Zarathushtis of Chicago Lend a Helping Hand at 2017 ZAC-CHI Potato Drop

The Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC-CHI), in coordination with Society of St. Andrew (a national non-profit hunger relief organization), organized a community service event to benefit local food banks on Saturday, September 23, 2017. Over 42,000 pounds of donated potatoes were delivered to the ZAC-CHI grounds in a large trailer truck, destined for various local food pantries. About 40 intrepid volunteers had already gathered at the center before the truck rolled in at 9am, ready to transfer the potatoes from the tractor trailer to various food pantry delivery vehicles.

The volunteers worked at a furious pace, unloading 50 pound sacks of potatoes from the trailer and neatly stacking them on wooden crates nearby. The volunteers then reloaded the potatoes into separate cars and delivery vans from each local food pantry as they started rolling in. In all, the volunteers unloaded, stacked, and then reloaded, 840 bags of potatoes, each weighing 50 pounds, over a period of two hours.

Volunteers came in all ages and sizes -- grandparents to grandchildren -- working as a team, in high spirits and humor.

In total, the potatoes were distributed among 8 food banks throughout the region.

All through this effort, a separate team inside the ZAC-CHI Center, kept all volunteers, food pantry personnel, and drivers well fed and refreshed through a delicious breakfast spread. All were gracious and grateful for the food and breakfast, and atmosphere of good cheer.

The Zarathushtis of Chicago were grateful to be able to serve their community in this manner and hope the success of this event will spur even greater participation in future.

For more photos or to read more about ZAC-CHI’s service day: http://zamc.org/2017-zac-potato-drop-off/ To find out more about the Society of Andrew and its hunger relief programs, visit: http://endhunger.org/
In a first, the Society Of Scholars Of Zoroastrianism (SSZ) Annual Conference was organized in Metropolitan Detroit, on Saturday October 14, 2017, by the Zoroastrian Association of Michigan (ZAOM).

A legacy of the 8th World Zoroastrian Congress, which was held in the United Kingdom, the SSZ conferences since its inception have been hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC). This year, under the leadership of Dr. Ardeshir Irani, the SSZ was hosted successfully by the Zoroastrian Association Of Michigan (ZAOM) at the Public Library in Farmington Hills, a suburb of the city of Detroit.

Presentations included: a captivating talk on the Life of Zarathushtra as gleaned from the Gathas by Professor Jamsheed Choksy, of the University of Indiana; a shared vision and mission of the SSZ by Rohinton Rivetna; What should be taught in Religious Education Classes, by Dr. Lovji Cama; Zarathushtra’s Influence on World Religion and Philosophy by Er vad Tehemton Mirza, Vice President of the North American Mobeds Council; and stellar presentations by next generation speakers Afriti Chinoy and Sarosh Irani.

Videos of the presentations were recorded by Neville Bugli and are available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arl5j1T6nms&list=PLYQq9_Sve3YggMUrBQhQOSiA263BZ9t4p

The conference was well attended by local area Zarathushtis, local interfaith leaders as well as students of theology some of whom had traveled far from the other side of the state and even as far away as Texas.

[Read the full write up of the SSZ conference in the upcoming Winter 2017 issue of the FEZANA Journal.]
ZSBC Hosts Successful One Day Seminar

What a great way to spend a Sunday! For the 63 people who attended the “Zoroastrian Influences & Connections along the Old Silk Road” Seminar hosted by the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (ZSBC) in Burnaby, BC, on Sunday, September 24, 2017, it was indeed a privilege. Organized by Firdosh Mehta under the flag of ZSBC and supported by FEZANA through the Jamshed Pavri Religion Education Fund, it was a day well spent.

Presentations included: “Aryan and Zarathushti History Along the Old Silk Roads” – Mr. K.E. Eduljee; “From Samarkand to Chang’an: Zoroastrians along the Silk Road” and also “Bird-Men and Other Hybrids” – Dr. Jennifer Rose; “Ancient Iranian Geography in the Sahrestaniha-I-Eransahr” – Dr. Rastin Mehri.

Photo courtesy of Aubtin Yazdgardian.

[Read the full write up of this one day seminar in the upcoming Winter 2017 issue of the FEZANA Journal.]

FEZANA EXISS Scholarships, 2017-18

The FEZANA Excellence in Sports (EXISS) Committee has announced the following qualified recipients. Congratulations to them on their achievements!

Anahita Antia (Gymnastics)
Kyrus Buchia (Basketball)
Dilshad Elavia (Badminton)
Anushka Oak (Table Tennis)
Zane Patel (Squash)
Farzad Sarkari (Swimming)

[Look for full write-ups on the scholarships and their recipients in the Spring 2018 issue of the FEZANA Journal]

Visit our website at http://www.fires-fezana.org/
FEZANA Supports the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations: Call for Participants

The FEZANA UN-NGO Committee is looking for participants to attend the 62nd Commission on the Status of Women Conference at the UN Headquarters in New York from March 12-23, 2018.

This year’s priority theme is, “Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls” and the review theme is, “Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women (agreed conclusions of the forty-seventh session)”. 

For more information on the NGO CSW62 check the NGO CSW Website: http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw62-2018

Individuals interested in attending the conference, are requested to send their resume and letter of intent by December 15th, 2017. Please send the e-mail to both individuals below:

Behram Pastakia (bpastakia@aol.com)
Afreed Mistry (mistry.afreed@gmail.com)

While FEZANA, as an NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council [ECOSOC] and the Department of Public Information (DPI), will facilitate registration to the CSW Conference, the selected participants are expected to make their own financial arrangements regarding visas, tickets, accommodation, food, and transportation in the city. Details about the vision, mission and activities of the United Nations can be accessed at www.un.org.

Regards,
Afreed Mistry and Behram Pastakia
Co-Chairs, FEZANA UN-NGO Committee

Procedure for Acquiring Services of a Mobed in North America

The North American Mobeds Council (NAMC) has published the following procedure to be used by anyone needing the services of a Mobed in North America:

1) Call a Mobed in your state or region by visiting the NAMC website at http://NAMCMobeds.org and clicking the "Directory" tab at the top
2) If a Mobed is not readily available in your state or region, please call on of the Mobeds from the list provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF PRIEST</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>TEL</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ervad Kobad Jamshed</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>(650)888-7876</td>
<td>kobadjd (@) hotmail.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ervad Zarir Bhandara</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>(562)331-9973</td>
<td>zbandara (@) gmail.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ervad Jimmy Ravji</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>(630)280-1897</td>
<td>jimmy1902 (@) att.net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ervad Pervez Patel</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>(718)446-6751</td>
<td>udvadad (@) aol.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ervad Nozer Kotwal</td>
<td>ONT</td>
<td>(905)820-0461</td>
<td>nozerk (@) yahoo.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ervad Jal Panthaky</td>
<td>ONT</td>
<td>(905)568-4946</td>
<td>jal_panthaky (@) yahoo.ca</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Please note that the charges for the ceremonies including travel, room/board will be based on NAMC’s schedule given under the “Rates for Priestly Services” tab on the NAMC website. http://namcmobeds.org/ratesforpriestlyservices/
Looking for Emerging Leaders to Feature in Upcoming FEZANA Journal Issue

Zarathushtis in North America are doing very well, with many Young Adults on the threshold of Leadership positions. The FEZANA Journal would like to feature these Emerging Leaders in its Spring 2018 issue. I have been requested to guest edit this issue and accepted the challenge. We plan on featuring two levels of leadership (a) those under 35 yrs and (b) those between 35 – 45 yrs. If you would like to be considered for inclusion please contact Edul Daver, eduldaver@gmail.com; 908-397-4443. Also, if you know of someone that should be considered please forward their name and e-mail address.

We plan on profiling perhaps 15 movers and shakers who will no doubt make our community proud in the not too distant future.

Your help to make this issue a success is much appreciated.

Thanks,
Edul Daver
eduldaver@gmail.com

2018 FEZANA AGM Dates Announced

The FEZANA Executive is happy to announce that the 31st Annual General Meeting of Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America shall be held from Friday April 27th to Sunday April 29th 2018 in Los Angeles, California.

As is the practice, the day before the AGM, Thursday April 26, 2018, shall have various Pre-AGM events; and we encourage one and all to attend the same.

FEZANA Member association California Zoroastrian Center are the hosts of the upcoming AGM and they shall in due course of time send out details about the actual program, accommodation etc.

One of the main thrusts of this AGM shall also be to find out more about the 2019 World Zoroastrian YOUTH Congress to be hosted by the youth of the host association California Zoroastrian Center. In this regard we urge member associations to encourage and bring along their youth representatives to the AGM so they can interact with their counterparts at CZC to aid in making the 2019 WZYC a grand success.

For participants to book their flights etc, please refer to sidebar at left for a very broad conceptual program.

If you have any questions please feel free to email Arzan Sam Wadia FEZANA VP and Chair of the Coordination and Planning Committee at vp@fezana.org