

# FEZANA bulletin

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## UPCOMING DATES

**November 26, 2016**

Masquerade Ball. ZAMWI fundraiser to benefit American Cancer Society and ZAMWI.

**December 1, 2016**

ZAH Library Presents K.E. Eduljee. *Silk Roads, Arab Invasion and the Flight to China*; 7-8:30pm. Houston [www.zah.org](http://www.zah.org).

**December 2, 2016**

ZAH Library Presents K.E. Eduljee. *Yalda, Mithraism and Christmas day – are there any Zoroastrian Roots?* 7-8:30pm. Houston. [www.zah.org](http://www.zah.org)

**December 16-18, 2016**

WZCC AGM. "Building the Spirit of Entrepreneurship" Hong Kong <http://www.wzcc.net/>

**January 15-18, 2017**

UN World Data Forum Cape Town, South Africa. [www.undataforum.org](http://www.undataforum.org)

**March 13-24, 2017**



CSW61 (*Commission on the Status of Women*) Conference. United Nations, NYC. [CSW61](http://csw61.un.org)

**April 28-30, 2017**

FEZANA Annual General Meeting. Hosted by Zoroastrian Association of Houston. [admin@fezana.org](mailto:admin@fezana.org)

**April 29, 2017**

FEZANA's 30th Anniversary Gala Celebration - Houston. Details to be circulated.

**October 21, 2017**

Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism (SSZ) Conference. Detroit, Michigan.

**June 1-4, 2018**

11th World Zoroastrian Congress, Perth, Australia <http://11wzcpert.com.au/>

## Chicago Kicks Off FEZANA 30th Anniversary Celebrations



On Saturday November 5, 2016, the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC-CHI) hosted a Gala celebration marking FEZANA's 30th Anniversary. It was a truly fitting location to inaugurate FEZANA's yearlong 30th Anniversary Celebrations -- in the same building where it started -- as FEZANA's original Constitutional Convention took place thirty years ago in ZAC-CHI's Dar-E-Mehr.

The evening's program featured: a narration of FEZANA's early history and its ties to Chicago entitled *FEZANA is Born* ending with a rendition of the "We are FEZANA" song narrated and sung by ZAC-CHI Children; a fictional amusing skit taking the audience on a journey back to 1986 when representatives from various Zoroastrian associations gathered in the library of the Chicago Dar-E-Mehr to draft and deliberate FEZANA's constitution; a community chorus of "We are FEZANA"; and an after dinner professional Magic and Mind Reading performance.

Fortunately, the occasion was graced by six out of the eight FEZANA Presidents (past and present) -- Rohinton Rivetna, Dolly Dastoor, Firdosh Mehta, Bomi Patel, Katayun Kapadia and Homi D. Gandhi -- and by Vice President, Arzan Wadia, each of whom was invited to say a few words to the crowd. [See Homi D Gandhi's remarks next page.]

A grand *Lagan-nu-bhonu* feast was a highlight of the evening, served on banana leaves in traditional style, and featuring many local community members as servers.



This Chicago event was the first in a series of yearlong events to be held in Zoroastrian communities throughout North America celebrating FEZANA's contribution to North American Zoroastrianism over the past three decades. Other events include: [FEZANA logo design competition](#); FEZANA Journal 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Special (Spring 2017); FEZANA 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala to be held on April 29, 2017 during the FEZANA Annual General Meeting hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Houston.



More events at the local and regional level are being planned and as they get finalized, announcements will be circulated. We urge local associations of FEZANA to get together and host combined events to foster friendships amongst members of your associations and help in realizing the founding principles and goals of FEZANA. [PHOTOS COURTESY OF KEN WEBER] □



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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



### Remarks by Homi D. Gandhi, FEZANA President, at the Chicago Celebration on 5th November 2016, marking FEZANA's 30th Anniversary:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Many years ago, before the FEZANA constitution was signed, and before those 16 member associations created a federation, there were grassroots meetings at association levels. I was at one of those meetings at ZAGNY to discuss what our stand was going to be. Prof. Kaikhosrov and Piroja Irani were our representatives to the convention in Chicago. So Kaikhosrov came to ZAGNY board meeting to explain the idea, scope, and future as he had visualized. As ZAGNY treasurer at that time, my first question was how much it was going to cost! Like any other entity, we had to make the best use of our bucks. Then as Kaikhosrov started to explain, in his usual compelling and lucid manner, I suddenly saw a vision of the Philadelphia convention almost 2 centuries ago that created these United States. My bean counting mind suddenly took a different fork and without further questioning my vote was yes, yes, yes!!! It was crystal clear to me that ZAGNY must join this federation.

Now 30 years later I stand before you as your president, seeing that those 16 associations have increased to 26, and many more may join in the next decades, and with 15 corresponding groups also today, I stand tall and feel very proud of this community. We have created a partnership on this continent which is an effective model for the new Zoroastrian diaspora in other parts of the world.

I am not only proud of this institution for its numbers. I am proud because this institution, FEZANA, has articulated the ageless message of Asho Zarathustra in this new diaspora. We are learning to demonstrate our understanding of His message by how we live in our daily lives. FEZANA and our North American Zoroastrian community want our youth to really feel that message, to feel pride and ownership of that message.

FEZANA's role has expanded into many areas. So many wonderful people, of all ages, are working to help each other and the world at large. FEZANA is trying to showcase these quiet good deeds to be role models for all of us. So today I call upon all our member associations and corresponding groups and their members, and all North American Zoroastrians who are not members of these associations to join me, to join this vibrant FEZANA Executive and our FEZANA committees. Let us build a stronger partnership to help make this planet a better, happier, and peaceful world.

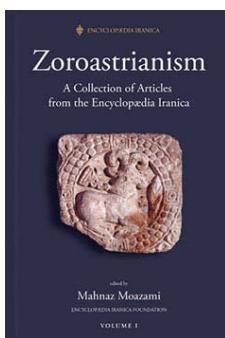
So ladies and gentlemen, please join me by raising your glasses and wishing FEZANA a very Happy 30th Birthday. May you prosper in the years ahead with Hamazori towards all. May you shine like a beacon to our North American and the world Zarathushti community, and may Ahura Mazda's choicest blessings be showered on us all!

Happy 30th Birthday, FEZANA!





## BOOK AWARENESS



**Zoroastrianism: A Collection of Articles from the Encyclopædia Iranica,**  
Edited by Mahnaz Moazami.  
Eisenbrauns, 2016. 2-volume set.

Zoroastrian theology, cosmology and cosmogony, history of the faith, its rituals and ceremonies, Avestan and Middle Persian texts, festivals such as Nowruz, Mehregan and Sada, and a host of other topics, are gathered together here under one cover. As a thought-provoking and authoritative work of reference, it is a testimony to the fine scholarship and remarkable erudition of its contributors, scholars who have been foremost in ensuring that the Encyclopædia Iranica maintains its high reputation for authoritative comprehensiveness and pioneering research.

**Visit our website at**  
<http://www.fires-fezana.org/>

## Celebrating "Cyrus the Great" Day

By Pearl P. Balsara



followed by dinner featuring a variety of cuisines.

An artistic rangoli exhibit greeted members and guests as they arrived at our ZANT Center. We started the evening with a short video clip explaining exactly why King Cyrus II is called The Great, not only by Persians worldwide, but also by Jews and Christians who hail him as "The Anointed of the Lord" in the Bible.



our community. The piece de resistance, however, was the dessert, which was a chocolate and vanilla cake made as a replica of the Cyrus Cylinder.

We finished the evening with dancing the "dandias"! We aim to make this an annual celebration and plan on inviting people of other faiths and ethnicities to join us so that, in our own way, we may keep alive the spirit of caring and inclusiveness of the Great King Cyrus. □

On Saturday, October 29, 2016, the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (ZANT) celebrated "Cyrus The Great" Day with great pride and gusto. An evening of entertainment showcasing various cultures, in keeping with the multicultural tolerance of the Great King, was

Next, we enjoyed a recital of the story of Rustom and Sohrab from the Shahnameh, in the original Farsi, with great dramatic flourishes. The children of our community entertained us with music played on the electric keyboard and saxophone, classical Indian dance, Salsa dance, and a rootin' tootin' boot scootin' line dance from our Lone Star state.

Our artistically creative children had cleverly constructed models of King Cyrus' tomb, out of various materials, cardboard, paper, and there was one made from Rice Krispy treats.

Dinner was a gustatory delight with Cajun, Mexican, Persian, Indian, Pakistani, Italian and Thai dishes to please our palates. All prepared by the talented cook volunteers of



## CONNECTIONS

New online PARZOR exhibits through a partnership with the Google Cultural Institute

Six multimedia exhibits (photos; articles; videos) are posted and more to come.

### i. Jamshedi-Navroze

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/gQVK2nwe>

### ii. Parsi Zoroastrians: From Persia to Akbar's court

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/gQXXqzxD>

### iii. Kusti - The Sacred Cord

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/VgKCK5pS1twuIQ>

### iv. Weaving the kusti

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/YQKihoUHbZkbIA>

### v. Spinning the kusti

[https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/2gLi2\\_m84YFiLA](https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/2gLi2_m84YFiLA)

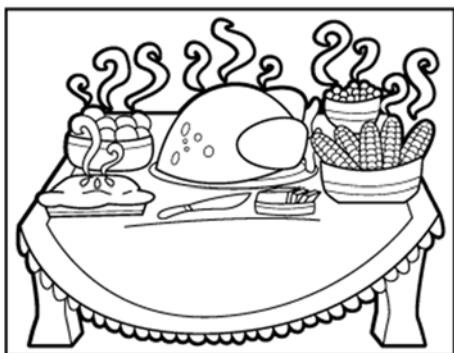
### vi. Ava - Water in Zoroastrian Life

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/YwLyZKjiMblqJA>

For more information on PARZOR:

<http://unescoparzor.com/>

## What's the Connection between Zarathushtis and Turkeys?



Why Thanksgiving, of course! A turkey dinner or feast traditionally commemorates the Pilgrims arrival in the new world and thanksgiving for their safe deliverance. We Zarathushtis also have a number of immigrant journeys to celebrate!

Many of our ancestors migrated from Persia to India between the 8th and 10th century CE, and promised to 'mix like sugar in milk, thereby sweetening it'. A second migration is recorded in the 1800s when Parsees, moved

by the plight of Zarathushtis in Iran, aided a number of families to migrate to Bombay province (well documented by Simin Patel, University of Oxford, 2015). Thirdly, over the last sixty years, many of our parents, grandparents (and us!) migrated from India, Pakistan, Iran and other countries to our present home in North America! So we are immigrants three times over!

The *FEZANA Journal* has helped to preserve these tales of our immigration by including a section in many issues called "Oral Histories". Combined with original photographs and quotes, these personal narratives show how our ancestors and seniors struggled against the odds, preserved their religion and demonstrated enormous resilience to adversity. Their quiet courage, sometimes eccentric good nature, and their faith in Ahura Mazda make these stories compelling reading for all ages. You can search and locate previous issues in the "Journal Archives" webpages.

Support these efforts to preserve our history with your subscription and donation to the *FEZANA Journal* at [www.FEZANA.org](http://www.FEZANA.org) (North American subscribers pay \$35 per year). □

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Did You Know?

- Over a third of the United States population volunteers each year (62 Million people volunteered in 2014).
- Everyone can volunteer regardless of age; 30% of Gen X (ages 33 – 44), 20% of millennials (ages 16 – 32) volunteered their time
- Volunteers have higher odds of getting a job after being out of work than non-volunteers (27% higher)



**New Opportunity to Volunteer with the Fundraising Team:** Bring your computer skills to help your community, by joining a team of volunteers focused on economic sustainability of FEZANA. Working remotely at your own home, help build innovative campaigns to support FEZANAs activities for Zarathushti families. To learn about non-profits and fund-raising as part of an experienced, warm and cheerful team, contact [nawaz@fezana.org](mailto:nawaz@fezana.org)