

FEZANA *bulletin*

May 21, 2012 / VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 11



UPCOMING DATES

June 2-3, 2012

Year 3750 Thus Spoke
Zarathushtra Conference of
Scholars of Zoroastrianism.
University of British
Columbia, Vancouver. For
info, visit
<http://www.3750z.com/conference.htm>

June 29-July 3, 2012

13th Zoroastrian Games
Toronto, Canada. For info
www.zso.org or
zgames2012@yahoo.ca

August 2-5, 2012

16th North American
Zoroastrian Congress
Rye, New York. For
registration or more info
<http://nazc.zagny.org>

August 2, 2012

FEZANA 25th Anniversary
Gala Evening; Rye New
York; 7:00pm.
<http://nazc.zagny.org>

August 3, 2012

25th FEZANA AGM;
Rye, New York. To register
or more info
<http://nazc.zagny.org> or
admin@fezana.org

AROUND FEZANA...

FEZANA at the United Nations

FEZANA UN-NGO COMMITTEE REPORT

Background:

FEZANA was placed on the Roster of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (UN) in 1997. We are now also registered with the Department of Public Information (DPI) and maintain this standing by submitting quadrennial reports.

The FEZANA UN-NGO Committee was appointed in 2003; current Co-Chairs are Afreed Mistry, Homi D. Gandhi and Behram Pastakia.

For the first time, the FEZANA Team participated at the 55th Annual DPI/NGO Conference entitled "*Rebuilding Societies Emerging from Conflict: A Shared Responsibility*," held at the UN in New York City, on September 9-11, 2002. Since then, we have participated and presented workshops at numerous Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) meetings held at the UN headquarters, and at annual UN-DPI NGO conferences all over the globe. The funding for travel, visas and housing remain the responsibility of the participants themselves.

Committee Activities:

The year 2012 started with a huge success as our team (Tanya Bharda, Homi Gandhi, Afreed Mistry, Freyaz Shroff and Behram Pastakia) presented a panel discussion titled, "*NGO Learnings: Empowering Rural Women to Overcome Poverty & Hunger*" at the 56th CSW conference. We showcased specific case studies from the *Gram Seva Foundation* in addressing infant malnutrition and the holistic approach of the *World Zoroastrian Organization* to promote prosperity in South Gujarat. The international dialogue at the workshop provided team members opportunities in sharing best practices and to network with like minded individuals.

Participants, on return to their home cities, have the option to follow-up with action programs. For example, Roshni Kasad who has worked with an NGO called *Manav Sadhna* in Gujarat, is involved in organizing a tour by children from the slums of Ahmedabad presenting a dance performance at American University in Washington D.C. on 17 May 2012. The children shall visit the Gandhi Memorial Center in the nation's capital before leaving for the second leg of their fund-raising tour in California this summer. Roshni continues to advocate for *Indicorps* – Service for the Soul.

The declaration by the UN General Assembly to celebrate *NowRuz* as an intangible heritage of humanity, successful after a long and arduous international campaign, was an important landmark. The committee urges member associations of FEZANA to meet with their local elected officials in celebrating this day, the spring equinox, as our New Year, as we establish our own unique identity on this continent.

Focus and Policy:

Over the last ten years, the UN-NGO committee has chosen to encourage participation by Zarathushti youth and in keeping with our faith tradition, lifted up the message of caring for the environment. From the outset, we determined as a policy that there shall be no place for proselytization in our activities.



Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA)

President
Bomi Patel
president@fezana.org

Registered Address
5750 S Jackson Street
Hinsdale, Illinois 60521

Administrative Office
8615 Meadowbrook Drive
Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527

Phone:
630-468-2705

E-mail:
admin@fezana.org

Web:
www.fezana.org



Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fezana/146727472067524>



Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/#!/FEZANA1>

Archived issues of the FEZANA Bulletin are available at:
<http://www.fezana.org/BulletinArchives>

FEZANA Bulletin is distributed to addresses listed in the FEZANA directory; to individuals included on the FEZANA group lists and to those requesting information about FEZANA. To opt out, contact: admin@fezana.org

Future Plans:

We are keen to advocate for human rights and religious freedom, celebrating our ancient heritage and culture, echoed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A replica of the Cylinder of Cyrus the Great is housed at the UN as evidence from the *Achaemenian* dynasty of a people who were respectful of the rights of the other, even those vanquished in battle, to practise their own religion without hindrance. We look forward to seeing members of FEZANA install replicas of this symbol from antiquity in their association halls, homes, and public gardens in their cities, to share the story of who we are and what we stand for. As the demographic profile of the Zarathushti population morphs, we anticipate greater involvement from the Iranian Zarathushti diaspora in developing these plans.

To Connect:

Zarathushtis from anywhere in the world interested in joining the FEZANA UN-NGO team should contact Afreed B. Mistry afreed.mistry@gmail.com, Behram Pastakia bpastakia@aol.com, and Homi D. Gandhi homidgandhi@gmail.com, with a copy of their curriculum vitae and a letter of intent stating how they would further the vision and mission of the UN. We seek individuals with leadership potential who can speak and write well. Fluency in multiple languages is an added asset. For archived FEZANA UN-NGO press releases visit: www.fezana.org To understand the workings of the UN and find opportunities to be involved, visit: www.un.org □

Dated: 12 May 2012

Research and Preservation Committee, 2011-12

R/P committee consists of following individuals:

Dr. Jehan Bagli, Chairperson; Dr. Dolly Dastoor; Mr. Maneck Bhujwala; Mr. Firdosh Mehta; Mr. Rummy Mohta

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the dedicated members of the Research and Preservation Committee, for their contributions. These individuals have contributed their valuable time and efforts, in the interest of preservation and perpetuation of various aspects of Zarathushtrian Faith and culture to help augment the awareness of our Heritage. This report enumerates major activities of these individuals during 2011/12. – Dr. Jehan Bagli, Chairperson

Religious activities – Lectures and Discourses

- Performed Jashans, Fereshta and last rites for Parsi and Irani associations (ZAC and CZC) and families. **(Bhujwala)**
- Presented a talk of our religion at the Noor center to the members of Islamic faith. **(Bagli)**
- Organized a one day seminar in Calgary, inviting Dr. Jenny Rose and Dr. Mitra Ara and introducing their recent books. **(Mehta)**
- Invited at Gandhi Jayanti event to speak on contributions of Parsis of India to the efforts of Mahatma Gandhi. **(Bhujwala)**
- Help organize a successful Nowrooz function for Zoroastrians from four corners of Virginia with 39 adults and a number of children attending. **(Mohta)**
- Presented a talk on the legendary events that led to the passing of Zarathushtra as described in Shahnameh. Spoke on translation of passages from Atash Neyayesh at Jashn-e Sadeh. **(Bhujwala)**
- Invited to present a talk on Zoroastrian priesthood and showed a video on jashan ritual at Concordia University in Montreal on May 31. **(Bagli)**
- Presented a talk on short prayers of 'Nirangs' with meanings to the Calgary chapter of ZAA. **(Mehta)**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

International Logo Design Contest for the 10th World Zoroastrian Congress, Mumbai 2013

Congress theme:
Zoroastrianism in the 21st Century: Nurturing Growth and Affirming our Identity.

Each submission should be accompanied by a paragraph explaining the creator's vision.

Contest Submission Deadline:
July 31, 2012.

For further details or to obtain an entry form:

www.bombayparsipunchayet.com

- Participated on March 7 and 8 2012, in an interfaith panel discussion as Zarathushti representative at Bishop Montgomery High School. **(Bhujwala)**
- On June 18 we were invited to perform a Jashan Blessing ceremony at the Government House by Lieutenant Governor Honorable Mayann Francis of Nova Scotia in Halifax. The event was organized by the Zoroastrian community of Halifax. **(Bagli)**
- Invited to participate in **Journées des Sciences de la religion du Cégep de Sainte-Foy** November 7-10. The days were dedicated to the theme 'Discover Zoroastrianism' for the students. **(Dastoor, Bagli)**
- Continued posting of Shahnameh couplets with translation and transliteration on internet, as well as reported summery of lectures attended at UC Irvine organized by Persian studies Department. **(Bhujwala)**

Interfaith Activities

- Attended several public events (Thanksgiving, July 4 parade and others) as Zoroastrian representative for Huntington Beach Interfaith Council, and help promote them in News media. **(Bhujwala)**
- Participated in a program of the Interfaith center in Edmonton. **(Mehta)**
- On March 15 invited by the interfaith group for a universal service and to present a talk on the religion of Asho zarathosht. **(Bagli)**
- Participated in the celebrations of birthday of Martin Luther King on January 15/12, to present Zoroastrian view point on Non-violence. Organized by MOSAIC. **(Bagli)**
- Participated as a representative of Zoroastrian Faith in the Interfaith Unitarian Service on the theme of 'Festival of Light'. **(Bagli)**
- Participated in the interfaith activity of MOSAIC to explain Zoroastrian wedding ceremony. **(Bagli)**
- On September 18 participated as Zoroastrian representative in MOSAIC interfaith activity to present an explanation of last rites in Zoroastrian religion. **(Bagli)**
- At the October 23rd meeting of MOSAIC spoke on the importance of water in Zarathushtrian faith. **(Bagli)**

Books, and other Activities

- Wrote a letter to Professor Lumi O. Hanus at Hebrew University, Jerusalem to explain some highly erroneous notions mentioned about Zarathushtra, in his review article on Cannabinoids. **(Bagli)**
- Wrote articles and letters to the editors on topic related to Zoroastrianism in India current, India West, and Orange county Register. **(Bhujwala)**
- Nine essays on various aspects of Zoroastrianism have been assembled from mobeds and scholars from India, Europe, Canada and USA for compilation of Zoroastrian section in the 'Encyclopedia of Indian Religions' due for publication in mid-2013. **(Bagli)**
- Accompanied ZSO president Sam Vesuna, to meet with Imam Dr. Mesbah Moosavi to sort out the understanding of certain terminology in our liturgy which were misrepresented in his public remarks. **(Bagli)** □



CELEBRATE WITH FEZANA!

*FEZANA's Silver Jubilee Gala
An Evening of Dinner and Dance
Rye, New York
August 2, 2012, 7:00pm*



Education, Conference and Scholarship Committee, 2011-12

The Education Conference and Scholarship Committee was formed, to support and enhance the efforts of the Member Associations to provide religious education and education material to their individual members and to enhance the knowledge of Zoroastrianism through supporting lectures and scholarships for the study of Zoroastrianism and encouraging Zoroastrian Studies at Institutions of Higher Learning. To empower our children and our youth with the knowledge and information necessary to function in a pluralistic society and in the interaction bring informed judgment, conviction and wisdom based on a comprehensive education of the tenets and philosophy of the Zoroastrian religion and to empower our parents, educators and members of the community with informed vision, knowledge and guidance necessary in the imparting of such education.

Towards these goals the ESC Committee carries out the following activities:

Religion Education Teachers Workshops

Five Religious Education Workshops have been held over the years in different regions of the US and Canada such as the East Coast, West Coast, Southern Midwest, Toronto, bringing together teachers from different associations to discuss teaching curriculum, teaching methods, and general discussions of the problems which teachers face and the solutions.

A workshop for teachers concentrating on teaching methods for teaching religious education is planned at the 16th NAZC in New York as well as a course in Fundamentals of Zoroastrianism, religion and history for youth at the college level and young adults.

Website for Religion Class Material

The website www.Zoreled.org was created 4 years ago, where teachers can share their teaching material with other teachers. At the present it has age appropriate materials contributed by ZAGNY, ZSO, the KZBM Sunday School for Little Zarathushtis, Karachi, Pakistan and ZANT teacher Annahita Jasavala. A list of books that can be used by teachers for their classes and the places from which the books can be obtained is also available on this website.

Google Group for Religion Class Teachers

A Google group Zoroastrian-Teachers@Googlegroups.com has been established to facilitate communication between teachers and the ESC Committee. At the present it has 51 members.

Education Materials

The ESC supports the development of Religious Education material for example the Kushti Weaving Video

FEZANA's Jungalwala Lectures

The Jungalwala Lecture Series was set up By FEZANA to honor Khorshed Jungalwala for her work with and for FEZANA. The lecture series invites scholars of Zoroastrianism generally once a year to give a lecture at a gathering of Zoroastrians such as the North American Zoroastrian Congress, the North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress, the World Zoroastrian Congress and the World Zoroastrian Youth Congress or other venues where a large number of Zoroastrians might be expected to attend. Since its inception in 2007, the lecture series has had Prof Kaikhosrov Irani, Prof Almut Hintze, Prof Oktor Skjaervo, Prof Jenny Rose and Prof Jamsheed Choksy among others as the invited speakers. Prof Yuhan Vevaina from Stanford University will be the Jungalwala Lecturer at the 16th NAZC .

Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty Religion Education Scholarship

This scholarship set up by the Zardoshty family in honor of Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty supports Zarthushti students of Zoroastrianism who are working at the graduate level at recognized Universities. A number of students have availed of this scholarship to help them obtain graduate degrees in fields related to Zoroastrianism. Rastin Mehri has been the latest recipient. □



**XVI NORTH AMERICAN
ZARATHUSHTI CONGRESS 2012**

ZARATHUSHTI EXISTENCE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

DATE: AUGUST 02 - 05, 2012	VENUE: HILTON WESTCHESTER RYE BROOK, NY	HOSTED BY: ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK  IN PARTNERSHIP WITH IRANIAN ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION 
--	---	---

LAST CALL BEFORE REGISTRATIONS RATES GO UP ON FRIDAY JUNE 01, 2012

Hello everyone

We are happy to inform you that the preparations for the XVI North American Zarathushti Congress 2012 are at a feverish pitch. We endeavor to provide a fantastic experience to everyone who attends this event.

Registration Rates Go Up From June 01, 2012

To all of you who have registered, we thank you.

To those who are still deciding to register, we would like to remind you that the rates will go up at the end of the month.

From June 01, 2012; the rates increase by \$125 for adults and \$75 for children.

We encourage you to take this opportunity to register for the Congress before this rate-hike.

You can register and pay online on our website <http://nazc.zagny.org/online-registration/>

If you prefer to print the form and mail in a payment, please download the form http://nazc.zagny.org/download/NAZC_2012_Registration.pdf

Hotel Room Reservations

We have negotiated a special hotel room rate for participants, for the entire duration of the Congress. There are a few rooms still available at the special rate. If you have not booked your hotel rooms we urge you to do so at the earliest.

You can reserve a room

Online: The Reservations link for NAZC 2012 is <http://zagny.org/hilton>

Telephone: By calling the Hilton Rye Brook room reservation department at 1-800-HILTONS.

Please request the group rate for ZAGNY or give the unique group code .

In order to confirm a room assignment the Hotel will require one night's deposit, refundable up to 72 hours in advance of the check-in date.

zagny.org

