

# FEZANA *bulletin*

March 2017 / VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 3



## JAMSHEDI NOWRUZ GREETINGS FROM FEZANA

FEZANA wishes good health, happiness, peace and harmony on this Nowruz to fellow Zarathushtis and friends across North America and worldwide.

### UPCOMING DATES

March 25, 2017

[8th Annual Chicago Nowruz Parade](#), 1pm

March 25/26, 2017

Dar-e Mehr Grand Opening, Sacramento Zoroastrian Association. Sacramento, CA.

March 26, 2017

3rd Los Angeles Persian Parade

April 15, 2017

Deadline for Association bids to host 2018 FEZANA AGM

Mid-April 2017

[New York Persian Parade](#), New York City.

April 22-23, 2017

[Iran Through Books](#) at the L.A. Times Festival of Books. Univ of Southern California.

April 27, 2017

WZCC NA Regional Meeting [wzcc-houston@outlook.com](mailto:wzcc-houston@outlook.com)

April 27, 2017

[An Evening with FIRES](#)  
Chief guest and keynote speaker Aban Marker Kabraji. Exhibition of our rare book collection, cultural artifacts. Dinner catered by ZAH's Naushad Mehta.

(Dates continued on page 4)

## Celebrating Nowruz/Jamshedi Navroz 2017 in North America

As FEZANA enters its 30th anniversary, migrants grow roots in the North American continent and establish a unique new identity for themselves in our new western Zarathushti diaspora, traditions are forming.

Harkening back to our countries of origin, to celebrate the New Year and the coming of Spring on March 21<sup>st</sup> (*Jamshedi Navroz / Nowruz*) we are suggesting that we tell our friends and neighbors who we are by sharing a snippet of our culture, and reviving the tradition of giving them a gift of 'mithu mohnu / shirini' – any sweet dish.



### HOW WE CAN PARTICIPATE:



We can choose to make the sweets at home, or buy them from local Persian food outlets in cities where we live.

Read more about this initiative, establishing a North American tradition here:

<https://fezana.org/celebrating-navroz-with-our-neighbors-and-friends/>

□

## Need Help to promote your community's Local Nowruz festivities?

### Now available: Template for news release distribution

With Nowruz festivities here, the FEZANA Public Relations Committee has prepared a news release template for use by local Zarathushti communities in publicizing local events to media groups. PR Committee co-chair, Jim Engineer, is available to assist. Jim (@) fezana.org

During this season of Nowruz, it is a good time to enlighten the communities in which we live about: who Zoroastrians are, our rich history and our contribution to life in the North American diaspora.



Federation of  
Zoroastrian  
Associations of  
North America  
(FEZANA)

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Facebook: [FEZANA](https://www.facebook.com/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

## Renovating Our World With Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds

By Dilnavaz Shroff

The **Zoroastrian Association Of California** was proud to host an Interfaith celebration of “**Renovating our World with Good Thoughts, Good words and Good Deeds**”, jointly with the **World Interfaith Network** and the **Unity-and-Diversity World Council**, at the ZAC Center on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2017.



The purpose of this special gathering was to promote the spirit of unity within diversity in humanity...and this was amply portrayed by the large number of speakers, who spontaneously volunteered to be a part of this celebration.

**Meher Amalsad** was the MC for the event and he very ably conducted the proceedings with wit and humor. The celebration was organized by **Zarrir Bhandara** who initiated the whole event with the chanting of a Zoroastrian prayer. **Perinne Medhora**, committee member presented a warm welcome to the attendees, followed by a hymn, sung by the ZAC priest, Zarrir Bhandara.

The list of speakers was impressive, starting with **Reverend Leland Stewart**, Founder & Central Co-coordinator of the unity & Diversity World Council, and author of books on world religions. He was happy to note that he saw many more in the audience, than in the past.

He was followed by **Bishop Obispo Juan Carlos Mendes** of Centro Cristiano Bet-El in South Gate. He is a leader of social justice and has retired as Superintendent of Public Schools in LA. He has been a pastor for the last 32 years.

The CZC also had their presence noted with **Dr. Ardeshir Anoshiravani**, who talked about good destroying evil and how in Persian, Angre (The angry thoughts) is destroyed by “Spenta” (the good thoughts)

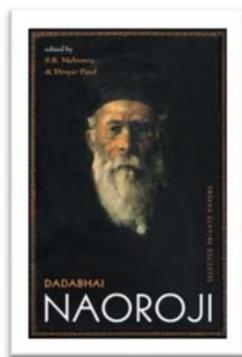
The Bahai faith, founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, followed with a speech by **Mr. Farhad Shahriary** who discussed how honored he was to be a part of this forum. He talked about the love of humanity and read paragraphs written by Bahá'u'lláh the founder of the Bahai faith and the founder's quote which made a huge impact on the crowd, “The world is but One Country and Mankind its Citizens”

The Brahma Kumari's world Spiritual Organization, was represented by **Liza Haddad** who also spoke of how “we, God's children, all belong to one global family”. She believes that by directing our thoughts in positive ways, we all have the potential to guide the world towards becoming a more loving place.

The next speaker was **Mr. Homi Gandhi**, current President of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA). Mr. Gandhi has been awarded the “Temple of Understanding's Interfaith Visionary Award (2010) and was



## BOOK AWARENESS



**Dadabhai Naoroji:**  
**Selected Private Papers,**  
**Edited by S.R. Mehrotra and**  
**Dinyar Patel, Oxford**  
**University Press, 2016.**  
**ISBN 0198076665**

Dadabhai Naoroji, popularly known as the 'Grand Old Man of India', was thrice president of the Indian National Congress, and the first Indian to be elected to the British House of Commons. Naoroji's most lasting contribution to Indian nationalism was his exposition of the exploitative nature of British colonialism through his 'drain theory'. This much awaited volume brings together for the first time rare private papers, including correspondence, of Dadabhai Naoroji from the National Archives of India.

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

also honored to ring the New York Stock Exchange opening Bell (2004) in recognition of his service to the community. He is a vocal climate control and environmental advocate and has presented papers at numerous conferences globally. He is the honorary president of "Religions for Peace International World Council" and was treasurer for "Religions for Peace USA Council". He talked of the tenements of the Zoroastrian religion, "Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds".



The Hindu faith was represented by **Dr. Rini Ghosh**, who is the president of the South Coast Interfaith Council, the oldest and largest Interfaith Council in Southern California. She is also a devotee of the Vedanta Society of Southern California which is part of the Ramakrishna Mission of India and president of Vedanta International Cultural Center, in Redondo Beach which devotes its time to feeding the homeless and underprivileged. Dr. Ghosh, talked of the Vedanta's Advaita philosophy which talks of "Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham" which means, "I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am pure consciousness, I am eternal Bliss".

Islam was represented by **Duaa Alwan**, who was very thankful and gracious for being invited to speak at this interfaith meeting. Alwan is the co-founder of the Muslim Speakers Network and a board member of the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California. She talked about a very prominent quote by Prophet Muhammad which says, 'Love for others what you love for yourself'.

**Erica Wilson**, from unity and Diversity World Council and a retired professor of comparative Religions, followed by stating that she believed that science and religion are totally connected. As a student of Quantum Physics she was always interested in similarities of all religions of the world.

**Susanna Foo Rios**, worked for the Church of Scientology for 18 years. She started studying scientology in Sweden and now works as community relations and interfaith work in the Church of Scientology in Los Angeles. She talked of how Scientology is reaching out and helping others in their time of need.

She was followed by **Wilma Striebeck** who has studied all different religions right since childhood. She talked of reaching the same goals through different methods by different faiths. If you search in your heart and soul and you see beauty everywhere your life will change and you will feel better.

Last but not least, priest **Zarrir Bhandara**, took the floor and talked about Good thoughts, Good words and Good Deeds and how if everyone followed these three principles, the world would be living in peace and harmony. He quoted the Zoroastrian scriptures, saying how energy flows where the attention goes. He talked of how Prophet Zarathustra, said that you are the maker of your own destiny. He said we all have the super power of our "good and positive" thoughts and if we used our supernatural powers within us, we could make the world a more positive and better place. He asked us to be more receptive in receiving God's blessings to renew and renovate ourselves with these three simple principles in life.

Each of the representatives, lit a candle from one main candle, thereby summarizing the thread that a candle loses nothing by lighting another candle and yet helps to light another one! Therefore each faith can help another and do good, and not lose sight of its own uniqueness.

To very aptly sum up we are all one big global family of faiths and serve one God and if we all worked together in peace and harmony the world would be a wonderful place with happiness and thankfulness all around. □



## UPCOMING DATES

(Continued from page 1)

April 28-30, 2017

[FEZANA Annual General Meeting.](#)  
Hosted by Zoroastrian Association of Houston.

April 29, 2017

[FEZANA's 30th Anniversary Gala Celebration - Houston.](#)

June 5-9, 2017

[The Oceans Conference](#) coinciding with World Oceans Day. United Nations, New York City.

August 28-30, 2017

67th United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI)/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference. New York City. UN Headquarters.

September 2-3, 2017

[10th Zoroastrian Unity Cup Soccer Tournament.](#) Redondo Beach, CA

October 1-10, 2017

Business Tourism trip to Iran organized by WZCC

October 14, 2017

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

December 15-17, 2017

WZCC Global AGM. Bangalore, India.

June 1-4, 2018

[11th World Zoroastrian Congress, Perth, Australia](#)  
<http://11wzcp Perth.com.au/>

## New Co-chair for Excellence in Sports Scholarship Committee

FEZANA is pleased to announce that **Amy Sumariwalla** of Idaho Falls, Idaho, has agreed to serve as Co-chair for the Excellence in Sports Scholarship committee. This committee strives to support Zarathushtis in all sports, achieve their goals. Amy will join existing Co-chair, Niloofar Balsara, on the committee.

**Amy Sumariwalla** writes:



*I was born in India and grew up in Mumbai. I immigrated to USA as a young adult. I am a wife, mother and grandmother, recently retired after a career in chemistry and management. I have 30+ years of experience in laboratory operations, project management, quality management, and six-sigma leadership, managing operational and technical activities. I am an active individual with varied interests, consider myself to be a people person, results oriented and function effectively with a wide range of people.*

*I started my career as a chemist in the water quality laboratory at the Corps of Engineers in St. Louis, Missouri and since then have worked in the chemistry world in varied positions to support the Department of Energy and Department of Justice projects. While in Chicago, I worked as a Nuclear Forensic Scientist and served on the Board of Directors at the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC).*

*Upon retiring I have moved to Idaho Falls, Idaho, the beautiful Northwest. I am interested in current affairs, politics, and children's causes. I appreciate nature's beauty, and enjoy gardening, cooking, reading and hiking. □*

## Convert Your PIO Cards To OCI Now

GOOD NEWS FOR PIO CARD HOLDERS: The Government of India is encouraging all PIO [Person of Indian Origin] Card holders to convert to OCI [Overseas Citizen of India] cards and has extended the deadline to June 30, 2017. If you convert your PIO to OCI before this deadline, you do not have to pay the Consular Fee of \$275.



GOPIO is alerting those holding PIO card to take immediate steps to convert it to OCI Card. If you have a PIO card issued by Govt' of India, which so far served as your visa to India, it will be terminated on June 30, 2017. You must act before this date to apply for converting your PIO card to an OCI card for free. After this date, you will have to start afresh an application for OCI card and pay the fee.

For more details about conversion of PIO to OCI, go to <https://www.in.ckgs.us/pio/index.shtml> One can complete an application and give attachments on line. One can also use this to apply for a new OCI for your spouse (Indian or foreigner) and for children. □



## OPPORTUNITIES

**NORTH AMERICAN  
INTERFAITH NETWORK (NAIN)  
YOUNG ADULT  
SCHOLARSHIP**
***Application Deadline: April 7***

Scholarship is open to young adults who are currently involved in some form of interfaith or social justice work. Scholarship recipients receive a stipend to attend the annual NAINConnect Conference which will take place this year from August 6-10 2017 in San Diego. This year's theme: *Harmony: Journey to One Heart*

More details:

<http://www.nain.org/young-adults.html>

## Mava Cake Lovers e-Cook Book

If you have a sweet tooth and a liking for mava this eBook is for you. All of the satisfying food dishes included in this book, are made with Mava (an Indian version of ricotta cheese) including Cupcake, Ice-cream and Cake recipes.

The FREE "Mava Lovers" electronic eBook can be downloaded here:

<http://www.parsicuisine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/mava.pdf>

Please feel free to distribute to friends and neighbors for upcoming Nowruz events. Offered to FEZANA supporters, courtesy of [www.parsicuisine.com](http://www.parsicuisine.com)

## FEZANA Annual General Meeting Updates

FEZANA is preparing for its upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held in Houston from April 28-30, 2017. Pre-AGM sessions are planned for April 27 and post-AGM activity is planned for April 30. Please make your reservations now. All attendees must register at: <http://zah.org/?event=fezana-agm-registration-for-fezana-members-and-out-of-towners>. See pages 6-10 for more details.

For up to date AGM information, please visit the [AGM page](#) on FEZANA's website. This page is continuously updated as new information becomes available. □

## Celebration of Nowruz Program at University of Chicago's Oriental Institute

Sponsored in part by FEZANA and the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC-CHI), the Celebration of Nowruz program at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute has become a regular event. With over 300 registrants this year, the free family-oriented program, held on Saturday, March 11, 2017, included such activities as: Nowruz greeting cards for decoration, storytelling, Haft Seen table, scavenger hunt and Persepolis green screen photo-op.



***Celebration of Nowruz program at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute on March 11, 2017. [Left] Families make Nowruz greeting cards; [right] Farida Sharyari (ZAC-CHI member) greets visitors at the Haft Seen table near the entrance of the museum.***



## 2017 FEZANA AGM / HOUSTON / APRIL 28-30, 2017

### THURS APRIL 27, 2017

#### Pre-AGM Activities

10:00 am – Site Visit  
 1:30pm – 4:30pm  
 WZCC Regional Meeting  
 7:00-10:00 pm  
 An Evening with FIRES [\$]

### FRI APRIL 28, 2017

9:00 am – 4:30 pm  
 FEZANA AGM

7:00 pm FEZANA  
 Showcase Dinner

### SAT APRIL 29, 2017

9:00 am – 4:30 pm  
 FEZANA AGM

7:00 pm Gala Dinner [\$]

### SUN APRIL 30, 2017

AGM continues until  
 Noon

Post-AGM Activity:  
 MFAH visit [\$]

RSVP by March 15, 2017 Online at: <http://zah.org/?event=fezana-agm-registration-for-fezana-members-and-out-of-towners>

And also to

FEZANA SECRETARY at [secretary@fezana.org](mailto:secretary@fezana.org) and FEZANA Administrative Office [admin@fezana.org](mailto:admin@fezana.org)

Visit 2017 AGM webpage: <https://fezana.org/annual-general-meeting-2017/> for regular updates

#### For Further Information or Questions Contact

Homi D. Gandhi	FEZANA President	<a href="mailto:homidgandhi@gmail.com">homidgandhi@gmail.com</a>
Aderbad Tamboli	ZAH Chair	<a href="mailto:axtamboli@windstream.net">axtamboli@windstream.net</a>
Zeeba Kayani	AGM Coordinator (281) 610-6593	<a href="mailto:zeeba.kayani@gmail.com">zeeba.kayani@gmail.com</a>

#### ACCOMODATIONS:

**Home2 Suites by Hilton:**  
 Group Rate is \$95.00 - breakfast included.

**11121 Fountain Lake Drive, Stafford, TX. 77477**  
**Special Group Name: FEZANA-AGM**

**Reservations by: Phone directly at (346) 309-2240** (If needed, ask for Ms. Nicki Richardson for assistance)  
 Reservations **must** be received by 04/14/2017. After this date reservations will be accepted on a space and rate available bases only. 30day cancel policy and \$50.00 will be applied for early departure.  
 Please Note: Rooms are available from Wednesday, April 26, 2017 to Monday, May 1, 2017.

#### TRANSPORATION:

**Super Shuttle Houston Intercontinental Bush Airport(IAH) (800) 258-3826 Roundtrip Rate: \$ 49.99**  
**Houston Hobby Airport (HOU) (800) 258-3826 Roundtrip Rate: \$ 54.00**  
**Special Group Code: Special Discount Rate to be announced**



ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON

#### *Things you can do in Houston*

- The 'GO TEXANS' city with its museums, theaters & restaurants.
- Visit NASA...now operated by the Disney Group
- The Kemah Boardwalk & Galveston
- 6 Day / 5 Night cruise from Galveston with fellow Zarathushtis (see page 10 for details)
- Take a tour to San Antonio



# World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce

Building the Spirit of Entrepreneurship



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**CORROSION  
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FACILITIES**

**INTERNAL  
COATINGS**

WZCC invites you to Houston to participate in the Annual North American Regional Meeting to be held on **Thursday, April 27, 2017**. As per past meetings, it will be held on the day before the FEZANA AGM, where many of our members are active participants. Our meeting is planned to provide valuable information to entrepreneurs, business owners, professionals and anybody with interest in various aspects of business, finance and industry.

**10:00 AM to 12:30 PM:** Visit a Zarathushti owned industrial facility, **Coating Industries Inc, CII** that provides serious corrosion protection for substrate to shipbuilders, chemical companies, major oil companies and industrial plants. We will also visit their adjacent J R Manufacturing facility, a fabricating plant for piping, skids and packages. (Lunch included)

**1:30 PM to 4:30 PM - (ZHCC):** A panel discussion with focus on the financial resources available to new and existing businesses. The panelists will be from the Federal Government agencies like Small Business Administration (SBA), academic institutions, private financial institutions, venture funds, etc. The discussion will cover traditional and non-traditional methods of raising funds. The second part of the afternoon session will be led by WZCC Global President Edul Daver, covering the progress made during 2016, the status of specific objectives and game plan for 2017 & 2018 and beyond. Comments, Suggestions and Participation from all our members, friends and supporters is welcome.

**VENUE:** Zarathushti Heritage & Cultural Center (ZHCC)  
(Home of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston - ZAH)  
8787 West Airport Boulevard, Houston, Texas 77071, USA

**REGISTRATION FEE:** **Complimentary** to WZCC members, friends and supporters  
**Due to limited capacity and advance transportation arrangements,**  
**Registration is required by April 15, 2017**

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON WZCC INDUSTRIAL VISIT & MEETING SESSIONS:**

Contact Regional Director - Rustom Engineer [rustom47@hotmail.com](mailto:rustom47@hotmail.com)

**RSVP for WZCC By : April 15, 2017**

[wzcc-houston@outlook.com](mailto:wzcc-houston@outlook.com)

## An Evening with FIRES



### FEZANA Pre-AGM Evening:

**Date and Time: Thursday, April 27, 2017**

**Time: 7:00pm to 10:00pm**

**Place: Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) Library**

**Cost: \$15.00 for dinner and entertainment**

- An exhibition of our rare book collection, cultural artifacts, as well as an entertaining presentation linked to the exhibits that will bring them to life.
- Dinner catered by ZAH's Naushad Mehta.
- Chief guest and keynote speaker Aban Marker Kabraji



#### COME and MEET: Aban Marker Kabraji

Aban Marker Kabraji is a biologist and scientist and is the co-Chairperson of Return to Roots.

Her early years were spent in Quetta, Pakistan and she is currently residing in Bangkok, Thailand. As Asia Regional Director of IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Ms. Kabraji provides strategic leadership for IUCN's work in the 23 countries of the Asia region. With over 30 years of experience in conservation, Ms Kabraji has dedicated at least 20 years of her professional career to IUCN.

Ms. Kabraji has been honored with several distinguished awards. She received the Order of the Golden Ark by the Grand Master of the Order, His Royal Highness Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, and is also a Yale University McCluskey Fellow. She has authored and co-authored a number of publications on conservation strategies, the environment and security and conflict prevention. She maintains a special interest in gender, social equality, and security. She is married, has three children and loves dogs.

Please register for this event at: <http://zah.org/?event=fezana-agm-registration-for-fezana-members-and-out-of-towners>



### **POST-FEZANA AGM TOUR: REFLECTIONS OF THE SILK ROAD**

The Museum of Fine Arts Houston provides a venue for our FEZANA visitors to go on a visual journey glimpsing at works of art that reflect the world wide trade along the famous Silk Road. View artifacts from areas around Gandhara, India, Central Asia and the world of antiquity extending into arts of the western world. This guided tour will provide a great opportunity for our community members to savor their cultural influence on the rest of the ancient world.

- 1) Date: Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017
- 2). Tour: 3:00pm
- 3). Tour Duration : Approximately 1 Hour
- 4). Total # of people : 35-50
- 5.) Group rate to be announced

**Due to limited capacity and advance transportation arrangements,  
RSVP is requested.**



**5 DAY CRUISE ON CARNIVAL'S VALOR  
TO WESTERN CARIBBEAN  
FROM GALVESTON, TX**

**MAY 01, 2017 - MAY 06, 2017, MON - SAT**

**PRICES STARTING  
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**Interior**  
**\$379.00\*** PER PERSON

**Ocean View**  
**\$464.00\*** PER PERSON

**Balcony**  
**\$574.00\*** PER PERSON

\* Taxes, fees and port expenses are \$68.79 additional.

Add \$129.50 Prepaid Gratuities (per room)  
ADD VACATION PROTECTION FOR AN AVERAGE OF \$59 PER PERSON

**YOUR 5 DAY ITINERARY**

**DAY 1  
GALVESTON  
DEPART 4:00 PM**

**DAY 2  
FUN DAY AT SEA**

**DAY 3  
COZUMEL  
ARRIVE 9:00 AM - DEPART 6:00 PM**

**DAY 4  
YUCATÁN (PROGRESO)  
ARRIVE 10:00 AM - DEPART 6:00 PM**

**DAY 5  
FUN DAY AT SEA**

**DAY 6  
GALVESTON  
ARRIVE 8:00 AM**

**TO BOOK AND FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL US AT  
281-491-4000**

**SPACE AND PRICES ARE NOT GUARANTEED AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGES**