

# FEZANA *bulletin*

May 2014 / VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 5



## UPCOMING DATES

Through Sept 20, 2014

*A Thousand Years of the Persian Book Exhibition.*  
Library of Congress,  
Washington D.C. [click here](#)

July 2-6, 2014

*14th Zoroastrian Games.*  
Los Angeles, CA.  
<http://www.zathletics.com/>

August 6-8, 2014

*UN Summer Youth Assembly.* UN Headquarters, NYC. Registration is open but space is limited.  
<http://faf.org/main/youth-assembly-at-the-un/>

August 10-13, 2014

*North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) Conference.* Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. <http://nain.org/>

August 27-29, 2014

*65th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference. "2015 and Beyond: Our Action Agenda".* UN headquarters, New York City. [Click here](#)

December 29-31, 2014

*17th North American Zoroastrian Congress,* Los Angeles, California  
[www.nazc2014.org](http://www.nazc2014.org)

## FEZANA Annual General Meeting Held in Washington State

The FEZANA 27th Annual General Meeting was held in Bellevue, Washington from May 16-18, 2014. The FEZANA Executive these last two years was comprised of Katayun Kapadia, President; Homi Gandhi, Vice-President; Ratan Mistry, Treasurer; Nahid Dashtaki, Secretary (2012-13), and Shiraz Italia, Assistant Secretary. We welcome Nilufer K. Shroff as FEZANA Treasurer and Saghar Javanshir-Behroozi as FEZANA Secretary for 2014-16. We would like to thank the outgoing FEZANA Treasurer, Ratan Mistry, for his proactive, prompt and efficient handling of our requests for information and reimbursements and Assistant Secretary, Shiraz Italia, for her services to the FEZANA organization.



**Ratan Mistry, Shiraz Italia, Katayun Kapadia, Homi Gandhi**



**Nilufer K. Shroff, Ratan Mistry, Katayun Kapadia, Homi Gandhi, Saghar Javanshir-Behroozi**

We would also like to thank the Presidents and Representatives of FEZANA's 26 member associations and 14 corresponding members as well as 24 Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs for their efforts in garnering the support and participation of their members and fellow Zarathushtis in promoting the various activities and causes supported by FEZANA.

FEZANA functions through its several standing and ad-hoc committees that work on various worthy causes and projects to provide service to the Zarathushti community in North America and world-wide. Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs bring expertise to their committees from all walks of life. We would like to thank all the Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs for their active participation and efforts in working harmoniously with the FEZANA Executive, member associations and small groups to achieve the mission and goals of the FEZANA organization.

The FEZANA Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees have continued to perform their activities and have accomplished a lot in the past year as can be noted from the Committee Reports included in the AGM Report Book that was distributed at the meeting. We share some highlights of these reports in the following pages.

We also would like to thank the Zarathushtis of Zoroastrian Society of Washington State for their warm hospitality and efforts in hosting this AGM. More details on the AGM in the June *FEZANA Bulletin*.

Regards  
Katayun Kapadia  
FEZANA-President



**Federation of  
Zoroastrian  
Associations of  
North America  
(FEZANA)**

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NGO in consultative status  
(Roster) with the Economic  
and Social Council of the  
United Nations



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FEZANA INFO

## FIRES Committee Report

Submitted by Aban Rustomji, Chair

### Mission

FIRES' mission is to establish and provide access to a centralized collection of materials in print and electronic form, primarily pertaining to the Zarathushti faith, culture and history.

### Standing Committee

FIRES is delighted and humbled at the overwhelming support for inclusion as Standing Committee. We want to thank you for it and pledge to enhance our services, work on the Strategic Plan, and encourage more of you to get involved in FIRES with your suggestions, ideas and goodwill.

### Events

ZAH Library events are now recorded and will be accessible through FIRES to the wider North American community. We encourage all Associations to record their literary/lecture events and provide us a link through the FIRES website.



Events in 2013-2014 that are available on the FIRES website include:

- Sari Sorority: A history of garas from China to India, followed by a sari wearing demonstration. The presentation was such a hit that we repeated it in Dallas
  - Cyrus Cylinder Exhibit: In conjunction with the exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the ZAH library paid for renowned lecturer and author Jenny Rose to speak at the Museum and at a special event at ZAH.
  - Book Launch: Nozer Buchia's latest book, *Road Map to Success: America's top intellectual minds map out successful business strategies*.
  - Recreating Pasargade: Presentation of the CD followed by a discussion
  - NAMC Meeting: Presentations by four NAMC members. This was a three day event starting with a dinner with the youth group on Friday, lectures on Saturday and free forum on Sunday. This was the first recorded event.
- Upcoming Events:
- Oral History Project (May 3, 2014): In conjunction with Rice University, we plan to record and archive the oral history of members of ZAH. We will be happy to guide other Associations who wish to do a similar project.
  - Zarathushtra's Gathas: Lecture by Kersee Kabraji (August, 2014)
  - FIRES Annual Dinner (November 1-2, 2014): Featuring speaker Sarah Stewart, a lecturer in Zoroastrianism in the Department of the Study of Religions at SOAS and project director of the Everlasting Flame Exhibit.

### Cataloged Collection

The FIRES online catalog now has books from several member associations. We need help with cataloging at different locations, especially with Farsi books. The table below shows the approximate number of books presently cataloged from each association.

### Book Donations

We are very fortunate to have a constant stream of books donated to both the ZAH Library as well as to FIRES. We would like to recognize some of our recent donors:



## OPPORTUNITY

### UN DPI/NGO Conference Registration Open

Registration for the 65th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference, which will take place in New York at the United Headquarters from 27 to 29 August of this year, is now open.

Zarathushtis wishing to participate can send in their curriculum vitae and letter of intent to:

Afreed Mistry  
[afreed.mistry\( @ \)gmail.com](mailto:afreed.mistry@gmail.com),  
Homi D Gandhi  
[homidgandhi \( @ \)gmail.com](mailto:homidgandhi@gmail.com),  
Behram Pastakia  
[bpastakia \( @ \) aol.com](mailto:bpastakia@aol.com),

The costs for travel, visa and stay in New York City will be the responsibility of the selected participants. FEZANA UN-NGO committee will make available access to the UN premises and to the international discussions and fora at the United Nations Headquarters.

For more details on the upcoming 65th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference, [click here](#).

- Jehan Bagli (Toronto): *Encyclopedia of Indian Religion*
- Toxy Cowasjee (Karachi): *Vintage Cowasjee: A Selection of Writings from Dawn: 1984-2011*
- Daraius Bharucha and ZSO: *Gifts to a Magus - Indo-Iranian Studies - Honoring Firoze Kotwal*
- Sarosh Manekshaw (Houston): *Threads of Continuity and Parsi Bol*
- Zubeen Mehta and Meheryar Rivetna (Houston): *The Great Pretender, a life in pictures; Cuisine for a Cause.*
- Farrokh Mistree (Houston): *Everlasting Flame Catalog*
- Yasmin Pavri (Houston): *Across Oceans and Flowing Silk - From Canton to Bombay 18th-20th Centuries; No Man Is an Island.*
- Firdosh Mehta (Alberta): Thirty books from his personal collection that FIRES catalog doesn't already have
- Arnavaz and Hoshang Sethna (Houston) and the Sethna Family: *The Cambridge History of Iran: Volume 1: The Land of Iran, Volume 4: The Period from the Arab invasion to the Saljuqs; Volume 5: The Saljuq and Mongol periods*
- Tehmi Dastur (Houston): *Swami Vivekananda - Literary Biography*
- Bahraam Shamardaan (Los Angeles): *Karma: Its basis, its nature, its sources*

### Outreach

Diana Katgara, Outreach Co-ordinator, e-mailed out a letter to the President of each FEZANA Association to bring awareness of FIRES. This was in addition to the flyer designed by Feroza Fitch. We look forward to Diana's effective strategies to raise awareness and connect with member associations throughout North America. FIRES continues to contribute articles to the FEZANA Bulletin approximately every quarter. We are also featured in FEZANA Journal, in Hamazor, and in USHAO – publications that have a worldwide distribution.

Rice University declared November 23, 2013 as Zarathushti Day at the University in honor of Bahrom Firozgary who is on the Rice basketball team. This was a great opportunity to reach people outside the Zoroastrian community. A team from ZAH put together an exhibit on Zoroastrianism that included the FEZANA brochure as well as bookmarks publicizing the ZAH Library and FIRES.

### Research Questions

FIRES continues to receive requests for information from people all over North America. From simple questions as to where can I get a Kadmi prayer book to what is correct version of Dare Mehr. From Marilyn Singer, a well known children's poet who wanted help with a poem for Navroze, to Julie Holz who is interested in Zoroastrianism, to a high school teacher in Brenham, TX who wanted to develop a unit in world religion and to include Zoroastrianism. □

## Funds and Finance Committee Report

Submitted by Rustom Kevala, Jerry Kheradi and Zubin Bagwadia

We have many reasons to be grateful and happy: family, friends, home, education, a job or business, etc. We believe in good thoughts, good words, and good deeds and we are awed by the beauty and wisdom of this Creation. As Zarathushtis, we express our joy by being charitable.

One of the most important needs today is to ensure that our future generations do not lose faith in our culture and religion. That is why it is so important to support our local Associations and FEZANA's activities. Our local Associations conduct religious education classes to instill pride and understanding of our history and religious principles. FEZANA provides a cohesive force that helps the community to attain its collective needs now and into the future. Core values



## URBAN ART OPPORTUNITY

### ***Freedom: A Shared Dream***

### **An International Urban Art Competition Sponsored by Farhang Foundation**

Farhang Foundation is looking for professional artists to submit their qualifications for a major public urban art opportunity in Los Angeles, California, USA. This innovative project has been inspired by the unprecedented visit of the 2500 year old *Cyrus Cylinder* to the Getty Museum in Los Angeles during 2013. ([See Inspirational Facts](#)).

Artists from all cultural and political backgrounds, who have had experience working in the public sector, to create a site-specific artwork are encouraged to apply. Once completed, this artwork will be gifted to the city of Los Angeles on behalf of the Iranian American community by Farhang Foundation.

**Project Phase 1 deadline: August 1, 2014**

For further information about the **Freedom: A Shared Dream** Project and **Farhang Foundation** please visit: [www.farhang.org/freedom](http://www.farhang.org/freedom) or contact [freedom@farhang.org](mailto:freedom@farhang.org).

are being recognized and enhanced through a strong emphasis on education, economic stability, and volunteerism. Encouragement of higher education in the arts, sciences and religion provides strong professional and business skills that enhance the earning power of families and serve as a foundation for an enlightened, harmonious and prosperous life. Our youth and adults participate in local and national fundraising drives for cancer, feeding and building homes for the poor; and even collecting eyeglasses and shoes for distribution to the poorer parts of the world. Several individuals enthusiastically participate in global activities within United Nations, Parliament of World Religions and Religions for Peace. And as we nurture a love for humanity and promote our Zarathushti way of life, we are increasing the awareness of our sublime religion and ethical culture domestically and globally. This is the vision that FEZANA is promoting to instill pride in our future generations; thus ensuring the survival and growth of our religious community on the North American continent. Our support is vital to keep this vision alive.

Happily, we are already rising to the challenge. During 2013, FEZANA received over \$246,000 in contributions and investment income. FEZANA's expenses and disbursements totaled \$198,748; including distribution of over \$72,700 for welfare and critical assistance and \$36,500 for scholarships. This is in addition to the support received by our local Associations from their members. Please keep up the good work and help us grow. □

## Interfaith Activities Committee Report

Submitted by Homi D. Gandhi, Co-chair

FEZANA continues to take part in Interfaith Activities at the United Nations. Following up on the historic offering of Zarathushti Prayer of Peace in February 2013, FEZANA was once again invited in February 2014 to offer Zarathushti Prayer of Peace at the World Interfaith Harmony Week 2014. This year Tina Dukandar, FEZANA's Youth Representative at the UN, offered the prayer. Her father, Kerman Dukandar, accompanied her to offer the flower of Peace in accordance with the program.

Ervad Poruz Khambatta from ZAGNY was selected as the Zoroastrian youth representative for the IXth World Assembly of Religions for Peace, which was held in Vienna, Austria during November 19-21, 2013. Jehangir Sarosh from World Zoroastrian Organization and Homi Gandhi were also invited to participate in the IXth World Assembly. The world assembly delegates elected Jehangir Sarosh and Homi Gandhi as Co-President and Honorary President respectively to the World Council, representing the Zoroastrian community. They will be serving on behalf of the world Zoroastrian community for a period of 5 years till the next World Assembly.

As an important part of RFP World Assembly preparatory process, regional youth preparatory meetings were held in six continents. The RFP North American Interfaith Youth Network (NAIYN) Assembly Preparatory Meeting was held on 25-26 August 2013 in Washington DC. Farzin Avari from Atlanta was the Zoroastrian youth representative at the meeting.

FEZANA is an Executive Council (EC) member of the US based organization Religions for Peace USA (RFP-USA); Homi Gandhi represents FEZANA on RFP-USA EC. Rohinton Rivetna represents FEZANA on Parliament of World's religions. FEZANA is a member of North American Interfaith Network (NAIN). FEZANA has nominated Maneck Bhujwala as a Zoroastrian representative on NAIN's Board, in response to a recent invitation by NAIN.

At the 9/11 Unity Walk in Washington DC on 8 September 2014 the Ambassador



## FUNDS AVAILABLE

**True Hero Awards****Funds Available for Service Trips and Volunteer Activities****Deadline: June 30, 2014**

True Hero grants cash awards to high school, college and qualified non-profit community youth organizations that sponsor service trips and volunteer activities for students. These cash awards enable more schools to continue their service learning programs and offer a life changing experience to those students who participate. Awards are given to those projects with the most online votes on June 30th, 2014!

<http://bit.ly/1nKwVDi>

to the United States from South Africa, His Excellency Ebrahim Rasool, made the suggestion that we lift up the idea of non-violence as a response to conflict resolution centered on the three icons for peace and reconciliation - Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi. The event was live streamed. Participation this year was marked by a service project to feed the hungry at the Embassy of the Vatican, in keeping with the ministry of Pope Francis. Another innovation was the implementation of the concept of gleaning. A tractor trailer load of potatoes was trucked in from the State of Maine, thanks to the Society of St Andrews, to Embassy Row in the nation's capital, bagged by the walkers at St Sophia's Orthodox Greek Cathedral and sent to the kitchens caring for the homeless in the poor parts of the city. The statue of Nelson Mandela, was unveiled in Washington DC on 21 September 2013, the international day for prayer and peace. A detailed report is printed in *Fezana Journal*, Winter 2013, Vol 27, No 4, on pages 4, 85 and 86.

At the **Global Working Group** meeting held at the Palamkote Hall, in Dadar Parsi Colony, in January 2014, on the sidelines of the 10th World Zoroastrian Congress in Mumbai, India, the representative from the London based, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, Dorab Mistry, reminded us that 2014 will mark the 100th anniversary of the launch of the First World War and Zarathushti should be thinking about a common response to commemorate this occasion.

We would submit that this year would be an opportune time to begin to respond in civil society with events centered around the Zarathushti concept of ***Nidhaisnaitshem***. We could start by building on the suggestion of the South African Ambassador, by promoting **a triangle of non-violence** - learning from the life and legacy of the three icons - Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi, at events organized in different cities in North America bracketed between the two dates **21 September** (International Day of Prayer and Peace) and **2 October** (International Day of Non-Violence).

A model for **a Day to Serve** between in last two weeks of September annually has been successfully launched [www.daytoserve.org](http://www.daytoserve.org) (c.f., article by our newly elected Secretary, of FEZANA, Saghar Javanshir-Behrooz titled "*The Role of Zoroastrianism in Building a Bright Future*" *Fezana Journal*, Vol 27, No 4, winter 2013 page 30)

Homi Gandhi was invited to talk about FEZANA's Interfaith Activities during an Interfaith session at ZTFE in London when he attended a seminar celebrating 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

FEZANA was represented by Homi Gandhi in New York 9/11 Unity Walk, at the end of which he offered a Zoroastrian prayer of peace at the World Trade Center monument.

On November 10, 2013 in celebration of the International day of Prayers, Ervad Jehan Bagli participated with the representatives of some fourteen different faith traditions assembled at the St. Paul's Basilica in Toronto to offer prayers for Persecuted Christians and those of other Religions. Representing the Zarathushti faith, Erv Jehan Bagli offered prayers from the Gathas that directed mankind to freedom from bondage, sovereignty of choice and moral justice.

The details of most of the above events have featured in FEZANA Bulletins and/or FEZANA journals. Additionally, several other Associations, small groups, and individuals participate in Interfaith activities. It is hard to capture all the information. We would request that others at this gathering take this opportunity to relate their interfaith experiences.

**FUTURE EVENTS:**

The next Parliament of World Religions (PWR) is likely to take place in 2014 in Mexico. Although all details are not finalized, as the only North American



## SPORTS SCHOLASHIP

### FEZANA Excellence in Sports Scholarship (EXISS) is now accepting applications

**Deadline: Aug 30, 2014**

The FEZANA Excellence In Sports Scholarship (EXISS) Fund is now accepting applications for 2014.

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, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

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 [exissfund@fezana.org](mailto:exissfund@fezana.org).

Zarathushti organization, FEZANA should prepare to participate actively in that event. FEZANA's participation with the Zoroastrian Association of Victoria (ZAV) in Melbourne 2009 PWR was very well received by the world interfaith community.

FEZANA's 2<sup>nd</sup> Strategic Plan enumerates the Strategic Goals for our community. The above Interfaith Activities represent achievement of most of the goals. However, it is up to each one of us to put our best foot forward to achieve those goals. Interfaith Activities Committee cannot achieve those goals without the participation of member associations, small groups, other committees, and individual Zarathushtis on this continent.

Zoroastrians interested in participating in local, regional, national or international interfaith events may contact: Rohinton Rivetna [rivetna@aol.com](mailto:rivetna@aol.com) and Homi D. Gandhi [homidgandhi@gmail.com](mailto:homidgandhi@gmail.com) □

## Research and Preservation Committee Report

Submitted by Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli, Chair

### R/P committee consists of following individuals

Dr. Jehan Bagli , Chairperson

Ms. Farishta Dinshaw

Mr. Maneck Bhujwala

Mr. Firdosh Mehta

Mr. Rummy Mohta

May I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the dedicated members of the Research and Preservation Committee, for their contributions through the year. These individuals have donated their valuable time and efforts, in the interest of preservation and perpetuation of various aspects of Zarathushtrian Faith and culture to help augment the awareness of our Heritage. This report enumerates major activities of these dedicated members during 2013/14.

In the last report of 2012 we welcomed the incoming new member Ms. Farishta Dinshaw. However we totally overlooked to thank the outgoing member of the committee, Dr. Dolly Dastoor for her untiring efforts during her tenure as a member of the committee.

### Religious activities –Lectures and Discourses

Participated in a dialog of interreligious harmony with Muslim and Christian representatives. **(Bagli)**

'Preserving Unity in our Community' was the subject of a talk given at CZC in June 2013. **(Bhujwala)**

Presented a talk on 'The Gathas and their Significance in our Faith' to Zoroastrian Assoc. of Alberta (ZAA) in May 2013. The talk was followed by a presentation of the First Charter of Human Right depicted in the cylinder of King Cyrus. **(Mehta)**

Participated in the community Jashan at ZAC, and performed private Jashans, as well as last rites as requested by individual families in S. California. **(Bhujwala)**

Prepared a power point presentation of "Proud to be a Zoroastrian" for a class of 4<sup>th</sup> grade for a curriculum on Belief Systems, at the Whitby School, Greenwich, CT USA. The presentation stimulated a chain reaction and was shown to three other sections of 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> graders and other teachers. It also provoked remarks from students of other faith to stress the similarities in their devotional practices. **(Dinshaw)**



## INSPIRATION

### ***The Power of Cultural Influences and Inspirations for Success: Part II***

A full video is now available of this event. This is Part II of the two part series on the panel discussion titled "The Power of Cultural Influences and Inspirations for Success" hosted by ZAGNY.

View this panel of prominent Zoroastrians who are innovators, leaders and trailblazers in their respective fields. These leaders came together for one evening to share their stories of struggle and success and to discuss how their cultural background influenced their careers.

<http://vimeo.com/90676145>  
[approx 01:30:30]

Panelists: Dr. Jamshed Bharucha and Zubin Mehta.

Made a presentation in December 2013 to ZAA members on the Zoroastrian connection with the story of the Three Wise Men. **(Mehta)**

Participated in a full day seminar organized by NAMC at Ontario Zoroastrian Cultural Foundation on November 16. The topic of my lecture was 'God of Zarathushtra' **(Bagli)**

### **Interfaith Activities**

On August 13 invited to represent the Zarathushti community at the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) to end a Panel discussion with a Zarathushti prayer. **(Bagli)**

In June 2013 a talk was presented to Edmonton Interfaith Centre on 'Introduction to Zoroastrianism'. The talk was followed by a power point presentation of the Cylinder of Cyrus the Great. **(Mehta)**

Invited to give a talk on Zarathushti religion at Fairview church in Costa Mesa, CA. **(Bhujwala)**

Participated in the discussion 'Building Bridges among Faith Traditions' at the Edmonton Interfaith center. This included prayers and chants from various faiths. **(Mehta)**

Presented a Zarathushtrian perspective of Light at the 'Festival of Light' program at a Unitarian Interfaith service. Initiated the meeting with a chorus of the greetings of *Hamazor Hama Asho Baed* **(Bagli)**

Invited as Zoroastrian representative for the consecration and blessing of building site of Satya Sai School. Gave a short talk on the importance of Prayers (for details see FEZANA Bull 9, 2013). **(Bagli)**

Invited to a seniors session at the Jain Society, on March 18 2013 for a lecture. The topic was the origin, migration, adaptation and integration of the Parsi Zarathushtis from Iran to India. Based on the remarks in the report of their 'Year in Review', the talk was deeply appreciated. **(Dinshaw)**

In October 2013 Invited by Heavenly Culture and World Peace group to speak on 'Unity and Peace' at Sheraton Hotel in Cerritos CA. **(Bhujwala)**

As a part of Religion 101 series of the South Coast Interfaith Council presented a talk on Zoroastrianism at the Later Day Saints Institute of Religion, California State University, Long beach, CA campus. **(Bhujwala)**

Participated in the Mosaic meeting on April 21 to speak on the topic 'Marking Time'. This involved an elaboration how Zoroastrians mark time through diverse calendars. **(Bagli)**

Gave a talk on 'The Influence of Zarathushti Religion on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam' at Marymount College, Palos Verdes, CA. **(Bhujwala)**

Helped with the design of a poster on 'Zoroastrianism: Ancient and Influential Religion'. This was a part of the 'Getting to know your neighbors' initiative of the South Windsor Human Relations Commission. The event was held at South Windsor Library, CT USA on April 24 2014. **(Dinshaw)**

For the blessing of the waves event at Huntington Beach Pier, gave a short presentation on the 'Reverence for Water' and recited a verse from Aban Neyayesh. **(Bhujwala)**



Invited to a Buddhist Asian Art exhibit where I participated in a discussion of Zoroastrian culture and religion with Consul General of India Mr. Akhilesh Mishra and the Immigration Minister of Canada Mr. Chris Alexander. **(Bagli)**

Elected for a 2nd term President of Huntington Beach Interfaith Council. Also nominated and elected to the Board of Directors of the South Coast interfaith Council, and nominated as FEZANA representative to North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) council. **(Bhujwala)**

Participated in the International day of Prayers at St. Paul's Basilica in Toronto for those who experienced religious persecution. The meeting took place with the participation of fourteen other Faith traditions. (for details see FEZANA Bull 11, 2013). **(Bagli)**

### **Books, and other Publications**

As a guidance to young boys preparing in North America for Navar ceremony to go in India, a book is under preparation. This book will provide a detailed of explanation of the ceremony, with all the prayers for the four days rituals and exhaustive description of the enactments involved. This project is undertaken with Ervad Adi Unwalla of New Jersey. **(Bagli)**

Contributed to the collective call to the Zarathushtis to offer concrete solutions to maintain Zarathushti identity in a multicultural melting pot society in North America. This appeared in the Fall 2013 issue of FEZANA Journal. **(Dinshaw)**

Contributed an article in winter 2013 issue of FEZANA Journal "An honor and a privilege-Discussion on Zarathushti Identity". The article focused on the analysis of responses by Zarathushtis to a survey conducted by FEZANA in summer 2013. **(Dinshaw)**

Continued the publication of transliteration and English translation of Shahnameh from Kutar Brothers. Also wrote letters to the editors of Indian and U.S. news media relating to Zarathushti Faith and the community. **(Bhujwala)**

Produced four issues of e-Ushao Newsletter with interesting time related topics on Zoroastrian Faith. **(Dinshaw)** □

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## **Academic Scholarship Committee Report**

Submitted by Dolly Dastoor, Ph.D, Chair

During the academic year 2013-2014 the FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program Committee received 39 applications for the FEZANA scholarships, the Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Scholarship, FEZANA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Endowment Scholarship, the Morvarid Guiv Endowment Scholarship, Purvez and Aban Rustomji Endowment scholarship, Morvarid Guiv Endowment scholarship, the Banoobai and Maneckshaw Kapadia Endowment Scholarship.

**The FEZANA scholarships** are awarded for a combination of academic excellence, need, extracurricular activities and community service.

**Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Scholarship** is awarded for ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (\$5,000) and the recipient named the **FEZANA SCHOLAR**. (This is for Academic Excellence PLUS involvement in the community services. Financial need is factored out).





*Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.*

— Nelson Mandela

**Purvez and Aban Rustomji Endowment Scholarship** For Undergraduates awarded for Academic achievements and financial need (\$5000)

**The FEZANA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Endowment Scholarship** is awarded for Academic Excellence plus involvement in community service (\$3000) to a graduate student.

**The Banoobai and Maneckshaw Kapadia Endowment Scholarship** (\$2000) is based on academic standing and need.

As the committee had decided earlier the applications were divided into two categories: undergraduates (24) and graduates (15) and as the number of applicants had increased we added more judges for the undergraduate and graduate category. They were Tinaz Chinoy and Bella Tata.

Based on the cumulative scoring of the judges in each category a total of \$29,000 was awarded for scholarships:

**TOTAL OF ALL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS: \$17,000**

**TOTAL OF FEZANA SCHOLARSHIPS: \$ 12,000**

Each year the candidates are exceptional and there is always a good geographical spread among the winners. We hope the program will continue to attract this high caliber of applicants

It is also heartening to see the mushrooming of scholarship programs across the continent by associations as well as by private individuals. We continue to receive requests for scholarships from students all over the world.

To give more publicity and raise awareness of this scholarship program, efforts were made by the Dr Jerry and Celeste Kheradi and the committee members to present the scholarship cheques and special certificates at community functions where and when possible. An article with the bios of the winners together with their photos is published each year in the spring issue of the FEZANA Journal. The Spring 2014 issue of the FEZANA Journal carries information on all the scholarship winners, We hope this will attract and generate more funds for this program.

Starting from the 2011 annual competition, the applications were filled on line. This eliminated mailing costs to both the applicants and scholarship committee.

We encourage other families and past recipients to think of the Scholarship program in their legacies and bequests.

The Academic Scholarship committee thanks the FEZANA officers for giving us this opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the future generation of Zarathushti youth. We also thank the web master and the FEZANA Journal for publicity on the web and in the journal.

On my personal behalf I would like to thank each and every member of the committee and all the judges for the excellent work they do so diligently and with such professionalism. My special thanks to Ratan Mistry, the FEZANA Treasurer for his diligent work in sending out the checks to the winning candidates in a most timely and efficient manner and for maintaining records and clarifying the fund



balances at the present time. Thanks also to Zenobia Damania, our office administrator for handling the certificates to the winners

Respectfully submitted

*Dolly Dastoor Ph.D Chair  
FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program*

**Committee:**

Ervad Poras Balsara Ph.D	(Texas)
Shernaz Bamji Ph.D	(British Columbia)
Tinaz Chinoy Ph.D	(Quebec)
Zena Irani,	(PA)
Jerry Kheradi M.D.	(Rhode Island)
Rashid Mehin	(California)
Rostam Shahrokh	(British Columbia)
Anahita Sidhwa	(Texas)
Bella Tata	(British Columbia)
Ratan Mistry	Ex-Officio Treasurer

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## Message from WZO Trusts

Dear Friends at FEZANA,

On behalf of my colleagues and self, please accept Greetings from us at the WZO Trusts. We are sure the AGM will be a grand success. FEZANA is the only community organisation on our planet that is planning infrastructure development and a strategic plan. This augurs well for the community in North America. With the situation in India being what it is, in my opinion, within the next two decades the community's global centre of gravity would have shifted to NA. I repose confidence in the ability of FEZANA to take over the leadership role of our community.

The WZO Trusts have been collaborating in community welfare activities with FEZANA for many years now. We have enjoyed our interactions with all members of Team FEZANA at all times.

The invitation to attend the last North American Zoroastrian Congress held in August 2012 provided us with an excellent opportunity to reach out to our community members residing in North America and create heightened awareness about our multifarious welfare activities. We are privileged and honoured to be the recipients of consistently increasing funding from donors through FEZANA for our various community related activities.

For the WZO Trusts the year 2013 was a very busy year but also an extremely fulfilling one. Our philosophy has always been to endeavour to rehabilitate those who are down and out, and with support extended by way of interest free loans, encourage them to work hard and rejoin the mainstream of society. We believe that doles should be arranged only for those elders unable to work, the infirm and those who are physically challenged.

It is with great pleasure that we share with you an overview of our multifarious welfare activities.

1. For our poor Zoroastrian farmers rehabilitation project, we undertook the rehabilitation of 19 new families in 5 villages. We commenced this project in August 1991, and since then we have regularly brought about a



quantum change in the lifestyle of many. We have, thus far, touched the lives of 469 poor Zoroastrian families in 184 villages.

2. Additionally, in 2013, we replaced into cottages, 18 huts in which poor Zoroastrian agrarian families used to live. Over the years we have undertaken the replacement of 217 huts into cottages. Many donors from North America as also office bearers of FEZANA have visited the villages with us to see firsthand the work being carried out.
3. In keeping with our philosophy, we lay great stress on assisting Zoroastrians by way of interest free loans to take up self employment of their choice. In 2013 we extended support to 44 individuals to start varied businesses of their choice, such as a young dentist purchasing dentistry equipment, others opting for, a Pizza franchise, starting a bakery, young DJ's purchasing music equipment, a tiffin supplying business, automobile service station, aerobic classes, beauty parlour, commercial taxi's, auto-rickshaws and so on. We take great pride in the fact that between 1995 to 2013 we have supported 871 Zoroastrians to be gainfully self employed.

Our other welfare activities, in a nutshell were:

4. Medical Support was extended to 408 individuals.
5. Support for pursuit of education was extended to 135 students.
6. Quarterly financial support was extended to 397 individuals.
7. Our Senior Citizen Centres are very much in demand. Over the years we have been running to full capacity (60) with a waiting list for whenever a vacancy should occur.
8. Encouraging youth activities is very much in our DNA. We hold an annual athletic meet, organise a week long summer camp, sponsor a cricket team of our youth at Navsari, hold an annual function to acknowledge Zoroastrians from South Gujarat who have done well in their academics and so on.
9. We run a very popular Sanatorium at Sanjan, a very well laid out grand bungalow with a beautiful garden in the front, a mango orchard and coconut grove at the rear.
10. From time to time, whenever a request is received we extend financial support to athornan families who wish to have the navar & maratab ceremonies performed of their young boys.
11. At Navsari, many Zoroastrian residents gift us their ancestral homes, which we redevelop into apartment buildings for economically challenged members of our community. Our 9th building will be ready for occupation by end May 2014, our 10th will be ready by November / December 2014 and our 11th is in the planning stage, with construction expected to commence by August 2014.

It is a matter of pride for WZO Trusts that during 2013 donations amounting to Rs.70,975,392 (approx US\$1,182,923) were received for our various projects from within India and other parts of the world.

We have remained busy in serving our community but it would not have been possible for us to do so, had we not enjoyed the confidence and support of donors worldwide. We raise donations for all our projects from all over the world and are very fortunate to receive firm backing from donors. Donations continue to be received for our regular projects, all of which are on track, progressing smoothly.

It would also not have been possible for us to undertake such extensive welfare programmes without support from our band of dedicated staff, members of our local committee and volunteers. We are indeed very grateful to all of them.



It will not be out of place to mention making a reference to the sad reality of serious challenges that our community faces, not only on the demographic front, but also issues of economic vulnerability that require considerable attention. Contrary to the general belief that we are an affluent community, the fact remains that there are quite a few Zoroastrian families who are impoverished and live below the poverty line defined by the government.

I conclude by extending my very best wishes to FEZANA and all the Zoroastrians in NA and by reproducing for your benefit the prayer of serenity - "May FEZANA be blessed to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, the courage to change the things that should be changed and the wisdom to distinguish one from the other".

Best wishes and warm regards,  
**Dinshaw K Tamboly**

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**WE BELIEVE IN:**

**Building Community.**

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**EMPOWERING WOMEN.**

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Healthy Homes. Each Other.

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TRANSFORMATION.**

**INSPIRING POSITIVE ENERGY.**

The Power of Faith and Unity 

**WE BELIEVE IN YOU.**

Registration opens June 3, 2014.