

FEZANA *bulletin*

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UPCOMING DATES

January 15-18, 2017
UN World Data Forum Cape Town, South Africa.
www.undataforum.org

February 28, 2017
Submission Deadline: FEZANA's Logo Competition.
logo@fezana.org

March 13-24, 2017



CSW61 (*Commission on the Status of Women*) Conference.
United Nations, NYC. CSW61

April 28-30, 2017

FEZANA Annual General Meeting.
Hosted by Zoroastrian Association of Houston. admin@fezana.org

April 29, 2017

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

June 5-9, 2017

[United Nations Conference](#) (see page 2) coinciding with World Oceans Day.

October 21, 2017

[Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism \(SSZ\) Conference.](#)
Detroit, Michigan.

June 1-4, 2018

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

Atash Kadeh Opening for Zoroastrian Association of California, Orange



Six years after the Zoroastrian Association of California Center was opened, the dream of having a prayer hall was finally turned into reality. A unique building in many ways was completed and a long-awaited celebration was about to begin.

At 9:00 am on a beautiful sunny morning on Sunday, November 13, 2016, Roj Mahrespand, Mah Khordad, the beautiful edifice was opened for the use of the community and their guests. The building was sanctified for 48 hours by prayers offered by Mobeds Zarrir and Zerkxis Bhandara.

The morning of the 13th witnessed the beautiful Atash Kadeh decorated inside and out with festive torans and balloons with community members dressed in their finery of daglis and garas/saris awaiting the ribbon cutting ceremony. To the sounds of a joyous rendition of "Chhaiye Hame Zarathosti" the ribbon was ceremoniously cut by 2 couples together – Arda-e-Viraf and Hootoxi Minocherhomjee and Sohrab and Sharon Charma. The very first Boi ceremony was then performed by Mobed Zarrir Bhandara, followed by a Hama Anjuman Machhi and a Jashan of 6 kardas was performed by 12 Ervads of the community. Since the hall could only accommodate about 100 guests, arrangements were specially made to stream the entire proceedings live in the main Arjani Hall of the center where the overflow were seated. After the jashan people made their individual offering of sandalwood and lit tea lights followed by chasni and refreshments.

The Felicitation ceremony took place in the Arjani Hall. Perinne Medora Vice President of ZAC welcomed the audience of 250 present in the Hall and emceed the proceedings. The event started with beautiful songs cutely sung by 13 Zarathosti tiny tots directed by Houtoxi Contractor which got a standing ovation from all present.

President of FEZANA Mr. Homi D. Gandhi who now resides in California addressed the congregation and congratulated ZAC on this great achievement. He mentioned that Fezana encourages all Zoroastrian Associations worldwide to have a prayer Hall constructed for the use of their members and to keep the flame of our noble religion alive and well.



**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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Mobed Zarrir Bhandara read out a congratulatory message received from Dasturjee Dr. Firoze Kotwal and talked about the importance of fire and prayers in the lives of Zarthushtis everywhere.

President of ZAC-LA, Tehmi Damania then felicitated each and everyone involved in the creation of the Atash Kadeh and they included the Architect Sohrab Charna, Feridoun Ghostasbi, a Zarathosti Builder (NIPA Construction) and various other individuals like Firdosh Mehta who was responsible in getting the Aalat of the Jalna Agiary, India and Kobad Zarolia, Ex-President of the NAMC who guided ZAC on what a true Atash Kadeh should have. Major donors like Arda and Hootoxi Minocherhomjee and key persons involved like Tehemtan Arjani were also mentioned and acknowledged.

The celebrations were followed by a delicious parsi lunch of Dhan Dar, Kolimi-no patio, Sali murghi and lagan-nu-custard all prepared by community volunteers and cooked by Bomi Patel (ex FEZANA President) in the new role of Master chef. Thank you Bomi and Binu for being such a great help and making this possible for us.

At the end of the day every member of ZAC had one single thought ... Our Atash Kadeh is finally complete and how proud we are of our community's achievement.

□



United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal to Conserve the Oceans and Seas

5 JUN 2017 - 9 JUN 2017, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Overarching theme of the Conference:

Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

A high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development will be convened in New York, from 5 to 9 June 2017, coinciding with World Oceans Day, to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. The Conference will be co-hosted by the Governments of Fiji and Sweden.

Zarathushtis interested in participating in the environmentally friendly conference at the United Nations, may send a copy of their resume and a letter of intent by **1 January 2017** to both the following individuals:

Afreed Mistry -- mistry (dot) afreed (at) gmail.com
Behram Pastakia – bpastakia (at) aol.com

While FEZANA, as an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) in consultative status with ECOSOC, (the Economic and Social Council) shall arrange access to the UN headquarters to selected candidates, the costs of travel, visas, transport and lodging in New York City will be the responsibility of the individuals themselves.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/oceans/SDG14Conference> □



Book Awareness



The First Navjote

by Ava Mehta

2016, GBP 16.99+ postage.

Available at thefirstnavjote@hotmail.com

This is Ava Mehta's second book for children on Zoroastrianism. The first book, 'The story of the religion Zoroastrianism,' is now in its 4th edition. The First Navjote retells the story of how this ancient religion first began. It portrays the determined journey that Zarathushtra made some 4,000 years ago to the faraway kingdom of King Vishtaspa and Queen Hutoasa and their fictitious but adorable little princesses who were in awe of this 'fascinating' visitor and his message. Children will no doubt relate to the characters and the simplicity with which the two princesses view the messages shared by Zarathushtra. This book is written mainly for Zoroastrian children and their families but will resonate with all, young and old, as they embark on a journey together thinking more Good thoughts, speaking more Good words and doing more Good deeds thus helping our world to be a happier place to live in for all. A truly Zoroastrian concept children can relate to.

Visit the FIRES website at: <http://www.fires-fezana.org/>

□



CONNECTIONS

Pomegranates of Deygan (Yalda)

Pomegranates form an important part of the traditional Ancient Iranian Zarathushti tradition of Deygan (Yalda), celebrating the winter solstice on 22/23 December 2016 annually.

Have you ever wondered, how the ancient Iranians preserved the fruit to remain fresh for the celebration? They were kept in a cool space; sometimes buried in the cold ground. With our modern day appliances, try keeping them in the refrigerator - They can keep fresh for months!

Art , Archeology, Aging, Achemenians, and Antioxidants

The Pomegranate Flower: A Symbolic Message from the Ancient World



▲ The flower of the Pomegranate at the Udvada Atash Behram entry gate, Gujarat, India. Photo credit: Bawi Bride



Figure 2: ► The pomegranate flower and buds (*Punica Granatum*)



Holding pride of place on the Haft Sheen Table at NowRuz, on the Sofreh Mehregan and at the celebration of Deygan (Yalda), the pomegranate is embedded in the cultural psyche of Zarathushtis from Iran. We see engraved on the bas relief at Takht-e-Jamshid (Fig.1), the Achaemenid Monarch, Darius the Great, holding the flower of *Punica Granatum* (Fig. 2), passing on a message to us, through the centuries: to value it for use in our daily lives.

Packed with antioxidants, this gift of nature is revered in many sacred religious traditions (Fig. 3) and has

◀ Figure 1: Bas relief of Darius The Great at the Apadana Palace, Iran, holding the flower of the pomegranate.



▲ Figure 3: *Madonna of the Pomegranate* by Sandro Botticelli (circa 1487) Housed in Florence, Italy

been used for medicinal purposes from Ayurveda in India, to ancient Chinese medicine. Beneficial effects have been attributed to diseases which come with aging, the circulatory system, (atherosclerosis); and prostate health in elderly men. Cherished as a food for millennia, it is time for us to look into its cultivation at our Dar-e-Mehrs and Atash Kadehs in North America, bringing back the whiff of the Persian



CONNECTIONS

How to Peel a Pomegranates

Pomegranates can be messy to cut open and peel -

Here is a neat way to get at those juicy avrils:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BExPRwPdAs>

How to Cut and Eat a Pomegranate (less than two minutes)

Enjoy with your family and friends !

Gardens, with their special spaces reserved for "*Bagh-e-Anar*". The plant grows well in loam and in full sun. It can be grown in pots.

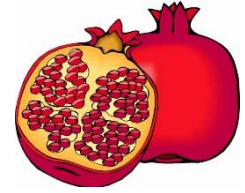
Over the (kitchen) Counter: Pomegranate Pleasures(1)

Heat 1 cup pomegranate juice to just under a boil. Turn off the heat.

Mix in 1 1/2 tea-spoons arrowroot powder (dissolved in 2 tablespoons of water to make it into a liquid).

This mixture will immediately start to thicken. Add 1 or 2

tablespoons of maple syrup to taste. Store in refrigerator for up to several weeks.



- Add 2 tablespoons to sparkling water for a pomegranate spritzer.
- Add 2 tablespoons to your yogurt smoothie.
- Mix 2 table spoons with 1/2 cup olive oil, 1 clove garlic, a dash of lemon juice and sea salt for a yummy salad dressing.

Reference:

(1) National Geographic Guide to Medicinal Plants -- The World's Most Effective Healing Plants, By Rebecca L Johnson, Steven Foster, Tieraona Low Dog, David Kiefer, Pages 248-251; ISBN 978-1-4351-5658-6

– Behram Pastakia, Chair, Information Receiving and Dissemination Committee of FEZANA □

Caring for Cancer

Cancer is a devastating illness that affects the health, well being and financial stability of many Zarathusthi families.

Of particular note is the prevalence of breast cancer among Zarathushti families which goes undetected for lack of early detection and screening.



An entire issue of the *Fezana Journal* (Winter 2012) was dedicated to the issues involved in the community in Caring for Cancer.

Find the entire Winter 2012 Issue on the Journal Archives page: <https://fezana.org/journal-page/>

Here is the direct link to the Winter 2012 Issue: https://fezana.org/fjissue/FEZANA_2012_04_Winter.pdf

On 6 December 2016, the Washington Post hosted an event "Chasing Cancer" at their headquarters offices in Washington D.C. Elected representatives from the United States Congress, research scientists, patients, business sponsors, Non-Governmental Organizations, cancer care givers, media advocates, actresses, music artists, all came together under a big tent to dialogue about this disease which affects humanity.

The proceedings were live streamed and are archived for review:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/post-live-2016-Chasing-Cancer-Summit/?utm_term=.a9c24a6e83fb

Individuals interested in getting involved in caring for cancer are invited to revert back with their views and thoughts. □



What's Coming in the Winter Issue of the *FEZANA Journal*?

The Status of Women: How did we come to this? How is it that in the 21st century we need to have at the United Nations, a special goal to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls? How come, almost a century after women won the right to vote, we have to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources and access to ownership and control over land?

"There are rules if you're a girl." Said rock star Madonna, while accepting the 2016 Woman of the Year award. "If you're a girl, you have to play the game. You're allowed to be pretty and cute and sexy. But don't act too smart. Don't have an opinion that's out of line with the status quo."

Persian and Indian women of ancient times held high positions, were queens, leaders in government, law and even the military. The upcoming issue of the FEZANA Journal explores the change in perceptions and mindset towards women, and boldly addresses gender equality and gender discrimination, how it started and is still perpetuated in daily life and in corporate world.

Guest editor Zerbanoo Guifford is a well-known activist for women's rights and combatting slavery, and the first non-white member of the British Liberal Party executive. She has brought together a collection of articles from seasoned contributors both men and women in British politics, young professionals commenting on the corporate glass ceiling and authors shattering religious taboos. All this in the Winter 2016 issue of the FEZANA JOURNAL

Subscribe at www.FEZANA.org (North American subscribers pay only \$35 per year).

CONNECTIONS

Youth Changing the World

How Will You Stop Childhood Hunger?

One in five children in America are at risk of hunger. This is a problem that can be solved, and kids are a part of the solution! YSA (Youth Service America) and Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation are looking for 125 of the best ideas from young people about how they can help end childhood hunger in their communities.

\$400 grants are available for youth leaders ages 5-25 across the U.S. to turn their ideas into action and make an impact on the issue of childhood hunger on Global Youth Service Day – April 21-23, 2017 – and beyond.

Applications are due by 5:00pm on January 15, 2017

<http://ysa.org/grants/sodexoyouth/>