L.A. was attended by thirty-five to forty Zoroastrian children, from five to twelve and was carefully formatted to cater to the multi-age level of the young attendees. The three days were planned in accordance with the agenda of the main Congress. Each day the children were introduced to new topics:

Day 1 The Jashan Ceremony and the role of the Ameshaspentas

Day 2: Our Persian Heritage, with emphases on the Iranian Empires and the Shahnameh.

Day 3: Parsi contributions to the world and contemporary Iranian philanthropists.

Every session began with a beautiful musical rendition of the *Ashem Vahu* prayer, followed by captivating PowerPoint presentations skillfully prepared by our young educator, Naasha Dotiwala.

After each lesson, the class would begin their daily projects, such as creating clay *farohers* and *afarganu*, decorating and painting platters and canvases, and learning the techniques of creating

VEHISHTA KAIKOBAD



Vehishta Kaikobad with art work of the children



Mobeds Zareer and Xeres Bhandara perform an interactive Jashan with children



illuminated folios from the Shahnameh. The children also had the pleasure of visiting Silloo Mehta's beautiful Shahnameh exhibition and the poster display

The highlights of the congress were our various guest speakers. On the first day, Mobeds Zareer and Xerxes Bhandara performed an interactive Jashan so the students could understand the significance of each part of the ceremony. Nusha Sepehri (10 years) performed an eloquent rendition of the story of Zal from the Shahnameh and later, her father, Afshin Sepehri, gave a quiz in which the children who answered the questions correctly received an English or Persian language CD of the Shahnameh. Nusha and Afshin Sepehri stressed the importance of spending time together as a family to improve bonding and learn about Zoroastrian culture. (**see photo above**)

Role playing of topics such as the *Jashan Ceremony & Kiss-e-Sanjan* cajoled the interest of our young minds who contributed to the success of their congress with motivation and enthusiasm. Special treats such as *Persian cakes* and *Parsi "Dar ni Pori"* made the topics even more "flavorful"!

The NAZC 2014 was truly a unique event, giving each child a greater appreciation for their religion, history, and culture.

We hope the "Mini" Children's Zoroastrian Congress will continue to contribute its positive impact to all future NAZCs.

Special gratitude to Naasha Dotiwala for being an integral part of the Mini Congress. Her help in formulating the topics and activities was invaluable.

I would also like to acknowledge Shazneen Gandhi, Cherezad Raetz, and all the mothers who assisted us in making the program successful. My eternal thanks to my family whose help made it all possible.

REFLECTIONS OF THE MINI CONGRESS THROUGH THE EYES OF A YOUNG ZARTHUSHTI EDUCATOR

NAASHA DOTIWALA

A feeling of intrinsic joy swept over me as I encountered children at the “Mini” Congress who were so motivated to learn about their religion, culture and history. I was filled with a sense of awe at the knowledge reflected by children who were from different backgrounds, yet were so enthusiastic to delve deeper in discovering their wonderful heritage.

The father–daughter duo, Mr. Sepehri and Nusha made me realize how fortunate I was to have participated in similar community activities at Sunday School held at the Zoroastrian Association Houston, together with my family.

The Mini Congress was, therefore, not just a beautiful experience for me, but a self-rewarding one. It has enriched me with a deeper sense of appreciation for my young Zarathushtis and for my community. I hope I can continue to serve my fellow Zarathushtis in various capacities for years to come.



Our Creative Young Zarathushtis' Artistic Talents on Display



Colorful canvas creations with clay afarganyus and Farohars



Illuminating manuscript for the Shahnameh



Patterns depicting Court Art of the Persians

Vehishta Kaikobad: The concept of a children's congress was conceived by Vehishta in 2010 at the Houston NAZC and she continues the tradition in each congress every two years. Ms Vehishta has a degree from University of Karachi and a Montessori diploma from St. Nicholas College, England. She has dedicated her life to early childhood Education for the past 25 years and has won numerous awards, including Teacher of the Year by Children's Museum, Houston. She has taught Sunday School in Houston since 1980 and has conducted Sunday School workshops at national and international levels with innovative teaching aids.

She is currently the School Curriculum coordinator and a Master Teacher for the Houston Montessori Centre. She is also a Senior Docent and teaching Artist at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and in 2008 was awarded the prestigious Mary Benedict Docent of the Year Award

Naasha Dotiwala is a sophomore at Loyola University, New Orleans majoring in Psychology and a double minor in Political Science and Strategic Communications. She has been a member of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston Youth group, where she has assisted Sunday School teachers. She has been a camp counsellor, tutored middle and high school students, is a Cardoner Leadership Fellow, and member of the National Society of Leadership and Success (Sigma Alpha Pi).

PUPPY PARTY AT THE CLOSING OF THE CHILDREN'S CONGRESS

A special Puppy and Ice Cream Party was organized for children on December 31, 2014 at the close of the Children's Congress. It was an unprecedented huge success with parents and children all having a great time.



Photo credit: Parynaz Vimadalal



A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: XVII NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS POSTER SESSION

I have attended Zoroastrian congresses for over two decades, and, in most cases, because I was asked to speak. These congresses have been an incredible opportunity for me to learn and develop as a Zoroastrian. But, often I have been one of the few young Zoroastrians attending the sessions. This lack of representation has bothered me—so, when it was Los Angeles' turn to host the XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress; I decided to join the program committee and explore better ways to engage the youth.

Taking a lesson from my professional life in academia, I proposed organizing a poster session during the congress. I wanted to give the youth another avenue to express themselves and their views of Zoroastrianism especially for those who do not feel comfortable with public speaking. I did not want to limit their artistic expression by setting limits such as age for participation, subject, medium, or size. Also, I wanted to encourage individuals as well as groups to participate. Finally, I did not want to prevent individuals who, for various reasons, could not attend the congress from submitting their poster. I requested them to send their poster with someone who is attending and can speak about their work.

We started promoting the poster session five months before the congress via the website and social media. We asked that interested participants e-mail me with their basic information and interest. I received a wide variety of inquiries from youth themselves as well as parents of interested participants. But, as the September deadline approached I only had received a handful of confirmed registrants. I was not sure if it was because there was too much choice, if it was too early to ask people to commit to bringing the poster, or because this had never been done before so people had to get used to the idea. As the deadline approached we decided to push it by a couple of months and get much more targeted. I started e-mailing the names of Zoroastrian studies classes at different associations and asked them if anyone in their classes would be interested in submitting a poster or if their class wanted to work together to submit a group poster. We also sent a targeted e-mail to families that had registered their children for the congress. These efforts brought the number of participants in the poster session up by a few, but nowhere near to what I had hoped.



Children discussing their posters with
Trity

TRITY POURBAHRAMI

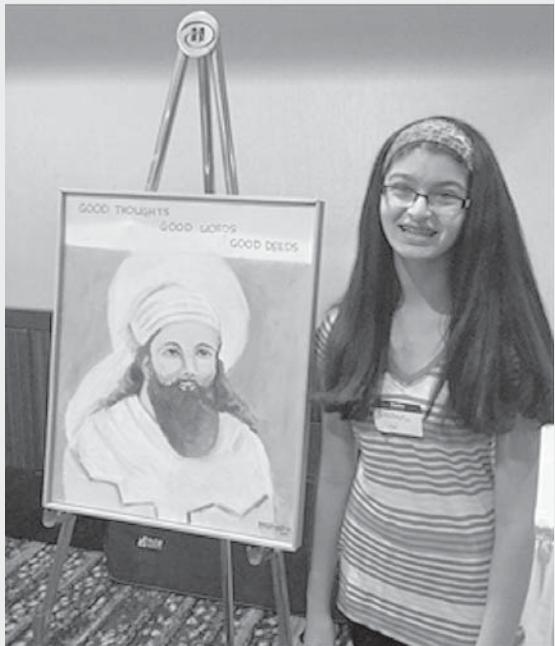


Finally, it was time for the congress and, to be honest, I was nervous and unsure of how the poster session would be received. We had fourteen posters on display and the artists came from all over North America. The first group to approach me about it was the lead of the congress' children's education program, Vehishta Kaikobad, who asked that I give tours of the posters to the students in her program. These tours were incredible! We split the students into two groups, five through eight for the first group and nine through twelve for the second group. I asked them to first walk round and look at the posters to decide which poster is their favorite and be ready to explain why. Then we came together again and as I walked to each poster I would ask, "*who chose this as their favorite?*" Everyone was engaged and they wanted to talk about how the posters influenced them. We were also fortunate to have the youth who created some of the posters in the group and the process of them sharing their thoughts and approaches further opened up the discussion. With the older

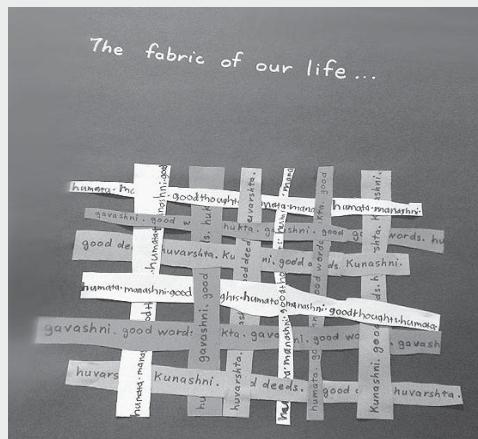
students I also asked them to point to a poster that has inspired them to create one for the next congress. Their responses were very encouraging and I could see the spark in their eyes as they spoke about the aspects of the posters that inspired them.

Throughout the three days of the congress, I heard many positive comments about the posters. The artists and their parents also approached me to talk about their experiences and provide suggestions for future congresses. One common question was whether there was a competition associated with the poster session. I explained that I chose not to make this into a competition, because I wanted it to be about a new form of expression; a new way for members of our community to come together and share their views and perspective on being a Zoroastrian. There were also many questions posed to me about the artists' thought processes and reasons behind their work. In these cases I tried to direct them to the artists, but in the future I suggest asking for a written description of the motivation for the work to be submitted with the poster. I recognize that this might become a hindrance to some, but I think it will add value to the experience of the artist as well as the viewer.

I sincerely hope that organizers of future Zoroastrian congresses will consider including a poster session



Natasha Patel with her poster of Asho Zarathushtra



and I would be happy to help them by passing on the lessons we learnt. Choice is a fundamental part of Zoroastrianism and thus I think we should continue to offer our community and, especially, the next generation choices in the ways of expressing their views and perspectives.

And last, but not least, here are some additional photos above that were taken at the poster session:

Trity Pourbahrami is the Director of Communications for California Institute of Technology (Caltech) Division of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the editor of the award-winning publication ENGenious. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Physics and Physiology and a Masters in Social Welfare and Public Administration. With her husband Peter and two young daughters she is very active in the Iranian and Zarathushti communities where she teaches Gathas. She was the President of the Zoroastrian Youth of North America (1997-1999)

PRE-CONGRESS WEEKEND, "PAYING IT FORWARD" A LOOK INSIDE THE FIRST YOUNG ADULTS' PRE-CONGRESS WEEKEND

KHUSHCHEHR ITALIA

The first congress I ever attended was the 2000 World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston, when I was nineteen. A couple of good Zarathushti friends and I decided to go together and see what this congress thing was all about. Not knowing what to expect, I have to say I was awed by the number of Zarathushtis in one place and at one time. I grew up in Los Angeles and since five—I had never been surrounded by so many Zarathushtis! I remember meeting a lot of people at the 2000 Congress and exchanged email addresses and chat screen names with them, as most people didn't have cell phones then. I felt slightly overwhelmed by all things Zoroastrian. I left the congress with memories of all the fun times and the knowledge acquired from the sessions. Most of all, I gained a stronger sense of community and a feeling that there are so many amazing Zarathushtis all over the world. I was hooked. Over the next fifteen years, I attended most congresses, uniting with old friends from all over the globe and creating some of the best friendships of my life; which shaped me into the person I have become. From meeting at congresses, to organizing our own smaller gatherings, to celebrating each others' milestones, my congress friends have become my family, my support system. For years now, I knew that if Los Angeles were to ever host a congress, I would without a doubt make it my mission to do whatever I could to pay it forward to future youth.

When the Los Angeles Congress schedule was released, I noted that it started on a Monday; it made sense to me to take advantage of the weekend before. The number one complaint of most congress goers is that three days is too short. This congress being a general congress (non-youth), I figured why not create fun outdoor activities for young adults (ages 18-40) to meet and mingle in a casual setting while giving them the opportunity to appreciate the sights and sounds of our beautiful, vibrant city. In past congresses, some of the most enjoyable experiences were the offsite excursions, so my instincts led me to believe if planned and executed well, this could be one memorable weekend.



From left Khush Italia, Roxanne Unwalla, Kaizeen Mody, Mahfrin Santoke, Malcolm Lakdawala and Mehernosh Gundevia

Planning an entire weekend takes quite a team, and what a great team I had! The weekend would absolutely not have been possible without the support and collaboration from the best team in all of Southern California, which included Roxanne Unwalla from Highland, Mehernosh Gundevia from Irvine, Mahfrin Santoke from Huntington Beach, Kaizeen Mody from West LA, and Malcolm Lakdawala from Chatsworth. They were intelligent, dependable, hard-working and shared the same enthusiasm for our end result. Despite our busy work and travel schedules, we were constantly in contact, providing ideas, feedback, and even comic relief when it was called for. The point is we had excellent communication and the same mindset, which was to work together to deliver an amazing experience for all.

The outline of the weekend came very easily, the real challenge was getting the congress committee and the other committee chairs on board with this plan. The main concern was the liability factor in taking so many people offsite. Mentioning that other congresses have done this before and even considering having everyone sign waivers, didn't appease their reservations. I understood that nothing like this had been done in the past but was confident that, if entrusted with the support and faith from the committee and its members, my Youth Committee and I could not only pull this weekend off but make this a weekend all young adults would remember and appreciate for years to come. For many months, there were countless discussions regarding the importance of having our weekend offsite and the steps taken to ensure the safety of the participants. They realized we weren't about to let this go and we were set on making sure this weekend would happen. We finally won over the support of the committee with the full backing of three key members, Tehmi Damania, Darayus Mistry, and Khushroo Lakdawala. Our committee was given free reign with the activities that were planned, to the budget mapped out, the costing, the companies and venues we worked with, to the logistics and details that went into making this weekend the success that it was.

And what a rousing success it was! We surpassed all our expectations by not only accommodating about 167 young adults throughout the weekend, but every event went as planned, buses left on schedule, and with no casualties. Two things that I am most proud of is that the entire weekend was provided at-cost, as the goal was to allow for as many young adults to attend as possible, and not a single young adult was turned away despite last minute requests. We kicked off with a low-key Friday night at Universal CityWalk, where dinner was on their own, with plans to meet afterward at Hard Rock Café to hangout. Saturday night

was our "dress-up going-out" night, which started with a stroll down 3rd Street Promenade in Santa Monica and ended up at a local hotspot, Wokcano, an Asian-fusion restaurant and lounge, where we ate, drank, and danced into the wee hours of the night. Saturday and Sunday was spent sightseeing at various popular LA sights, such as Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Venice Beach, and so forth. And, finally, to close out the action-packed weekend,



Group at the congress

Sunday night we gambled and danced the night away at our professional style Casino night at the gorgeous Hilton LAX Hotel.

Planning and executing the weekend was not an easy mission. In fact, it was one of the most stressful tasks I've ever undertaken. However, it was absolutely well worth the effort. Little did I know that while giving back, I too would gain so much. Not only did it bring me closer to my local community, but strengthened my bonds with my local youth, especially those on my youth committee. We received many comments like "great job, it was an awesome weekend," "phenomenal time, had a blast!," "thanks for everything," and "best congress ever." My team and I are grateful for the wonderful outpouring of appreciation. Continuous posts and hits on our youth Facebook page a month later shows the excitement and enthusiasm stirred within the participants lives on.

But, what truly makes this whole experience so fulfilling is seeing on various social media outlets how many new people became friends and connected because of our Pre-Congress Weekend. Many express how excited they are to keep in contact with each other and make future plans to hang out. All there is left to say is...

Mission

Accomplished!



The group in Beverly Hills.

Khushshehr "Khush" Italia was born in Mumbai and has lived in Los Angeles since the age of five. Since seven, she grew up participating in competitive tennis playing with Venus and Serena Williams. Khushshehr attended University of Cincinnati on a full tennis scholarship and was one of the most decorated tennis players at the University. In 2003 she completed her Bachelor's degree in International Business and Finance and then turned pro, playing on WTA tour. She won two doubles professional titles and was ranked at 654 in the world. In 2005, due to a rotator cuff injury, she was forced to retire. She now lives in Los Angeles and works as a pricing analyst of an Aerospace engineering Company.

Bavas Gone Wild

HORMUZ
NARIMAN

From Bombay to London
From Auckland to Houston
Bavas came all the way
To party in LA

In school buses we drove
From Venice Beach to The Grove
Sashayed on Hollywood Boulevard
Got star struck every yard

Partied till the morning at five
Then cruised on Rodeo Drive
While ogling Gucci and Jimmy Choo,
Asked each other "So...what do you do?"

From artists to physicians
Zoologists to mathematicians
We even had a weight lifter
And a poetic drifter

We gambled and dropped hot dollars
Cleaned up the house like ballers
Raged like gangstas and looked so fly
Washed down sali boti with whiskey and rye

We browsed the congress sessions
Hormuz lives and works in Houston.
And forged enduring connections
first congress he attended
We learned, engaged and entered the zone in
Instagram'ed, friend'ed and blew up our phone

Good thoughts, good words, good deeds we do
We cherish our heritage and unity too
What Parsi? What Irani? We're all the same
We party crazy hard and worship The Flame

Our livers and voices took a beating
Did bavas give up? Ha! They continued greeting
Aunties queried, "*Chhokri mali...?*"
"*No?! Let me introduce you to Fraynie*"



The grand finale the New Year's Eve bash
A thousand got in, scores looked to crash

Steak and machchi, jara avva dayjo
Wine and dessert please theek thi layjo
2015 was ushered in style
The hangover will remain for a while

The bonds and friendships created together
The legendary nights we'll reminisce forever
2014 North American Zoroastrian Congress
Near a thousand Zarathustis you impressed

It was super crazy epic fun
We can't wait until the next one

HORMUZ NARIMAN lives in Houston and works at a financial services company. This was indeed HIS first congress.

THE CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF YOUNG MOBEDS IN NORTH AMERICA

ERVAD SOLI P. DASTUR

On December 30th 2014, at the 17th North American Zoroastrian Congress (NAZC) in Los Angeles, five young North American Mobeds served on a panel formed by: Ervad Burzin Balsara (Dallas), Ervad Zerkxis Bhandara (Los Angeles), Ervad Bahrom Firozgary (Houston), Ervad Rayomand Katrak (Houston) and Ervad Rayomand Ravji (Chicago). It was moderated by Houtoxi Contractor and Ervad Soli P. Dastur. The Mobeds ranged in age from fifteen (Burzin) to twenty-five (Ravji)—Ravji also has the distinction of being the youngest President of Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC) and a Mobed at that too!



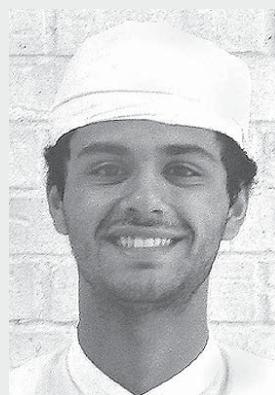
Ervad Burzin Balsara



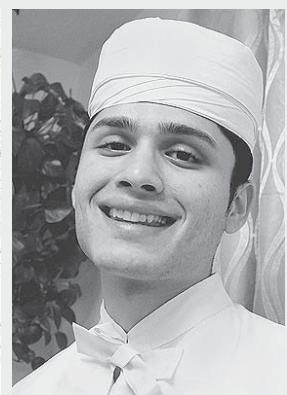
Ervad Zerkxis Bhandara



Ervad Bahrom Firozgary



Ervad Rayomand Katrak



Ervad Rayomand Ravji

The panel was designed to address themes and subjects developed by the Mobeds. After being introduced by Houtoxi as the panel's moderator, Soli started by asking the panel what they have accomplished as young Mobeds. All were asked to answer the following six questions as to what were the **Challenges** they faced and what were their **Achievements**.

All were asked to answer six questions:

1. Have you taught any Religious classes?
2. Have you spoken about our Religion to your Anjuman?
3. Have you worked with NAMC (North American Mobeds Council) and participated in any NAMC Seminars?
4. Have you thought about working to bring Iranians and Parsis of your Anjuman together?
5. Have you learnt the meaning of our prayers and conveyed them to your Anjuman Humdins,
6. Have you spoken about our religion to your Non-Zoroastrian colleagues or associates?

CHALLENGES

RAVJI: When he decided that his religious duties are central to his life, his teaching the children's religion class on Sunday took precedence over his watching NFL Football with his friends.

FIROZGARY: He reviewed the many activities that a young Mobed has to keep up with in college, admitting he has a difficult time balancing them.

BHANDARA: His biggest challenge is how to keep our traditions intact in this century. Using the song *Traditions* from the movie: *Fiddler On The Roof*, in which the father says: "Without traditions, our lives will be as shaky as the Fiddler On The Roof!" He said, as a Mobed, it is our duty to pass on traditions to the future generations, but sadly many Mobeds are forgetting the importance of our forefathers' traditions to our culture.

RAVJI: With considerable devotion, faith, and hard work, a beautiful Dar-e-Meher was built for

the Chicago community. This helped his parents settle in Chicago from East Africa where he was born. He is grateful to these Chicago elders who made this move possible and will do everything to ensure that the vision of these elders is maintained.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Have you taught any religious Classes?

FIROZGARY: He has led a onetime informational dialogue at Rice University for a multi-faith class where the students discussed and compared their beliefs and religions.

KATRAK: When their religious class teacher, Sarosh Collector, was unavailable, he was requested to teach classes in the basics of Jashans, Navjotes, the meaning of some prayers, and how we can apply Zoroastrianism in our daily lives.

BALSARA: He has still lot to learn before he can teach a class. However, he has helped his mother, a religious class teacher, to research some subjects and has participated in her classes.

Have you spoken about our Religion to your Anjuman?

KATRAK: He has not had a chance to speak to his Anjuman, but has made a presentation on Mehregan, after the Gahambar ceremony, and may do the same this summer. He may work with his teacher, Sarosh, to create the equivalent of a “sermon” like those used in Christian Churches which would be developed from a prayer in the Gathas.

BALSARA: He is not sufficiently experienced to do so. He has participated in his religious classes, which included extensive discussions on the application of our ancient religion’s principles to our modern lives.

FIROZGARY: He has had limited dialogue regarding the specifics of the Zarathushti Religion with his Anjuman Humdins. This could improve with more dialogue and discussion at events regarding Gahambars and the performance of particular Jashans

Have you worked with NAMC (North American Mobeds Council) and participated in any NAMC seminars?

FIROZGARY Bahrom participated in the 2011 Youth Congress Jashan in Vancouver. He tries to stay involved with NAMC, but has found it difficult to do so with his basketball and other school activities.

BALSARA: He is a member of NAMC, but has not worked with NAMC. He participated in the NAMC Jashan at the World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston.

Have you thought about working to bring Irani and Parsis of your Anjuman together?

KATRAK: In Houston, the Parsis are getting closer to the Iranis. The youth group is trying to hold more Persian festivals such as Tirgaan that we can enjoy together.

BALSARA: He grew up with Iranis and Parsis working together in the Dallas Association, where they enjoy activities together. He said that no one should make a big deal about minor differences in food, cultural upbringing, and so forth. These differences are minuscule compared to the well-being of our community—especially in light of what is happening around the world. He has performed Jashans at both Irani and at Parsi households with his dad. He believes we must strive to build on and stress our similarities and trivialize our few differences.
(Soli: Well said Burzin!)

FIROZGARY: Another “controversial topic” is that there is not much interaction between the two in Houston. He explains that the Iranian Californian Zoroastrian communities need to build a bridge between the two cultures. He thinks the lack of interaction perpetuates from older generations—but, optimistically, this may be slowly closing in his generation. He says that if we stop thinking that a “separation” exists and focus on our common multicultural events, we can eliminate our divisions.

Have you learnt the meaning of our prayers and conveyed them to your Anjuman Humdins?

FIROZGARY: Although he does not know the meanings to all our prayers, he reads the translations in a book he has from Sunday school. It's important that we realize what we are praying and why, and that translations are valuable to our learning. They make it easier for younger generations to realize the beauty of our religion. Understanding the simplicity of Ashem Vohu and being "righteous" can put meaning to our words and help in keeping our community informed and involved.

KATRAK: He has some knowledge of our basic prayers, but has not preached to his Anjuman. He believes the previously discussed sermons would be helpful to our community, as many of us pray without knowing what we are praying, its background, why it is prayed, and why it is prayed at a specific time.

BALSARA: He has learned the general meanings of our daily prayers from his dad and understands the Jashan prayers. His goal is to put these meanings into practice and not keep them for just scholarly exercises—they should be applied daily and not used for only intense philosophical discussions and debates.

Have you spoken about our religion to your Non-Zoroastrian colleagues, associates?

FIROZGARY: His goal is to make religious discussions non-controversial and non-argumentative. Learning about other cultures and appreciating their differences is more important than trying to declare what is "right."

KATRAK: He has discussed Zoroastrianism with many of his friends—some can give brief explanations of it to others. Through this, he has learned that different religions are not so different from what we thought they were and we can appreciate other religions more. It is critical for other religions to know and understand Zoroastrianism.

BALSARA: After studying ancient religions in his World History class, his friends and teachers were impressed to hear that Zoroastrianism is

still a living, breathing religion. This gave him an opportunity to describe key concepts beyond the usual Humata, Hukta, Hvarshta written in the textbook. Some of his swimming team now know the significance of his Sudreh and Kushti as they asked about them while they changed clothes in the dressing room. (Burzin is a competitive swimmer ED)

BHANDARA: Years of being Anglophiles (with an amazing knack to adapt) makes Parsis well-suited to successfully making homes abroad. The belief that the Three Goods and Kusti prayers are all that one needs is wrong! Parents send children to religious classes until their Navjote, but do not realize the importance of Manthrevani. If parents do not pray, why would their children?

He continued that many young Mobeds have never prayed the Khorshed-Meher Nyaayeshes until they perform the Uthamna of a loved one. Not wearing one's Sudreh and Kusti, at even Jashans and Navjotes, has become a common practice. He points out that some mothers, during their children's Navjote, do not wear a Sudreh as it would be visible through their spaghetti straps and refuse to cover their head because of their hair-do—yet tell their child to always wear their Sudreh Kusti!

He suggested that people should regard religious classes as a learning opportunity, not a social gathering. He stressed the community should focus on the importance of prayer and have sessions of communal Farajyaat prayers to feel the gratification derived from Manthrevani and to become more enthused to pray or meditate daily and along with Gahambars and Navroze Jashans, we should opt for having ceremonies such as Parab na Jashans, Baaj prayers for our saints (for example, Dasturji Kookadaru, Homaji, and Meherjirana), and Fareshta ceremonies.

Senior sharing days should be held where youth can talk with elders about their childhood and upbringing. The Persian community did this one year and it was a great success. He finds talking with elders, especially senior Mobeds, a very educational and inspiring experience.

Community centers should be used to the fullest,

which the Los Angeles Persian community does very well, treating their center as a second home with many weekend activities. When the children are exposed to this environment, it becomes a safe zone in their psyche, an opportunity to spread our Zoroastrian ideals on to the next generation.

KATRAK: He has worked closely with his mentor and teacher, Sarosh Collector and is regarded by his peers in religious classes and ceremonies as their leader. He mentioned some thoughts that have bothered him, saying many teenagers do not wear their Sudreh and Kushti daily and there are those who wear only their Kushti. They do not seem to understand that these are implements in understanding the core doctrine of our religion. They wear them only when required, which is consistent with an overall lack in the importance of religion to many young people.

Many of us lose touch with our religion or do not pray unless we are in trouble or need something. Although, statistically, teenagers and young people are the least religious, it is our job as Mobeds to bring them back to religion. As a Mobed, many people turn to him when a question is asked because they expect him to know the answer. It confuses him why he, a Navar, is expected to know about our history and prayers. He has not had formal Navar training and was fortunate to have somebody willing to teach him the prayers and ceremonies.

While leading his Youth Group in prayer, he noticed that they (and a few other Navars) could not read the-prayers properly. If they cannot pronounce the prayers correctly, then the meaning of the word is lost and the prayer does not have meaning. If they cannot read, they will never be able to read any prayers other than Ashem Vohu, Yatha Ahu Vairyo, the basic Kushti prayers, and maybe Sarosh Baj, Din No Kalmo, and Tandoorasti. Because they are limited to what they can pray properly, they will not pray many other important prayers such as Aafrins, other Bajs, the Gathas, and so forth.

More than understanding our prayers they should first be able to say them properly. Teaching the youth to properly read our prayers should be something our Mobeds should achieve. This would help bring us closer to our religion and make them interested in learning about what they are praying.

The points mentioned above (teaching how to read prayers and understanding the meaning of our prayers) require a base or regimen to be developed for all North American centers to be successful."

PROPOSAL FROM SOLI

That the young Mobeds should form a Council—a North American Young Mobeds Council (NAYMC)—and work with NAMC and FEZANA Religious Education Committee to establish a framework in NAMC/FEZANA to teach Z youth to properly recite the prayers and to understand the meaning of our Prayers. The young Mobeds have accepted this proposal and will work on it.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

Ervad Zerkxis Bhandara and Ervad Rayomand Ravji offered some Final Observations.

BHANDARA: His ideas may seem a bit old fashioned and orthodox, but if we do not retain these crucial aspects of our heritage we will be just another ingredient in the American melting pot, with only faint traces of Zoroastrian tradition left. As human beings, we are biologically programmed to strive for progress and these ideas are not a setback; rather they are icons of a culture that after years of oppression and refuge has remained pristine.

RAVJI: Saying that there are several challenges facing our Zoroastrian communities in North America, he thinks that with effort, patience, and sincere faith we will cultivate the proper solutions."

The panel ended with the traditional Hamaa Zori: Hamazor Hama Asho-Bade! *May we be united in strength and righteousness!*

The panel answered all questions from the audience very well. Almost all attendants stayed until the very end.

CLOSING

Soli closed the Panel by thanking Houtoxi, the Young Mobeds on the Panel, the Parents of the Young Mobeds,-NAZC Organizers, especially Vira Santoke, FEZANA Executives and Associations, NAMC, all NA Mobeds, and last, the most patient audience! You made this happen: Thank You!

Soli also thanked his Dearest Patient Understanding Wife, Goraani Jo Ann, for putting up with all his crazy endeavors for forty-eight years!

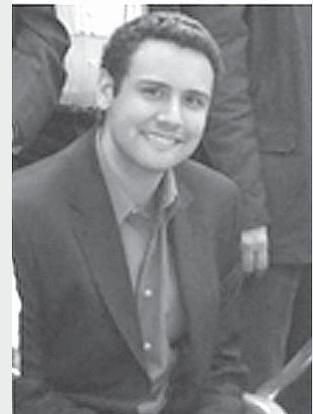
Bios See page 56

AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH DRS. DANIEL SHEFFIELD AND YUHAN VEVAINA

DINSHA MISTREE

"What is Zoroastrianism? What practices did the prophet Zarathushtra maintain and what practices have been adopted later? What are the best resources to learn more about our religion? "

Zoroastrians have plenty of questions about our own religion. Unfortunately, very few people—and particularly very few youth—know where to get accurate information. We all know that there is too much "noise" - it seems nearly every aunty or uncle has at one time asserted their perspectives on Zoroastrianism as authoritative, and today with the proliferation of information available over the World Wide Web, very few people know where to find real truths regarding our religion.



Some Zoroastrians blame the scholars. They say that instead of informing us, scholars of Zoroastrianism want to engage with each other. They do not want to make their research accessible to the community. This is partly true, but it is also a product of circumstance. Compared to other social and religious communities, we have been reluctant to endow professorships and serious Zoroastrian scholarship. Zoroastrian scholars have to write using academic jargon quite simply because they need to support themselves.

When scholars choose to engage with us, it should be considered as a charitable treat. They cannot earn a fulltime salary by exclusively catering to us. But their expertise is invaluable and they are best positioned to guide those who want to learn more in the right direction.

It was in this spirit that Daniel Sheffield and Yuhan Vevaina agreed to an impromptu discussion with interested youth at the 2014 NAZC Congress. They did not have to partake in this session—and no one would have faulted either of them for saying no—but they both kindly answered the call. **Dr. Sheffield of Princeton University and Dr. Vevaina of Stanford University** were both suffering from jetlag and were both preparing lectures to the entire Congress. As both are young and active researchers, their lectures sought to cover new ground. And yet, many young Zoroastrians want to know answers to some very old questions. This is why the lady had expressed interest in picking a bona fide scholar's brains, and this is why more than sixty Congress delegates came to hear them.

Drs. Sheffield and Vevaina began the session by explaining their role as scholars. They said that they do not have political agendas and would try to avoid sharing their personal views in this forum. Instead, they would answer questions anchored in their scholarship, without hiding the bad or exaggerating the good.

The questions started flying at 4:30 pm and didn't stop until 6:58 p.m. about two minutes before the gala was set to begin downstairs. Listeners entered and left throughout the session, but the two scholars remained.



As with their students at Princeton and Stanford, they assigned “homework” for those looking to learn more: they recommended Jenny Rose’s *An Introduction to Zoroastrianism*.

From those who were able to attend, we owe a special debt of gratitude to Drs. Sheffield and Vevaina. We would also like to thank the Congress organizers, particularly **Shazneen Gandhi, and Vira and Burjor Santoke**. With their help, this informal session went from idea to fruition in under a day.

Many who participated in this impromptu session mentioned that it was their favorite of the entire Congress and participants asked for such sessions to take place at future Congresses as well.

Dinsha Mistree is a doctoral candidate in Politics at Princeton University, he is co-founder of Agiary Connect, a website that allows Zoroastrians in the diaspora to support Agiaries and Atash Behrams in India. He is also the Core team of Return to Roots , a PARZOR supported project that enables youth living abroad to tour Zoroastrian India, and Iran , in the future

FROM BEHIND THE SCENES: TETE-A-TETE WITH THE ORGANIZERS

ARZAN SAM WADIA

INTERVIEW WITH PERSIS CHOKSEY, ENTERTAINMENT CHAIR XVII NORTH AMERICAN
ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS 2014, December 31st, 2014



Arzan Sam Wadia (ASW): Tell us a bit about yourself, where did you grow up, and how did you find yourself in LA?

Persis Choksey (PC): I was born in Bombay and grew up in Vikhroli at the Godrej Colony. I met my husband in Bombay, who was a student in the US. We dated for a while, got married, and moved to the US, first to Arlington, Virginia, where my husband worked with US Airways. After our son was born, we moved to the Los Angeles area in 1996 for a better job opportunity.

ASW: And how did your involvement with the community in general and ZAC, in particular, begin?

PC: When we moved to the LA area, my son was 6 months old—the people were very friendly and welcomed us. When he was about three and a half, he took part in a function at ZAC. Every two years ZAC organizes a Youth Night, where local kids put on a variety entertainment program. So, I started helping out with those and, over the years, went from being a participant to actually organizing and hosting them. Ruki Fitter, a very dear friend was equally involved with me in those shows. When we did the last one, Dhunmai Dalal, co-chair of the Congress, asked me if I would like to handle the entertainment aspects of the Congress—I readily agreed.

ASW: What drives you to community volunteer work?

PC: My dad was a big time volunteer. He would readily help anyone and could never say no. For me, this is our community. We cannot sit back and just watch things. I am hoping that seeing me and my husband involved will instill the same sense of volunteerism and involvement in my son, when his time comes.

ASW: When you took over as the Entertainment chair, you had a vision. Now we are nearly at the end of the event. How did that vision turn out? Did things happen the way you wanted?

PC: The execution could have been better. We had quite a few issues with audio visuals. And, when the audio visuals are not at their optimum, it affects all the performers and performances. Personally, that was a big disappointment. The first day's events did not pan out as we had planned. However, our vision played out as we wanted. Over the three days we took people through our history, from Persia to India and to North America.

ASW: Over the past few months, what are for you some of the highlights of working for this event?

PC: For me it is the interpersonal relations with the people I worked with. Finding out more about the person behind the name, and making friendships to last a long time, is what I will cherish the most.

ASW: And anything you would change if you had to do it all over again?

PC: Be prepared for any and every curve ball that can come your way. We had gone over our program and were ready for the normal pitfalls one may encounter; but, even then; there were a few items that tested our preparedness.

ASW: On the one hand you want to encourage local talent; but then, as host of a national event, you also want to put your best foot forward. Were there times when your heart said something, but your mind said the opposite. Can you throw some light on that?

PC: I had to actually learn to say no. It is very hard for me as a person to do that. But somewhere we had to draw the line, and we may have offended people.

ASW: How big a talent pool did you have to tap into?

PC: What you saw was a very small sampling of the large pool of talented entertainers we have in Southern California. Our biggest struggle was to get people to put in the time and the commitment to perform. And in some cases we could not get that to happen.

ASW: Organizing an event like this has brought about a huge capital of talent. How do you see this interest from the Congress continuing in the local ZAC community?

PC: From what I have seen, the kids had a wonderful time. Meeting other kids every Saturday for practice, and so forth, was something they all looked forward to. It may have been an effort on part of the parents to drive them back and forth, but, in the long run, the kids grew up in the community and I have seen how it has benefited my son. I've been involved with ZAC in the past in various official roles. I was the ZAC secretary in the past. I am still around when asked to help out and advise. I feel the time is ripe now for the next generation of volunteers to step in and take events like the Youth Night to further glory.

ASW: What would your message be to Vancouver, the next hosts?

PC: Volunteers...volunteers. Make sure you have a lot of manpower. So many times you would have seen me running around moving things. We had hoped that we would have a lot more volunteers.

ASW: So, was it because you didn't ask enough people or were people just not there.

PC: A lot of people had told us that we could ask them anytime we needed help. However when the time came, we had a very small group of dedicated volunteers, who were there all the time. You would have seen a lot of our senior organizational folks like Tehmi, Khushroo, and Daraius running around and jumping in at whenever and wherever the need be.

ASW: Thanks a lot Persis. It's been a wonderful three days and I've had a fantastic time.

PC: Thanks Arzan. It's been a great time for all of us, and I am happy that you all enjoyed too.

POWERFUL WOMEN OF ANCIENT PERSIA

FARIBA PRIGHAIBI

Looking at the rich and glorious Iranian history it is apparent that women were high achievers and successful members of society. Women of Ancient Persia experienced Independence, honor, and a level of gender equality that to this day is unparalleled. Female emperors ruled over many dynasties in the Persian kingdom; one such figure was Empress Azarmindokht (the twenty seventh Sassanid Monarch of Persia, 632 CE).

The significant role of women in ancient Persia both horrified and fascinated the ancient Greek and Roman male dominated societies. The fortification tablets at the ruins of Persepolis reveals that men and women were represented in identical professions and received equal pay as skilled workers and that gender was never a criteria. There is strong evidence that principles of Zoroastrianism lay the core foundation of the first declaration of human rights set by Cyrus the Great in the height of Persian Empire era.

HISTORY ENVISIONED: A few years ago a friend and co-teacher at CZC had a vision. While talking to some of the Sunday School teachers she shared her dream of one day wanting to put together a fashion show of sorts to display the personality, character and costumes of the, little spoken of, powerful women in Iranian history. She, being a very talented artist, had already sketched the costume designs for some of these characters. She wanted to demonstrate how the pre-Islamic women of Iran not only were not second class citizens but also ruled the country, fought battles as admirals, managed the country's treasury, were business owners, educators, and powerful mothers. She had the artistic end of this vision and it was up to the rest of our small group of mothers, teachers, and friends to come up with the script, order, timeline, and production.



HISTORY REENACTED: So it began with a group of six ladies at our initial meeting to see if this can be done. The first step was recruiting enough young ladies to commit to this. This was a monumental task due to girls in the age group of sixteen through twenty-two having their complicated college, work and high school activities. Then the research had to be done so we stayed as true, to the historical characters, as possible both in attire and script. Then the screenplay was put together in Persian. Finally after nine months to a year of planning, in August of 2014 this play took the stage at California Zoroastrian Center in Westminster, California. The organizing group was truly a match made in heaven and exemplified when we work as a team and use each other's strength any impossible task is possible. Among us were master organizers, tech savvy folks, public relation experts, designers, poets, etc. It took a village to put this production on and it would not have been possible without our sound engineers, narrators, hair and makeup artists, and dance choreographers. The dedication from all of our volunteers was truly unparalleled. Some gave their time to countless hours of sewing, rehearsing, building stage props and practice as well as some who also provided financial support. The public response was overwhelmingly positive with people being intrigued to learn more about these women. The young ladies who agreed to be part of this vision did so for a variety of reasons ranging from "my mother wanted me to" to "opportunity to hang out with friends" to "chance to dress up" to "intrigued by the idea". One of college student participants was asked why she agreed to be in this program.

She replied, "Originally I was curious to try this new venture but I did not really understand the lines I had memorized in Persian or quite felt the character I was playing. However as the production got near completion the magnificence of the characters and the powerful positions they held dawned on me; and it made me proud to be portraying such amazing historical figures and bringing the public awareness to them."

MISSION EXPANDED: The organizers were then approached in September with a request to translate this play into English and perform it at NAZC in December of 2014. The group went to work again, the play

was translated, the costumes made even more majestic and a new character we had not portrayed in the first play added. That character was Homay, king Vishtasp's daughter, who was the first female ruler in Iran and possibly in the world. Unfortunately due to sound system not being at its best more than half of the 800 people who saw this play in Los Angeles probably did not hear the words but a picture is worth a thousand words, right?

It is hoped that we are inspired by these majestic and powerful women and they become role models for our daughters and their daughters for decades to come.

THE POWERFUL WOMEN OF IRAN ENACTED

Ourchista was the youngest daughter of Zarathushtra. She was a wise and virtuous woman who was the first missionary.

Homay daughter of King Goshtab, of the Kianian dunasty, was the first female ruler in Iran and perhaps the world.

Mandana was the daughter of Astiag, king of Medes and wife of the Persian nobleman, Kamboujeh I, and mother of Cyrus the Great.

Atusa was the daughter of Cyrus the Great, sister of Camboojieh, mother of Khashiar the king and wife of Dariush the Great.

Irdabama was a well-known business woman, who managed a number of factories and wineries.

Artimis was the first fleet admiral and mariner and a great navy commander for Khashayar (Xerxes), the Achamedian king.

Youtab was the sister of Ario-Barzan and one of greatest commanders in Dariush III, the Achamedian king. She and her brother fought bravely with Alexander's army.

Sura was the daughter of Ardavan V, the Partian king, and one of commanding generals of the Parthian army.

Photo credit: Ardesir Baghghanian



Arta-Dokht was the minister of treasury at the time of Ardavan-IV, the Partian king.

Pourandokht was the oldest daughter of Khosro Parviz who ruled over ten countries.

Azad-Dokht was the wife of Shapoor I and one of the most intelligent queens of Iran, who had a key role in founding the university and city of Jondi-Shapoor.

Azad Daylami was one of the militia commandoes of Deylamians, near the shores of the Caspian Sea, who fought alongside male soldiers against the Arab invaders.

Banoo Khoramdin was the wife of Babak Khorramdin and always fought alongside her husband against the Arab aggression.

AN EVENING IN PERSIA was presented on the first night beginning with the play *Women of Persia* inspired and produced by Adeleh Alba, followed by a concert featuring Mima Goodarz with dance performances by Shahrzad Khorsandi

Fariba Prighaibi is a medical laboratory scientist who lives and works in Orange County, California with her husband and two daughters. She has been involved in the Zoroastrian community in various capacities for many years and currently teaches a teen class "Gatha Ethics and principle" at CZC on Sundays. She has been the editor of Chehrenama (CZC journal) since 2008.

YOUR DREAM SAREE FOR THAT SPECIAL DAY

LOOK NO FURTHER.

A specialist in Georgette/Crepe Silk Chic Designer Bridal Sarees, Graceful Parsee Garas of old traditional Chinese Designs, Tasteful Cut work, Elegant and Exclusive Lace and Sequined Sarees and the works with matching Blouses. Specialist in Beautiful embroidered Kurtis in Georgette/Crepe Silk materials also. Blissful satisfaction guaranteed. You will be hooked for LIFE.

Just call:+919820101854

PARSIS AND IRANIAN ZOROASTRIANS

The poem was recited by Ms Behmardian at the Persian Evening

FAITH AND UNITY

Upon its prosperity, a tree full and strong
A large wind blew, swayed the tree along
It fought
But some leaves—they flew away
Parting from the ones that were destined to stay
Separation, distance, that's all it seemed to be
Once leaves of the same branch, of the same trunk,
of same the tree
But new patterns arose, the leaves grew unique
Neither was better, no need for critique
Years passed, and these new fields that some
roamed
Were no longer foreign, it was now their home
Home is a place near dear to our soul
But there's something else that helps us feel good
and whole
And that's connection, community
A beautiful thing
To know someone you have not met
A special kind of unity
A wind came
And it spread not just leaves
But also the places of Zartoshtis
India, Iran
Put a different spin upon
The same religion
So its essence—well, it's never really gone

ROYA BEHMARDIAN

Customs change, traditions expand
That's why who we are, is far from bland
A trees is a tree cause of one seed
We are one in the same
When we practice good thoughts words and deeds
same home we tie back on
same root we will lean on
and that's why
we're two leaves off the same, still standing, tree



Roya Behmardian holds a BA degree in Psychology from UCLA and is now working on her Masters in Teaching at University of California, Irvine

ENTERTAINMENT IN PICTURES



1 It's a small world, sung by the Zoroastrian Children's Choir of California



2 The Choir of the Zoroastrian Association of California

"Chaiye Hame Jarthoshti "



3 Hamnavayan Mantrah Group
Khaan Asheem Vohu, Yasna 30 Ha 2



4 Soprano Meher Pavri, of Ontario and baritone Ardavan Taraporewala, Ontario, delighted the audience with beautiful renditions of Chanson du Toreador



6 Young pianist Neville Bharucha brought the house down to a standing ovation of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 5 "Emperor".



5 Flutist Mahfrin Santoke of California and Violist Agnes Schwartz



7 Adil Mehta conducting the World Zoroastrian Symphony orchestra in which there were 20 orchestra players and three vocalists. The Zarathushti players were represented in the Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Flutes, Oboe/English Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Percussion, Piano, and Harp.

Conductor Farobag Cooper was hospitalized a little prior to the Congress which brought about a last minute change in the music repertoire, with Adil Mehta taking up the baton and doing a fantastic job. Initially there had been great consternation, questions and concerns about who will pay for this extravaganza but with the support of all our generous individuals and institutional DONORS and WELL WISHERS to assist our Young Z Adult performers and with the absolute support and commitment for success from the Congress organizers, and some wonderful ZAC community volunteers, a fantastic performance was heard by all.



9 Persian dancers,

8 Soprano Tina Siganporia
(Chicago) singing the American
National Anthem



**SHARING IN CYBERSPACE THE RECODED SPEECHES AND
PRESENTATIONS OF THE 17th NAZC 2014 LOS ANGELES, WAS A GREAT
ACHIEVEMENT BY THE CONGRESS ORGANIZERS**

THIS HAS INCREASED THE FOOTPRINT OF THE CONGRESS MANIFOLD WORLDWIDE

ALL FUTURE CONGRESSES COULD FOLLOW THIS EXAMPLE

THIS CAN BE VIEWED AT [HTTP://WWW.NAZC2014.ORG/CONGRESS-VIDEO/](http://WWW.NAZC2014.ORG/CONGRESS-VIDEO/)

HOPEFULLY WE SHALL SOON HAVE ON THE INTERNET THE WORLD ZOROASTRIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (WZSO) PERFORMANCE IN LA TOGETEHR WITH ALL THE OTHER PERFORMANCES STARTING WITH THE WORLD CONGRESS, IN HOUSTON 2000, HOPEFULLY THIS WILL ENCOURAGE YOUNG MUSICIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE CONGRESSES.

FEZANA AWARDS AT NAZC 2014

The first North American Zarathushti Community Awards were presented at the Sixth North American Zoroastrian Congress held in Toronto, Canada, in 1988. Since then, North American Zarathushti Community awards are presented biennially at each North American Zoroastrian Congress. Until 1998, the award process was the responsibility of the FEZANA member association hosting the Congress. In 1998, to ensure consistency and transparency in judging and regularity of administrating the awards, President Dastoor created an Awards committee under FEZANA to administer the awards with Dinshaw Joshi as the chair. Under his able stewardship, a standard nomination procedure was developed and a Terms of Reference established for the awards process.

The 2014 awards were presided by co-chairs Drs. Noshir A. Langrana and Adil F. Mistry. Several outstanding nominations were received for the various awards categories. The six FEZANA awards were judged by an independent panel of judges and a special committee, appointed by the North American Mobeds Council (NAMC), judged the NAMC Community Service Award.

The Journal congratulates each award winner for this well-deserved recognition from the North American Community. The winners of the 2014 awards are:

North American Community Awards and the Mobed Council Award

SAM VESUNA, TORONTO



Rohinton Rivetna
Outstanding Zarathushti Award

A Chartered Accountant, he has served in senior management positions at Unilever and Phillips Electronics. He has been on the executive committee of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario for twenty-one years in different capacities and as its President. He was Secretary/Treasurer from 1957–60 of Parsee Association of Europe (renamed ZTFE). He was involved in the formation of FEZANA and in drafting its constitution and by-laws

ARZAN GONDA, HOUSTON

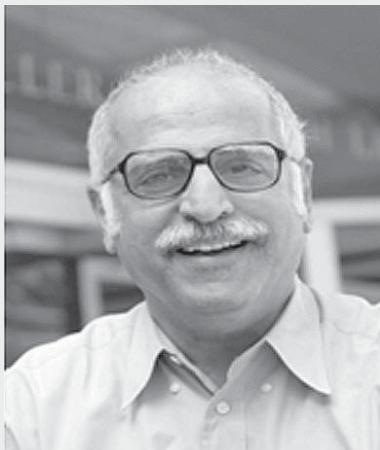


Dinshaw F. Joshi
**Excellence in Performing Arts,
Painting, or Literature Award**

A professional Indian Classical dancer of the Bharata Natyam art form, has competed in several national competitions and won a gold medal at the 2000 All India dance competition. She is Founder and Artistic Director of Rhythm India Dance Company, the largest Bollywood dance company, in Houston, performing at the opening act of the 2010 Jai Ho Concert and at half time during NBA Rocket games. She provides the very best in Indo-Fusion and Bollywood dance training in Houston Area.

DINSAHW J. PATEL, PH.D, NEW YORK

NAZNEEN SPLIEDT, SAN FRANCISCO



**JAMSHED AND SHIRIN GUZDAR
EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS OR PROFESSION
AWARD**

Distinguished Member of AT&T Bell Laboratories; tenured professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics at Columbia University; and Chair, Experimental Therapeutics at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Elected to American Academy of Arts and Science 2014.

**JAMSHED K PAVRI
HUMANITARIAN SERVICE AWARD**

President of Zarthushti Anjuman of Northern California. She built a bridge with the Persian Zoroastrian community. She has an MBA from the Institute of Business Administration, Karachi. She was the president of the Society of Asian Art at the Asian Art Museum in SF and Society of the Art and Cultural Heritage of India.

PERSIS BHADHA, SOUTH FLORIDA



**SHIRIN NARIMAN DASTOOR, OUTSTANDING
YOUNG ZARATHUSHTI STUDENT AWARD**

School valedictorian with GPA of 5.52, recipient of many prestigious awards majoring in Biomedical Engineering and Global studies, dual-enrolled at University of North Carolina and Duke University as a Robertson scholar and Chancellor's Science Scholar. She has been a front-runner for social change in her school.

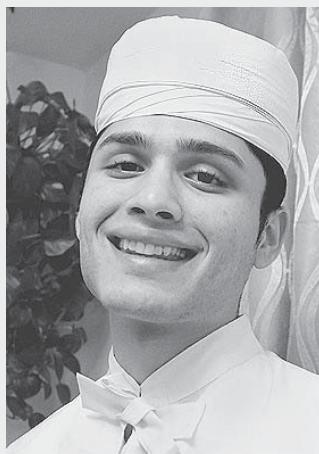
ERVAD PORUZ KHAMBATTA, NEW YORK



**SHIRIN NARIMAN DASTOOR, OUTSTANDING
YOUNG ZARATHUSHTI STUDENT AWARD**

A Doctoral student at Graduate School of Business, Stanford University. He has performed numerous religious ceremonies in USA, Canada, and India. Represented Zoroastrian religion at several interfaith meetings and at the Religions for Peace, World Assembly, Vienna.

ERVAD JIMMY RAVJI, CHICAGO



NORTH AMERICAN MOBEDS COUNCIL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

A navar and a martab from Cama Baug Agiary, Mumbai. He is the President of the Zoroastrian Association of Illinois and volunteers his services as a mobed. He has a BSc in Psychology with a minor in Chemistry from University of Illinois. He works full time at Labpro Laboratories, Inc.

OTHER STALWARTS OF THE COMMUNITY RECOGNIZED BY THE CONGRESS

PROFESSOR KAIKHOSROV IRANI: Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at City College, New York. He was the Director of Academy of Humanities and Sciences for 12 years.

His Excellency Jamsheed Marker: Pakistani diplomat *par excellence* who served as Ambassador of Pakistan for 30 years in ten different capitals, earning the distinction of being the world's longest-serving ambassador. In 1986, he was Pakistan's ambassador to the UN, Chair of the UN Security Council, and special advisor to UN Secretary-General Kofi Anaan.

Dr. FARHANG MEHR: Professor Emeritus of International Relations, Boston University, he has held several prestigious positions in Iran, including President of Pahlavi University, Deputy Prime Minister, but he resigned his position to show his opposition to the discriminatory provision in the constitution law against non-Muslims. He was the Iranian Governor to OPEC. He is the first and only non-Muslim to be decorated with the Homayoun and Taj Medallions for meritorious service by the Iranian Government. He holds an LLM from the London school of Economics and a PhD from Southampton University.

ZUBIN MEHTA: Maestro Zubin, the world-renowned conductor, was the musical director of the Montreal Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Israel Philharmonic (Music Director for life), New York Philharmonic, Orchestra Musicale, Florence, and Bavarian State Opera. He is an honorary citizen of Florence and Tel Aviv, and has been honoured by the Japanese Imperial family. The Indian Government gave him the Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony. He is co-chairman of Mehli Mehta Musical Foundation in Mumbai and the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv.

RATAN TATA: The plaque at the Tata Hall at Harvard Business School sums up this remarkable man as an "architect of global growth, role model of social responsibility, advocate for new technologies, with respect for the past and a vision for the future, he is an exceptional leader a role model for all who aim to have impact on their countries and the world." In 2014, he was made an Honorary Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire, the first Indian to be awarded the title since India became a Republic. He serves on the Boards of several national and international companies and on the boards of trustees of several international universities

**MEDICARE & OBAMACARE - OPEN ENROLLMENT HAS ARRIVED
CALL US TODAY!**

The time to explore your choices is now...
Call me today for

Life • Health • Medicare & more

Homi Davier LUTCF CLTC
Financial Services Professional
832-428-4285

healthcare
best paymail
coverage
Get comp
single expensive

xpert tours

Your xperts in business & leisure travel.....

We make packages for families & large groups... So let us plan for you.
Have fun on a Cruise, a European, South American or China tour.

AIR FARES • CRUISES • PACKAGES

In Business Since 1983

Call today or visit our website for
\$SPECIAL\$

281-491-4000

www.xperttours.com

In The News

AURORA, ILLINOIS, WOMAN ADAPTS NATIVE PARSI RECIPES TO LOCAL INGREDIENTS

Abby Scalf
Daily Herald Correspondent



Aban Daboo makes it clear what food she loves to make by sharing her email address. She refers to herself as a Parsi chef.

Parsi, which also can be spelled Parsee, refers to a group who emigrated to India to avoid religious persecution by Muslims. Aban explained she learned about the Parsi cuisine growing up in Mumbai where the cuisine is popular.

Like Aban, who moved from Mumbai to the United States in 1981, people who left India adapt their cooking to local produce available so the Parsi cuisine they cook takes on a nuance of that region. So, Aban said, the style of cooking incorporates Asian, Mediterranean and other diets. It's not what most people think of as Indian cuisine.

"The recipes are very easy. Sometimes Indian food can feature a lot of spices and preparation," said Aban, who now lives in Aurora. "This is more simple cooking. Some Indian dishes can be fried and are heavy. This food is not heavy unless it's made for a special occasion."

Many dishes incorporate lamb and fish, she said, as India's West coast relies on its fishing industry. One popular dish she likes to prepare is topping fish with a chutney made with coconut and lemon juice and wrapping the fish within a banana leaf before steaming.

Whether she makes her saffron chicken with apricots, her curried turkey loaf or homemade curry, Aban makes sure to include her favorite ingredient, a paste made with fresh garlic and ginger. She even adds it to vegetable dishes, combining the paste with steamed cauliflower, coconut milk and turmeric.

No matter the dish, Aban prefers using every ingredient fresh including vegetables and herbs.

"We never use anything out of a bottle. It gives such good flavor we don't need anything really spicy like curry paste, curry powder or red chili paste," she said. "If I make red chili paste at home, I roast all the chilies, garlic and cumin and make it in the blender. It can stay for almost a month in the fridge."

Aban loves to cook for her own family including her husband of 49 years and their two children. She also often contributes to potluck dinners and fundraisers organized by the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago where she's been a member since its inception 31 years ago.

For Aban, cooking is a chance to be creative and create a strong bond with family and friends. And just as important, Aban said, is they enjoy a beautiful table.

"I prefer to use my good china. My husband asks how many dinner sets I've collected. I respond I don't know but I like to entertain," she said adding with a laugh, "I'm the only one of my group of friends who uses cloth napkins whenever I entertain."

Recipes for
Saffron Chicken with Apricots
Potato Frittata
Coconut Cilantro Chutney
Can be obtained from Aban Daboo parsichef@yahoo.com.

Reproduced by special permission from Debbie Pankey, Food Editor, Daily Herald

In The News

DR. DHUN NORIA, RECEIVES ORDER OF ONTARIO

February 3, 2015



Dr Dhun Noria, a distinguished member of the Zoroastrian community of Ontario, a South Asian doctor who is The Scarborough Hospital's (TSH) Chief of Laboratory Medicine and Medical Director of Laboratories, was presented with the highest official honor, the Order of Ontario by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell at an investiture ceremony on Tuesday February 3, 2015 (photo above)

This order recognized any current or former long-time resident of Ontario who has demonstrated a high level of individual excellence and achievement in any field benefitting the people of Ontario or anywhere in the world.

Dr. Noria was recognized with this prestigious honor due to her unwavering commitment and steadfast dedication to TSH, Scarborough and the Ontario medical community.

"I am humbled to be honored as a recipient of the Order of Ontario," said Dr. Noria. "I have been blessed to have had so many opportunities to serve communities right here at home and internationally. It is in my blood; it is my passion. The Order of Ontario is a prestigious recognition; however, it is the relationships that I have with individuals and with the community that I cherish the most."

Dr. Noria, who came to Canada in the late 1960s, graduated from Osmania Medical College Hyderabad. She followed her husband Farokh to Toronto. She has built a career on an unwavering commitment to excellence in health care with significant impact on Ontario's health care system.. As a member of the core planning team for the amalgamation of Scarborough General and Grace Hospitals in 1999, she advocated for the community, and ensured transparency and quality throughout the process. She also founded and chaired the Shared Hospital Laboratory – a joint partnership with TSH, North York General Hospital and Toronto East General Hospital that was lauded by former Health Minister David Caplan as a, "trophy to the residents of Scarborough and East York." In addition, she has been a member of both the hospital and TSH Foundation (TSHF) Board of Directors. Currently she is a Trustee of the University Health Network (Toronto General Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto Western Hospital and Toronto Rehab Institute) and the Chair of the Quality Committee of the Board for the University Health Network. Since 1996 she has been a member of the Board of Governors for the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care and served as Chair of the Metro Toronto District Health Council where she steered the successful restructuring of 44 hospitals during the amalgamation of the City of Toronto.

Dr. Noria also serves on the Toronto Police Services Board, Her other awards include Business Woman of the Year (2004) by the Indo-Canada Chamber of Ontario, inducted into the Scarborough Walk of Fame (2011) and has been named as a Local Toronto Hero by the Canadian Multicultural Council. Medical Association Presidential Award (2012) for Outstanding Services by a Physician to the Community and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award, (2012) Lifetime Achievement Award (2014) from TSHF at the Scarborough World Gala.

As a two-time breast cancer survivor her philanthropic contributions support the Women,s Clinic for early diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer at TSH

Dr Noria has been very active in the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, which recognizes her and her husband for their many community initiatives in the United States and India.

In The News

KHUSH CHOKSY VICE PRESIDENT AT U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR TURKEY, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Khush (Khursheed) Choksy is vice president for Turkey and Middle East Affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He directs the development and implementation of policies and programs that promote U.S. trade and investment with markets in the region. Choksy leads a team of program and policy experts who work closely with Chamber member companies and government leaders to broaden commercial relationships between the United States and the region.



Choksy's responsibilities include oversight of seven programs in the Turkey and Middle East region: the Middle East Commercial Center, the U.S.-Bahrain Business Council, the U.S.-Egypt Business Council, the U.S.-GCC Business Initiative, the U.S.-Iraq Business Initiative, the U.S.-Israel Business Initiative, and the U.S.-Turkey Business Council.

Previously, Choksy was the Chamber's senior director for the Middle East, where he expanded the membership of the U.S.-Egypt Business Council from 6 to 50 members, relaunched the U.S.-Bahrain Business Council, and implemented a strategic plan to expand the Chamber's scope and impact in the region.

Before joining the Chamber, Choksy was a director at Chemonics International. There he led teams developing economic ties between the United States and the Middle East. He lived and worked in Jordan for seven years, establishing relations with private and public sector leaders at a critical time in the U.S.-Middle East relationship. He also worked in India where he oversaw pioneering U.S. government and World Bank-funded efforts to help liberalize India's economy.

His work in India led to policy reforms that enabled foreign companies to invest in Indian firms through stronger capital markets and intellectual property protection. Prior to that, Choksy worked for the Parsons Corporation, a large engineering and management services firm.

Choksy's thought leadership includes presentations at international forums on business reform and U.S. trade and financial sector investment in emerging markets.

Choksy received his M.B.A. in strategic management from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and his B.A., magna cum laude, from Hamilton College. He lives with his wife Pervin and daughter Zenia, in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Khush is the brother of Prof Jamsheed Choksy of Indiana University. <https://www.uschamber.com/khush-choksy>

In The News

DECEMBER 28TH 2015 – 2ND JANUARY 2016
KINGS COLLEGE, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
INTRODUCING THE JIMMYS



The excitement is building up! No matter where you are in the world, you will find everyone talking about the upcoming 6th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress (WZYC). Being held at Kings College, Auckland, New Zealand, between 28th December 2015 and 2nd January 2016, the Congress not only promises to connect Zoroastrian youth from across the globe but also inspire delegates to carry on the proud Zoroastrian legacy.



With that being said, the 6th WZYC Organising Committee is delighted to announce the two Keynote Speakers for the event: Jimmy Antia and Jimmy Madon.

Born and brought up in Mumbai, India, **ERVAD JIMMY KHUSHROO MADON** moved to the United Kingdom five years ago where he procured a First Class Honours degree in Computer Science from the University of East London. He is currently employed as a Software Systems Development Engineer at GENEO Software Ltd., a Warwickshire based company that specialises in the field of Lean Engineering and Consultancy.

Jimmy is an ordained priest, a 'Navar-Martab', which qualifies him to carry out higher liturgical ceremonies for the Zoroastrian community. He has been actively

performing Jashans, Navjotes, Weddings and Funeral Ceremonies for the community over the last decade all around the world. As the youth coordinator of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) and the Social Secretary for the Young Zoroastrians of the UK (the youth wing of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe - ZTFE), he actively helps in organizing community events and also volunteers to teach at the 'Young Flames' religious educational class in London for kids and parents alike.

At the 6th WZYC, Jimmy aims to address the modern 'young' Zoroastrian, whether he/she is the sceptic freethinker or the conformist. His presentation promises to be an unconventional discussion on how to practically use Zoroastrianism – beyond the Good Thoughts, Words and Deeds cliché, taking the Jashan beyond the Malido and the Navjote beyond the birdy dance or the 'patra-ni-machi'!

Understanding how to distinguish religion from culture, race and ethnicity while knowing the gist of our simple daily prayers, one can put Zarathustra's time-tested ethical framework to good use. Such a rational take should leave the 'young' Zarathushti wondering if he/she ever truly lived this wonderful way of life called Zoroastrianism.

JIMMY ANTIA is an International Security and Development Analyst with experience in Latin America and Southeast Asia. His work experience includes



In The News

working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, where he focuses on working with other components of the U.S. government to promote resilient and sustainable use of water resources.

Prior to this, Jimmy consulted with the Department of Defence where he investigated programs, objectives, and strategic goals to create solutions that enhanced strategic planning process. He also worked with the Environmental Protection Agency to create new programs to increase resource conservation. Jimmy has extensive experience in politics having worked for the 2012 re-election campaign for Barack Obama, and with the U.S. House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure committee as well as working on transportation issues post-9/11.

He holds a BA in Urban Planning from the University of

Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an MA in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and was a 2003 Fulbright scholar to Costa Rica, where he examined sustainable development issues.

He will be addressing the connection between ecology, the mind and how they are rooted in Zoroastrian philosophy.

Do not miss the opportunity to listen to and engage with these intelligent and knowledgeable Keynote Speakers.

Get your applications in quick, as Early Bird registration closes in less than 2 months (12th April, 2015).
Register at: www.6wzyc.co.nz

RUSTOM RUTANSHAW PATEL TURNS 100

Rustom Rutanshaw Patel..(Rusy) turned one hundred years (100) years on January 23, 2015. He lives in his own apartment in a facility for seniors, adorned with memorabilia that spans his lifetime. He has an abundance of family stories always told with a spark that light up his beautiful brown eyes, transporting me to a time and place that I would have loved to visit.

Rusy is an intelligent, well-read lovable person who walks daily with a straight back, hands clasped behind his back and does not need any assistance, He climbs up to his apartment instead of taking the elevator. He enjoys good health, never complains and always wears his radiant smile that endears him to all who know him. He has his own teeth, has an outstanding memory and drove his car until a couple of years ago

He was born in Bhavnagar, India went to a one-room school house there, studied engineering in Pune and was a mechanical and electrical engineer with the Royal Indian Navy. On a visit to London, in May 1948, Uncle Rustom met my aunt Lien quite by chance in a tea house. Lien, who was from Holland, was working in England to improve her English . The tea house was busy and a waiter pointed Rusy to the only table (for two) where he could still find a seat with Lien. The couple married in 1949 in a civil ceremony in Hampstead, London. In 1959, after a trip to Canada, Rusy and Lien decided to settle in Canada after travelling around the world. In 1996 Rusy and Lien moved to Victoria, British Columbia to enjoy a milder climate. Lien died in April 2008. Rusy continues to live in Victoria.

His neice Quinee Patel writes “we would all like to take a page out of my Uncle Rustom’s book and live a joyous, healthy and interesting life, reading world news and discussing it animatedly, climbing up stairs instead of taking elevators and spreading joy everywhere. I feel blessed to belong to the same gene pool”.

QUINEE PATEL, VICTORIA, JANUARY 2015



From left standing Homi Italia, Firdosh and Rashna Mehta , Koomie Khambatta, Rustomji seated in front.

11/01/2015 13:41



January 18-20, 2015 St. Louis, Missouri

HAVOVI DESAI

This conference has been an eye opening experience for me as a young American living in a religious community allowing me to meet and interact with people from many different backgrounds and religious groups, and learn a great deal from each one. The first day was spent getting to know each other, talk about our faith and our different religious experiences. I talked to my friend Ipninder about Zoroastrianism, and he told me about his religion, Sikhism. This was a great way to begin the conference, I learned so much about each person in such a short period of time!

The second day was very interesting and thought provoking. Ethan gave the first talk on *"Interfaith Environmental Advocacy"*.with a wonderful PowerPoint presentation which he will send via email, for us to share with our own religious communities. Ethan is not only very passionate about environmental issues but is very knowledgeable and has great and innovative ideas, and he hopes to have various religious communities, including the ones represented in the conference, have a greener approach and together brainstorm ways to help our planet within our religious organizations. Ethan has actually created his own toilet and composts his own waste, which is fascinating, and in a weird way, inspirational. The fact that someone cares so much about our planet's future and takes even the smallest step toward bettering this Earth is humbling and admirable. I really enjoyed this part of the conference and Ethan did a fantastic job conveying information in a creative and easy to understand manner!

Nathan's talk was called "*Militarism and the Rise of Religious Extremism.*" Nathan talked to us and listened to everyone's perspective as well. He discussed drones in detail and brought up some very interesting points. It's a lot easier to press a button to kill someone from afar than it is when you are face to face with him or her. The use of drones is almost dehumanizing and causes PTSD(post traumatic stress disorder) in many people after the incident. We talked about how the government/ military should seek the advice of religious communities and collaborate with them when it comes to these pressing matters. The military are so used to their work and war and fighting that they often get desensitized to it; the role of religious voices here could be very powerful and offer the other perspective that may be missing. Why resort to hate, violence, and mass killings when we can attempt to solve our problems with love, peace, and cooperation?

The final talk of the day, and easily one of my favorites, was "*From a Moment to a Movement-The Role of Religious Leaders in Social Change.*" We went to the Eden Theological Seminary, where a professor talked to us in depth about Martin Luther King, Ferguson, and social change and what it takes to have a social movement, based on Charles Tilly's model. The four criteria are: **Worthiness, Unity, Numbers, and Commitment.** I was very impressed, earned a great deal and one I likely won't forget. This was a fantastic way to spend Martin Luther King (MLK) day.

The final day of the conference was meant to be a discussion of the future of RFP and our plans for the next couple of years. There was a lot of discussion and brainstorming about potential inter-faith events to plan in the near future; one of the main ones discussed was "*Clean, Pray, Love.*" This is where each community picks a different religious temple to help clean for a day, and it allows us to interact with a different local community of another religion. Possibly planting trees or something



of the sort would be a potential way to incorporate environmental issues into this project as well!

After attending this conference and meeting so many people who are genuinely passionate about inter faith relations, I have seen things from a completely different perspective and have been able to learn something from each person I met on this trip. This group of people showed me what true inter faith relations can be like, and gave me the chance to explore my feelings about religion in society in a much more positive light. It was refreshing and encouraging to interact with people who have so much love for not only their own faith but also for the faith of others. Every conversation that I witnessed was stimulating and intellectual. They were at times even controversial, but always respectful. It was exciting and fulfilling to be part of something so empowering to the spirit, and I feel optimistic about the future of religions and inter faith connections for years to come.

Havovi Desai (extreme right on first row) is a second year student at The Ohio State University studying psychology, and minoring in French and music. She is part of the Mount Leadership Society Scholars, which is a group of students dedicated to leadership and service. She loves animals and hopes to incorporate them into her future career!



From left to right: Raguraman Selvakumar, Eunju Nam, Ipninder Singh, Ryan Martin-Yates, Theodore Pritsis, Ethan Bodnaruk, Havovi Desai, Nathan Hosler

On February 1st 2015 Ervad Dr Soli Bamji, of Ottawa, delivered a one hour powerpoint presentation **Zarathushtra and his teachings in the Gathas. Zoroastrian ceremonies and celebrations** as part of the Christian Formation Faith Journey series held at St Stephen's Anglican Church in Ottawa. His presentation was followed by a stimulating question and discussion period.

Reverend Dr. Anne Quick expressed the Church and audience's appreciation in a note that said in part "We feel at St Stephen's, that we have a lot to learn about other faiths - thank you so much for helping us."

Personal Profiles

PARISA KHOSEHRAVI,

AN EYE WITNESS TO HISTORY TALKS TO KESHVAR BUHARIWALLA



In her nearly three decades at CNN, Parisa Khosravi has played a vital role in the network's award winning coverage of the most significant international stories. Her talent was quickly recognized, and Parisa's leadership was instrumental in telling the stories that shaped our world. Parisa orchestrated CNN's largest investment ever in international newsgathering. Her work has brought her recognition and many prestigious awards for both individual and collaborative efforts. Parisa has been a true eye witness to history. As stated by CNN, "No one has played a greater role in the emergence and then dominance of CNN International Newsgathering than Parisa."

KB: Ms. Khosravi, I am delighted to interview you for the FEZANA Journal and I thank you for your time. You recently gave the Keynote Address "Follow Your Dreams and Passions" at the XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress. Please tell me what that was like? (See article on Keynote Address)

PK: I was so impressed with how well planned and thorough the Congress organizers were. They initially asked me over a year ago to give this Keynote Address. I had spoken on a panel at a previous Congress, but I really appreciated this request. We have so many wonderful, successful, accomplished folks in our community and I was absolutely honored to be asked to speak.

KB: In your Keynote Address, you emphasized the role your father played in your life. Can you please elaborate on your parents' influence on you personally and your career?

PK: I give credit to my parents for all that I have accomplished. My brothers and I followed their example. As we grew up in this country, my parents never really put any restrictions on us, they trusted us to do the right thing. I probably put more restrictions on myself because I appreciated the trust and respect they had for me.

As a minority, my dad's achievements were historical in Iran. I have learned from his unparalleled work ethics and discipline. My mom is the tower of strength, and has always supported and encouraged me in pursuing anything I wanted to do. This support has always motivated and emboldened me to go after any task no matter how challenging.

KB: Can you please tell me about the role Zoroastrianism plays in your life?

PK: I am not a religious person, but I think that I am a good Zoroastrian because I have followed our three main principles. To me that is the ultimate practice of being Zoroastrian. I believe in following our three tenants - good thoughts, good words and good deeds. In its simplicity it covers everything.

KB: Being an Iranian woman, did you ever feel the need to distinguish yourself as a Zoroastrian? Has being a minority affected you?

PK: I am very proud of our Zoroastrian heritage and our three guiding principles. I have never thought that being a minority was an issue or a crutch. As I look back, I have always been a minority in every setting in my life, and am proud of my Iranian heritage. Really these are the factors that have made me who I am

Personal Profiles

today.

KB: You started with CNN about 30 years ago, your first job out of college. You were a video journalist and within 14 years you had an executive office. Was this always the plan from the beginning?

PK: My mindset was never about a certain position or a title. I loved what I did. I went to CNN because of the opportunity to cover international news. During the early years my managers were impressed with my cool head and wanted me to go towards the technical route and become a director, but I was interested in the editorial side and that is what I pursued. It was about working hard in the position I was in and not what title would be coming next. I was always very committed and thorough in whatever I did. If it has my name on it, it was done right - that was always my thinking.

KB: What do you believe to be the decisive characteristics/principles that propelled you to the positions of Senior Vice President of International Newsgathering and Global Relations for CNN Worldwide?

PK: I really think that one's EQ (emotional intelligence) is just as important, if not more so, as one's IQ. The way you deal with people, the way you treat people, the way you react to people, is all very important. I did not have managerial experience back then; I would go back to our three principles. I have always wanted to do right by people, which remains at my core. The way I conducted myself, the way I worked with and respected my colleagues has been important throughout my career.

KB: Can you describe your work life? Were you a workaholic?

PK: In the early years in my 20's I spent really long hours at work, but that is exactly where I wanted to be, in the newsroom and in the middle of whatever was happening. I did a lot of traveling and field producing, and had countless vacations and holidays cancelled. As the years went on, as my responsibilities expanded, and my son was born, the balance shifted. People talk about a work/life balance, but I really believe in an overall life balance. On any given day the shift could be 90–10, either way. However, one must keep the big life picture in mind, and maintain an overall balance. Through the years make sure that you are paying attention to all who are, and all that is important in life. You don't want to put yourself in a position to one day realize that years have slipped by and you have sacrificed something important that you always wanted to do or be.

KB: In your various positions throughout your career you have been a witness to so much history. Can you please share some of the stories you have covered?

PK: I have had the honor of being part of the team who helped build CNN to a global news powerhouse. The front row seat to every major news event for nearly three decades has been awesome and humbling. My first really big story was Tiananmen Square, on to the first Gulf War and the fall of the Eastern bloc. With decades in between there was the end of apartheid, the genocide in Rwanda, and the tsunami disasters in South Asia. More recent events include the Arab Spring and what has happened in the Middle East since the 2011 uprisings. Too many stories and historic events to name...

KB: Your coverage has been so extensive over the years. Is there one story that has gripped you the most?

PK: Each of the stories has so much that I could go into. Also, there was the competitive nature of the business, which in itself has fascinating aspects. But what does stay with me on any story are the children. Whatever the disaster or story, the children's faces and eyes stay with me.

KB: Your list of awards is extensive, Ellis Island Medal of Honor, Peabody Award, Emmy Award, Edward R. Murrow Award and the list goes on. Is there any award/recognition that holds greater significance than the rest?

PK: Each award and recognition is extremely special in its own way, but if you have to push me, yes one stands out. The Somalia 1992 Emmy Award would be the one I am most proud of because there was so

Personal Profiles

much I did behind the scenes for that story. Initially, it was a famine relief story; then if you remember, it developed into the Black Hawk Down story. We had to move a team in there, move heavy equipment and of course it had to be done fast! As the story goes, I was able to divert a civilian airliner to ensure our people were on the ground with their equipment ready to cover this breaking news.

KB: It was really interesting to hear in your Keynote Address that you were able to meet two Popes in your career. (See photo inserts)

PK: Yes, these were both special occasions and I was honored to meet both Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis.

KB: You have decided to retire from CNN after 28 years, what are your plans for the future?

PK: I have received a number of different offers. This is very humbling as I have not even put out feelers as yet. I am considering my options on the public speaking circuit and the consulting realm. There are several companies and organizations that have approached me for strategizing and advising roles. What I want most is to utilize the various skills that I have gained over the past years to give back in different ways. But first I look forward to some needed vacation.

KB: To our youth who want to follow in your footsteps, what is your advice in achieving greatness in the journalistic field? Or in their chosen field?

PK: I would say be in it for the right reasons, be passionate about telling the story and really make a difference by highlighting the stories that need to be told. The world has become very celebrity driven and that is the wrong reason to get into this field. My advice for success in any field would be to work hard and put in the time to learn the craft. When you earn each position based on your ability, you are much more credible and confident in that role. Some of our younger folks are quite impatient, they want to move on to the next position quickly. **My advice is to be patient when needed, and enjoy and cherish each step along the way, for you are always learning.**

Parisa Khosravi resides in Atlanta, Georgia. Her career and her many accolades speak for themselves. Upon announcing her retirement, much praise for Parisa poured in from her peers, the overwhelming theme centers on her kind, helpful, humble, yet driven nature.

Photo Credits Peabody picture: Richard T. Griffiths, CNN Papal pictures : Pope John Paul --The Vatican
Pope Francis -- CNN



BIRTHS

Vivian Cyrus Irani, a girl, to Lillian and Cyrus Irani, granddaughter to Adil Bharucha (Houston, TX) and Farida and Behram Irani (Dallas, TX) in Houston, TX on November 18, 2014.

Sarina Aflatooni, a girl, to Armita Kadkhoda and Aflatoon Aflatooni (ONT) on January 13, 2015.

Adrian Mehrain, a boy, to Nasrin and Mehran Mehrain (ONT).

Deeyar Aryana, a boy, to Morvarid and Mehrdad Aryana (ONT).

DEATHS

Homayun Shapur Varjavandi, wife of Shapur Khodadad Varjavandi (Southern California), mother of Dilnavaz, Tanaz, and Mahanaz, mother-in-law of Cyrus, Rohinton and Parvez, grandmother of Jennifer, Mehershan, Rukshad, Shahzad, Zuri and Arash.

Morvarid Zanzab, mother of Gulcher Irani (ONT) in Iran in December 2014.

Pervin Noshirwan Cowasjee, wife of Noshirwan Cowasjee, mother of Minocher Cowasjee (USA), Nereus Cowasjee (Australia) in Karachi, Pakistan on January 14, 2015.

Banoo Hakim, 96, mother of Shirin, Mehraban, and Jamshid Amanat in Los Angeles, CA on January 9, 2015.

Firoze Sethna, 98, husband of late Dosi Sethna, father of Kamal (Feroze) Nanavaty (Vancouver, BC), Jehangir (Shirin) Sethna (Vancouver, BC) and Gulshan (Minoo) Dubash (FL), grandfather of Danny, Sandra, Veera, Sara, Hormaz, and Roy in Vancouver, BC on January 17, 2015.

Golestan Zenbehnoosh, 92, daughter of Morvarid and Ardehi Zenbehnoosh, died in Montreal, on January 20, 2015.

Perin Engineer, mother of Jehangir, Dinshaw, and mother-in-law of Khurshid Engineer, sister of Goolu Shroff, sister-in-law of Villie Engineer, grandmother of Fiona, Godrej, and Kate, great grandmother of Sophie in Toronto, ONT on January 22, 2015.

Aghdas Delgosha, mother of Khorshidchehr Zandian (ONT), grandmother of Mahshah Khosraviani in Iran.

Kairasp Nariman Choksy, 82, husband of Freny (nee Cooper of Mumbai) father of Jamshed (Carol) Choksy (Indianapolis, IN), Khursheed (Pervin) Choksy (Washington, DC), Vishtasp (Sirini) Choksy (Colombo, Sri Lanka), brother of Threety Irani (late

Cushrow Irani) (Calcutta, India), grandfather of Darius, Zenia, Arish, Shanaia and Anaisha in Colombo, Sri Lanka on February 5, 2015.

Hoshi Dinshaw Patel, husband of Kaity Patel, father of Zain, Zermina, and Gary, brother of Homai Dubash and late Homi Patel, brother-in-law of Dolly Patel, Pilloo Naoroz and Sheriar Haveliwalla on February 8, 2015.

Khorshed Batliwalla 91, wife of late Rustom Batliwalla, mother of Benifer "Bina" (Anupam) Chohan and Dinshaw Batliwalla (Kety).

Grandmother to Devin and Percy Chohan, Hutoxi (Jamshed) Pithawala, Rashna (Cyrus) Chinoy, and Sharon (Paakzaad) Chothia. Great Grandmother to Aban, Jasmyne, Darayus, Darya, Camren, Skyla, Kaevan and Shaheen in Ottawa on March 8, 2015.

**PLEASE SEND ALL
SUBMISSIONS FOR
MILESTONES TO
MAHRUKH MOTAFRAM
TEL 425-961-0298
Mahrukhm83@gmail.com**

DEATH ENDS A LIFE NOT A RELATIONSHIP

Mitch Albom. Tuesdays with Morrie

MILESTONES

Matrimonials for Spring 2015 -

FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at RRRivotna@aol.com.

Matrimonials for Spring 2015

Male, 41, Business Systems Consultant, working in the technology department of a bank in Toronto, Canada. Contact Shiraz_Irani@hotmail.com. [M15.02].

Female, 28. Parents looking for a well-educated, cultured and settled Parsi Zoroastrian male for their educated, fair, beautiful daughter settled and working in USA. Please contact her at girl.parsi@gmail.com. [F15.03].

Female, 31, B.S., M.Ed (University of Toronto). Working as Assistant Director, Business Development in Toronto. Strong work ethic and commitment to family; good sense of humor, outgoing and caring. Enjoys the outdoors -- hiking, bicycling, traveling, and hosting dinner parties for family and friends. Contact navazee@gmail.com. [F15.07]

Male, 29, 5' 8", Masters degree in Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, presently

working in Sydney Airport (Australia). Enjoys sports, travelling, good food and movies. By nature family oriented, loyal, caring and with good moral values, believes in honesty and simplicity. Contact mtarapor@gmail.com, tel: +971 50 4452356. .

Looking for a Soul Mate? Try these matrimonial sites and services:

www.chaalokaajkariye.com
www.Matrimonial.Zoroastrianism.com
www.zoroastrians.net
www.TheParsiMatch.com
www.shaadi.com
www.ParsiMatrimony.com
www.ParsiShaadi.com
www.MatrimonialParsiZoroastrianism.com
Mrs. Gool Banaji, Parel, Mumbai, goolpesi@gmail.com, tel: 91-22-2416 6120.

FEZANA - The Way Forward ..North American Zoroastrian

Congress, Los Angeles, 31 December 2014 -

On December 31 2014, at the conclusion of the North American Zoroastrian Congress, hosted by the ZAC-California and the CZA, a presentation was made about activities, strategic plan and organizational structure of FEZANA, with an invitation for individuals and member associations to join in the activities of the Federation.

Afreed Mistry the main representative from FEZANA to the United Nations said: " ***Every individual is empowered to follow their own conscience. Zarathustis can put the Yatha Ahu Variyo prayer into action by caring for the needy at their local level as individuals or as organizations. We propose that they create an event of their own liking, anytime between 21 September which is International Day of Prayer for Peace, and 2nd October, which is the International Day for Non Violence. The UN NGO committee will be happy to support you and share best practices which we will learn from the grass roots.***"

Service events organized in different cities and communities, by individuals or groups can be posted on-line at www.daytoserve.org Contact co-chairs of the Fezana UN-NGO committee, Afreed Mistry [afreed.mistry\(@\)gmail.com](mailto:afreed.mistry(@)gmail.com) and Behram Pastakia [bpastakia\(@\)aol.com](mailto:bpastakia(@)aol.com), for implementation of this proposal. As of 21 March 2015, six states from the USA have joined in the Day To Serve initiative.



Obituary

KAIRSHASP NARIMAN CHOKSY, PC, MP (7 February 1933 – 5 February 2015)

FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PROMINENT CONSTITUTIONAL LAWYER IN COLOMBO,
SRI LANKA, AT AGE 81



Ratan Tata (L) shakes hands with K. N. Choksy (R)

K. N. Choksy was born in Colombo on February 7, 1933. His paternal grandfather, Kaikhusr D. Choksy (1863-1938), arrived in Colombo in 1884 (the capital city of British Ceylon) from Surat and Bombay (now Mumbai) as an employee of Framjee Bhikhajee and Company serving in several senior positions and finally as corporate attorney until his death in 1938.

K. D. Choksy was a friend of the Indian Zoroastrian scholar Jivanji J. Modi and shared an interest in Parsi history. His father, Nariman K. Choksy (1896-1973), was born in Ceylon, entered the legal profession in 1917, became a renowned attorney and was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1947. In 1951, N. K. Choksy was elevated to the rank of *puisne* or regular judge on the Supreme Court. In 1955, as chairman of the Local Government Commission of Inquiry, he produced the *Choksy Report*—a handbook on local governmental authority.

The family of K. N. Choksy's mother Khorshed (nee Lakdawalla, 1907-1976) donated land in 1927,

on which the Ceylonese/Sri Lankan Zoroastrian fire temple, *Navroz-Baug*, was constructed. Like his grandfather and father, K. N. Choksy diligently served the Parsi Zoroastrian community of Ceylon/Sri Lanka, first as a trustee and subsequently as president of the Ceylon Parsi Anjuman which administers the agiary (fire temple), priests and rituals, trust funds, and aramgah (funerary ground).

K. N. Choksy was educated at St. Thomas' Preparatory School; his secondary education was at St. Thomas' College. Raised within the intellectually-vibrant legal atmosphere of his father's law chambers he also attended the Law College in Colombo and was admitted to the Ceylon Bar as an advocate, or attorney-at-law, in 1958. He swiftly established himself as one of Sri Lanka's leading civil attorneys, practicing before the District, Appeals, and Supreme Courts. In recognition of his contributions to the legal profession, K. N. Choksy was appointed as President's Counsel (PC) in 1981 by President J. R. Jayewardene.

As senior counsel, he successfully defended

Obituary

the country's then President R. Premadasa against a legal petition (1989-1992) to annul the presidential election.

K. N. Choksy emerged as Sri Lanka's preeminent constitutional attorney and constitutional thinker. He declined appointment to the Supreme Court, because he "did not want to be removed from the daily action of Sri Lanka." Instead, he first served as a member of Sri Lanka's delegation to the United Nations General Assembly in New York, which he addressed in December 1984. In February 1989, he became a Member of Parliament (MP) on the national list of the United National Party and served in that capacity for twenty-one years. The Sri Lankan Constitution allows for a limited number of such appointments, so that the professional and academic communities can gain representation through eminent members in the national legislature without having to contest elections.

During the political period of his life, K. N. Choksy accepted appointment as Sri Lanka's first Minister of Constitutional and State Affairs under President D. B. Wijetunge and guided the implementation of the nation's constitution from 1992 through 1994. In December 2001, K. N. Choksy was requested by President C. Kumaratunga and Prime Minister R. Wickremesinghe to accept the position of Minister of Finance of Sri Lanka because the country needed "an honest fiscal helmsman." He accepted and served until April 2004. In that office, K. N. Choksy

also functioned as a Governor of the World Bank and of the International Monetary Fund.

K. N. Choksy is survived by his wife Freny (née Cooper), of Bombay, and by his three sons, two grandsons, and three granddaughters. Kairshasp and Freny met in Bombay where she attended Law College. They were married in Bombay on January 4, 1959, and she was his partner through life's triumphs and tribulations. Their eldest son, Jamsheed, a scholar of Zoroastrianism, is Chairman and Professor of the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University and a presidentially-appointed member of the United States National Council on the Humanities. Their middle son, Khursheed, is Vice President for Turkey, Middle East, and North Africa Affairs in the International Division of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Their youngest son, Vishtasp, followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather by attending St. Thomas' College and the Sri Lanka Law College; he is a prominent, highly-respected, attorney in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and is a stalwart of Sri Lanka's Parsi community.

**SUBMITTED BY HIS SON JAMSHEED CHOKSY.,
PURDUE UNIVERSITY INDIANA,**

*"All things are bound together. All things connect.
Whatever happens to the Earth happens to the children
of the Earth. Man did not weave the web of life, he is
merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he
does to himself."*

—Chief Seattle (1780-1866)
Leader Of The Suquamish And Duwamish
Native American Tribes

Obituary

VICE ADMIRAL RUSTOM K. S. GHANDHI (1924-2014)

PROF. SORAB K. GHANDHI
ESCONDIDO, CA, USA



Vice Admiral Rustom Khushro Shapoorji Gandhi, PVSM, Vr.C., I.N. Ret., was born at Jabalpur, India, on July 1, 1924, the eldest of Khushro Shapoorjee Gandhi and Dina Cooverbai Amroliwalla's five sons. He married Khorshed (Bubbles) Kharegat (deceased 2011), daughter of Sir Pheroze and Lady Kharegat, on January 1, 1949, and had three children; Phiroze (Sandy), Yasmine, and Delna.

Rustom Gandhi graduated from St. Joseph's College, Naini Tal, in 1941, with an Intermediate Science degree. After a year of graduate studies at Allahabad University, he joined the Royal Navy with a permanent commission as an officer cadet on January 1, 1943.

On the midnight of 14th August of Independence

Day, Rustom Gandhi and Lord Louis Mountbatten were standing next to Pandit Nehru when he delivered the *Tryst with Destiny* speech. From 1947–1948, Rustom served as Mountbatten's Aide de Camp (ADC), when he was the last Viceroy of India.

He was the only officer to have commanded ships in all wars fought by India, highlights of his Navy career include:

- 1957: Commanding Officer of the *INS Cauvery*
- 1961: Commanding Officer of the *INS Betwa*, annexation of Goa after 451 years of Portuguese rule. Lord Mountbatten called him India's Nelson for his role in this battle.
- 1965: Commanding Officer of the *INS Khukri*, war with Pakistan, commanding the 14th frigate squadron
- 1968: Director of Naval Operations
- 1969 Commanding Officer of the *INS Mysore* (flagship of the Western Naval Fleet), 1971 war with Pakistan to create Bangladesh. He was awarded the Vir Chakra (Vr.C.) for conspicuous gallantry for his role in the 1971 war with Pakistan.
- 1972: Naval Advisor to the India High Commission in London, UK
- 1974: Fleet Commander, Eastern Fleet
- 1975: Fleet Commander, Western Fleet
- 1977: Commander-in-Chief, Western Naval Command
- 1979: Retired with the rank of Vice Admiral of the Indian Navy

Upon retirement from the Indian Navy, Vice Admiral Gandhi worked a short stint as technical consultant for the movie, *Sea Wolves*—in it he had a cameo role as the Governor of Goa. He was appointed Chairman of the India Shipping Corporation in 1981 and served in that capacity until 1986.

When Rajiv Gandhi was Prime Minister of India,

Obituary



Vice Admiral Ghandhi was awarded the *Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM)* for meritorious service of the highest order. He served as Governor of the State of Himachal Pradesh, from April 1986 to February, 1990, residing with Mrs. Ghandhi at Raj Bhawan in Shimla.

Vice Admiral Ghandhi died in Mumbai on December 23, 2014. He had suffered a severe stroke three years earlier, later developed pneumonia, and was in considerable pain from complications from it.

His request to be buried at sea was granted by the Navy High Command; he was buried with full naval honors on December 27, 2014.

Rustom Ghandhi had a finely developed

Parsi sense of generosity and fair play, which he exercised in his dealings with officers and enlisted men, often giving them guidance and advice in times of indecision. From 1993 to 1996, he was a Member of the National Commission for Minorities and was instrumental in establishing significant retirement benefits for enlisted seamen. He was loved by everyone with whom he interacted and the outpouring of this love was seen in the many tributes paid to him upon his passing.

In the words of William Shakespeare:

*His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, THIS WAS A MAN.*

*No matter how big your house
No matter how fancy your car
No matter how expensive your clothes
Our graves are still going to be the same size*

author unknown

FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

FEZANA Office: 8615 Meadowbrook Dr, Burr Ridge, IL 60527

Administrator: Zenobia Damania admin@fezana.org tel 630-468-2705

Registered address: 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521 USA

www.fezana.org

FEZANA OFFICERS

President: Katayun Kapadia, 33, Preamble Drive, Mt Laurel, NJ 08054, Tel 856-722-1030 kkatayun@msn.com

Vice-President: Homi D Gandhi, 704 Harristown Rd, Glen Rock, New Jersey, 07452. Tel 201-445-3917 homidgandhi@gmail.com

Treasurer: Nilufer Khushroo Shroff, 8, Highgate Lane, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003 Tel 856-489-0123 fezanatreasurer@gmail.com

Secretary Saghar Javanshir-Behroozi, 4709 Seafarer Court, Flower Mound, TX. 75022 Tel 214-455-7572 sjbehroozi@verizon.net

Asst. Secretary: TBA

FEZANA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Zoroastrian Association of Alberta (ZAA): President: Pedram Paysarvi zaacalgary@gmail.com <http://www.zaab.ca>
ZAA Rep Neelum Austin
Tel 403-271-1273 bapaiji@shaw.ca

Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (ZSBC): Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 6900 Halifax St, Burnaby, BC V5B 2R5, Tel: 604-420-3500, President: Farhad Iranfar; farhad92579@hotmail.com

Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation (OZCF): 1187 Burnhamthorpe Road, East, Oakville, ON L7H 7B3, President Percy Dastur Tel 416-930-9666 percydastur@gmail.com president@ozcf.com

Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO): Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr, 3590 Bayview Avenue, Willowdale, ON M2M 3S6, Tel: 416-733-4586, President: Bina Behboodi president@zso.org

Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (ZAQ): President: Dolly Dastoos, 3765 Malo, Brossard, Que, J4Y 1B4 Tel 450-656-2036 dollydastoos@sympatico.ca

California Zoroastrian Center (CZC): 8952 Hazard Avenue, Westminster, CA 92683, Tel: 714-893-4737 info@czc.org
President: Shiva Khorshidian; Rep Dr Sohrab Salamatipourtel 949-640-7612 salamatipour@yahoo.com

Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman (TMZA): President: Tahamtan Aresh, Tel: 949-759-0519.

Zarthushti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC): President: Nazneen Spiledt, Tel: 650-624-8888, nazehler@aol.com

Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC) President Tehmi Damania, 1424E Walnut Avenue, Orange CA 92691 Tel 949-583-9973, tdamania@zacla.org

Persian Zoroastrian Organization (California) (PZO): 10468 Crothers Road, San Jose, CA 95127, Tel: 408-272-1678, President Delbar Jahanian delbarj@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Rocky Mountain (Colorado) (ZARM): President: Neville Rustomjee,, Neville_rust@hotmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (District of Columbia and Washington DC suburbs) (ZAMWI): President Navroz Gandhi zamwi_president@yahoo.com; Rep Shehernaz Verahrami Tel 301-355-8460 verahrami@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF): President: Furrokh Irani, Tel: 305-281-0972, Address: 16586SW, 51st Street, Miramar, FL 33027 firani@aol.com

Atlanta Zarathushti Association (Georgia)(AZA): Representative: Cyrus Aidun : Tel 404-894-6645 Cyrus.aidun@me.gatech.edu; Farzan Bharucha, President, farzan.bharucha@kurtsalmon.com

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (Illinois) (ZAC-Chi): Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Hinsdale, IL 60521, Tel: 630-789-1983, President: Rayomand Ravji rayoravji23@gmail.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: Bakhtavar Desai Tel 513-829-7818, bfdesai@aol.com www.zakoi.org

Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area (Massachusetts) (ZAGBA): President: Firoza Farhad Panthaki, 146 Neponset Street, Norwood, MA 02062 Tel: 781- 769-5309, firozapanthaki@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Michigan (ZAOI) President: Shernaz Minwalla 16040 Mountain Side Drive, Macomb Township, MI 48042 Tel 586-216-3341 Sjminwalla@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania, New Jersey & Delaware (ZAPANJ): President Havovi Jokhi, 207 Avonwood Rd, Kennett Square, PA 19348 Cell : 302-753-6904; Res 610-925-3905 hjokhi@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (NY City Area) (ZAGNY): 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, NY 10901, Tel: 845-362-2104, President Astad Clubwala 973-238-0630. clubwala@aol.com

Iranian Zoroastrian Association (New York City Area) (IZA): 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, NY 10901, Tel: 845-362-2104, President : Shirin Kosravi, Tel: 212-757-1679, sherrykiamane@hotmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania (ZAPA): President : Sarosh Sepai, Tel 724-234-2228 president@za-pa.org; secretary@za-pa.org

Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (Texas)(ZANT): President Kashmira Contractor Tel 972-Presidnet@zant.org 1605 Lopo Rd Flower Mound, TX 75028 rep Sherazade Mehta; sherazadem@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Houston (Texas) (ZAH): 8787 West Airport Blvd, Houston, TX 77071, Representative: Roshan Sethna, Tel 713-856-9359 rosh@sbcglobal.net

Zoroastrian Society of Washington State (ZSWS): President: info@zswn.org

FEZANA CORRESPONDING MEMBERS (SMALL GROUPS)

Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada (ZAAC): President Firdaus Bhathena bhathena@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Arizona (ZAAZ): President: Jamsheed Mehta Tel 602-243-1311; jamsheed@yahoo.com

San Diego Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Hoshang Khambatta, Tel: 858-450-0190, khambatta@sbcglobal.net

Central Florida Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Sarvar Demehri, Tel: 407-509-6918, 1sarvar@gmail.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 Minoo Mehta, Tel: 314-569-1828, pmhelix@yahoo.com

Cleveland Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Kamal Mehta, Tel: 440-944-1181, knmkersi@aol.com

Zoroastrian Contact in Austin Texas: Ketyl & Aspi Wadia, Tel: 512-263-3131, ketylwadia@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Virginia: Chair: Rumy 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: \$10 plus shipping (US - \$15 Canada - \$15 Overseas
Air-only \$22 *Full set of archival Journals*, 1991 - 2005: \$225 plus
shipping. "Periodical Rate" may take up to 2 months (for UK, Europe)
and up to 4 months (for Asia, Australia, Far East).

Advertising Rates (in US dollars)

Advertise contact: Dolly Dastoor Tel 450-656-2036 e.mail editor@fezana.org

	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. **Fourth ad free.**

FEZANA JOURNAL

Subscription/ Advertisement/ Sponsorship Rates

Sponsor an Issue

To sponsor an issue of the Journal,
contact

Dolly Dastoor [see left].

Individual Sponsorship is \$6000

**Group Sponsorship is \$1000
each**

(six 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 term. Renew for
multiple years to ensure that your subscription is uninterrupted. It also help
us reduce administrative costs.**

----- 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). enquiries/updates contact: **Arnavaz Sethna, email: asethna@yahoo.net**
tel: 281- 499-1832.

Total enclosed (US funds only):

Subscription: \$ _____ for _____ years
o 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.

o VISA o 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: _____

Peel off and attach address label from last issue of your Journal
(or copy it here by hand including expiry date)

Personal Subscription o New o Renewal

Gift Subscription o New o 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