The FEZANA Awards Committee is pleased to announce the 2014 FEZANA North American Zarathushti Community Awards.

It has been our privilege to Chair the 2014 FEZANA North American Zarathushti Community Awards Committee, and we feel especially honored to have participated in this prestigious and important biennial process that seeks to honor the best of the best from our community.

We were presented with outstanding candidates for the various award categories and we thank our panel of distinguished judges whose task to select the Award winners was not made easy by the achievements of each and every nominee that was put forth. Above all else, this is an opportunity for the larger North American Zarathushti community to recognize one of our own and we thank the various Member Associations of FEZANA for completing the nomination forms and proposing such noteworthy candidates.

Finally, we would like to thank FEZANA for the opportunity to be Co-Chairs, and Navroz Gandhi and Shehernaz Verahrami, the 2012 Co-Chairs, for their assistance. The Awardees for this year’s Awards are:

**Rohinton Rivetna**
Outstanding Zarathushti Award

**SAM VESUNA**

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

**ARZAN GONDA**

**Shirin Nariman Dastoor**
Outstanding Young Zarathushti Student Awards

**PERSIS BHADHA, ERV PORUZ KHAMBATTA**

**DR. DINSHAW J. PATEL**
Humanitarian Service Award

**NAZNEEN SPLIEDT**

**ERVAD RAYOMAND, RAVJI**

North American Mobeds Council Community Services Award

See full details on the FEZANA website: Click here for the announcement, and for full details of each awardee click here.

**UPCOMING DATES**

Through Dec 24, 2014
Wednesdays. 7:15pm. “The Zoroastrian Way of Life” An Introductory Audio-visual course. Dadar Athornan Institute, Dadar, India. click here for details

December 4-5, 2014
Humanity: A conference on the role of Arts and Culture on Diplomacy. ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, NYC. Details.

December 13, 2014
Western Classical Music Concert showcasing accomplished Zoroastrian artists. Tickets at www.zagny.org

December 29-31, 2014

February 5-6, 2015

March 9-25, 2015

(DATES CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)
On November 1-2, 2014, the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) held its 11th Annual Library Lecture Series. On this occasion, they hosted Dr. Sarah Stewart, a lecturer on Zoroastrianism at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SAOS), London and Curator of the recent exhibition, “The Everlasting Flame” which explored Zoroastrian history, culture and religion and also its influences on major religions of the world.

In this series of well-attended lectures, Dr. Stewart first spoke about the interweaving of three traditions (those of Iranian heritage, those of Parsi heritage, and those that emerged more recently when Western Scholars began studying Zoroastrian texts) and how they shape the story of Zoroastrianism. In another lecture, Dr Stewart discussed topics related to her recent research on Zoroastrianism in travels to Iran.

ZAH’s warm hospitality was displayed with a community dinner reception including entertainment by ZAH Dance and Choir group entitled “From Bollywood to Broadway.”

[Look for the full coverage of the lectures in FEZANA Journal, Winter 2014]

Making Interfaith Connections through North American Interfaith Network (NAIN)

By Maneck Bhujwala, Co-Chair, FEZANA Interfaith Activities Committee

FEZANA has been a dues paying member of NAIN for a number of years. It is important for our religion and community to be known in the interfaith community, especially as we are a very small community and most people do not know about us. Recently FEZANA became a member of their Board of Directors, with the election of Maneck Bhujwala (who was nominated by FEZANA as their representative) for a 4 year term. Maneck has been involved in interfaith activities and organizations for many years in northern and southern California, and is currently also on the Boards of Greater Huntington Beach Interfaith Council and South Coast Interfaith Council.

NAIN was incorporated in New York in 1990 and Jamsheed Mavalvala was one of the early members of NAIN.

Mission of NAIN: NAIN builds communication and mutual understanding among interfaith organizations and diverse religious groups throughout North America. Without infringing on the effort of existing organizations, NAIN facilitates the networking possibilities of these organizations and encourages cooperative interaction based on serving the needs and promoting the aspirations of all member groups. (Nov. 15, 2002)

Vision of NAIN: NAIN’s history holds a vision turned into reality that across North America religions can live together in peace, serve together in compassion, and
Learning about Other Faiths at an Interfaith Dinner Dialogue

By Yasmin Medhora

The Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) hosted an Interfaith “Dinner Dialogue” event at the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center, Houston on Thursday, November 13, 2014. This event was a grand success well attended by 250 individuals. The unique dinner format was designed to encourage interaction amongst various faith traditions. Each of the 25 tables had: a ZAH host, a moderator from Interfaith and 8 other individuals from various faiths.

The Dinner Dialogue is an evening where Houstonians gather to learn about the hosts’ faith, learn about one another’s faith traditions and share a vegetarian meal. The dinner evening consisted of two parts. The first round was for the host family to share about his/her practices and included a brief period of questions from the participants. The second round allowed each dinner guest to reflect on one of a few prompts given to share a story from their experience of faith. The intention of the dinner is to provide an intimate, enjoyable environment for participants to learn about one another’s faith traditions in a respectful format.

[Look for full article in FEZANA Journal, Winter 2014]
In fact there are only two long time resident Zoroastrian families in Beijing, China, Pastakia and Contractor. But they love reading FEZANA Journal as they say, “the Journal gives them a good perspective of what is happening in the new Diaspora.” They said that some Zoroastrians come for work for a short period but they have not stayed there for long periods, or at least they are not aware of other Zoroastrians in their area.

Mehernosh Pastakia has been in Beijing for 20+ years, lives with his wife, Wen, and teenager son, Kersi, and owns and runs three Indian restaurants under the name of Taj Pavilion. His restaurants and cuisine are so famous that almost all Indian groups travelling to Beijing make this place as the first stop. On the night of my visit, there was a group of 170+ Indian doctors, enjoying “the home cooked Indian food.” Mehernosh has taken care of the food requirements of many dignitaries including Indian Prime Ministers Narendra Modi, Man Mohan Singh, and Indian President Dr. Abdul Kalam.

Kairaz Contractor is in China for 10+ years (last 5 years in Beijing) with his wife, Aaftab, and two young daughters. Many in the northeast US might remember him when he was studying at Syracuse University at the turn of the century. Kairaz was with Nokia when he moved to Beijing but now he works for Microsoft as that part of Nokia was taken over by Microsoft in the recent history.

Mehernosh welcomes Zoroastrians visiting Beijing. I would recommend anyone visiting Beijing to experience the restaurant and enjoy the sumptuous food. Mehernosh has also offered to help any Zoroastrian who would like to do business in the area. Here is an opportunity for WZCC members to spread your wings!

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