

FEZANA News Bulletin

October, 2003

Awesome news!!

The year 2003 is being recognized by UNESCO as the year the world celebrates the 3000th anniversary of Zoroastrian culture. This is a momentous event in our lives where we are given an ideal opportunity to show the world our rich culture and heritage. The celebrations are taking place world wide, and the community right here in North America is actively participating. At the last AGM, Dolly Dastoor was appointed co-chair, FEZANA UN-NGO sub-committee specifically to coordinate events around the FEZANA community. We have FEZANA members from all over the continent organizing and planning events. We encourage our small groups to plan events in honor of the celebration. If in need for any ideas or motivation please contact either the sub committee or any one of us.

The next issue of the FEZANA Journal, Winter 2003 will feature an entire article, **4th MILLENIUM OF ZARATHUSHTI CULTURE**. Please be sure to read it!

And, you can visit FEZANA Website www.fezana.org for all other FEZANA information.

Listed below are the events planned by the members for the 3000th anniversary celebration. For more information on any one of these, please contact the individual associations and their contacts.

Zoroastrian Association of Alberta

On November 23rd, in co-operation with Edmonton Interfaith Center, at the Main Public Library Theatre, will showcase the Zarathushti culture featuring the CD "Zarathushti Culture- A Revival" produced by the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation. Along with a mini Z museum of Zarathushti artifacts, books and pictures will be on display together with traditional garments and refreshments. A similar program is planned for CALGARY on 29th November.

Contact fdjmehta@telus.net

Persian Zoroastrian Organization

On September 5, the association invited Dr. Farhang Meher to speak at the De Anza College in Cupertino, California.

California Zoroastrian Center

A three-day gala festival, December 19 – 21 at the Anaheim Convention Center, Orange County. The theme of the event is, "The Ancient Persian and Zoroastrian Ethics and Today's World Affairs". The Director-General of UNESCO Mr. Koichiro

Matsuura has been invited to attend. The festival will be relayed in four languages namely English, French, German, and Farsi.

Contact emehrfar@yahoo.com; www.californiazoroastriancenter.org

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago

October 17 –18, Zarathushti International Film Festival (ZIFF) and the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago together with the Council of Parliament of World's Religion's and Columbia College in Chicago will host the 1st Zoroastrian Film Festival – Chicago 2003 – Our Beliefs, Our History, Our Culture.

For more information visit www.chicago.org/zfilmfest2003

Zoroastrian Association of Houston

October 25, inauguration of a library at the Zarathushti Cultural and Heritage Center in Houston. The library will feature a collection of books on Zoroastrian literature, history, culture and traditions.

Contact aban@coatingengineers.com

Sometime in February 2004, Interfaith Ministry for Women and the ZAH are planning an event.

Contact yasmin.pavri@milliman.com

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York

November 15, at the Metropolitan Hotel in New York City, events highlights include talks by renowned scholars like Dr. Farhang Meher, Prof. Keikosrow Irani, Dr. Ali Jaffrey on Zoroastrian influence on other world cultures, opening prayers, book display, recorded music to name a few.

Contact homigandhi@usa.net

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey

November 8, an evening of Indian entertainment at Maple Shade, New Jersey. Evening festivities to include classical and contemporary dances, Bollywood show tunes, ghazals, and gara fashion show. The proceeds will go to raise funds for the Zarathushti Cultural Center in New Jersey.

Contact noshkaranjia@aol.com

Zoroastrian Society of Ontario

November 28 up until January 31, 2004, parades of events have been planned by one of our largest members. Beginning the festivities with a "Showcase of Zoroastrianism" on November 30 followed by a "Youth Open House" on November 30. The grand finale on January 30 will be at the Royal Ontario Museum featuring an exhibit that will include Persian artifacts, and series of lectures illustrating Zoroastrian influence through the ages.

Contact MIRZAF@tc.gc.ca or kerman@priest.com or roxannamirza@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia

October 11, A Mehrgan Music Festival of Music of Ancient Persian Nations and Tribes to be held at Capilano College, North Vancouver.

Visit www.oshihan.org/mehrgan.htm

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington

18th November 2003, at the interfaith concert, at the Washington National Cathedral, members of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, under the direction of Mrs. Fereshteh Farhamand, will highlight the contribution of an Achemenian King. A follower of Zarathushtra's thought and philosophy, Cyrus the Great of Persia who granted freedom of religion to his subjects, is referred to as the "anointed one" in the holy books of major world religions. The "Cylinder of Cyrus" housed in the British Museum is an important archeological milestone in the history of human rights.

FEZANA has donated,

- \$250 to Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago towards the Film Festival
 - \$250 to the California Zoroastrian Center for their 3-day festival
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FEZANA WELCOMES -

ZATAMBAY, ZOROASTRIAN GROUP FROM FLORIDA

ZATAMBAY, Zoroastrian Association of Tampa Bay was officially registered as a small group at this point by a group of Zoroastrians around Tampa Bay, St. Petersburg, and Sarasota area. Hoshedar Tamboli, FEZANA Small groups chair is a resident of Tampa, and was instrumental in getting the group organized. Tehmi Dastoor, from St. Petersburg will be the FEZANA representative.

ZATAMBAY is already organizing and planning for the FEZANA Annual General Meeting to be held in Tampa Bay on 29th- 30th May 2004 with a visit to Sun City Center, Florida.

Way to go!!!!

ZOROASTRIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, AUSTIN

Lillian Bharucha from Houston and Veera Sidhwa with a group of Zoroastrian students, about 20, have gotten together to revive a Zoroastrian association on their campus. They are an enthusiastic group of young adults who are keen on increasing awareness for our religion, tradition, and culture to the community around them.

They already have activities planned with fundraisers and social events. Their web page is under construction as well.

It is indeed a terrific idea and hope the trend catches on.
We wish them all the best.

FEZANA COMMITTEE NEWS

➤ **Welfare committee, co-chairs Houtoxi Contractor & Hosi Mehta**

We understand that the Zoroastrian community is not immune to any social issues in today's world. It seems only right to have a program in place that identifies and addresses issues that have the potential to overwhelm an individual or a family. The Critical Assistance sub committee under the Welfare committee is in the process of developing such a program. This program plans to provide assistance and support to individuals, families and organizations in need due to medical emergencies, natural disasters, violence, and legal issues.

The program needs your involvement from the community. Please read the attached document for more details.

Also, listed below are the donations by FEZANA as of May 2003.

	AMOUNT
India	\$3950
North America	\$3000

➤ **UN-NGO Committee, co-chairs Homi Gandhi and Behram Pastakia**

ZOROASTRIANS PARTICIPATE AT THE UNITED NATIONS

For the second consecutive year, FEZANA participated at the United Nations' Fifty-sixth Annual Conference For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with a team of ten representatives. The conference on "**Human Security and Dignity: Fulfilling the Promise of the United Nations**", took place from September 8 - 10, 2003, at the UN headquarters in New York City. The conference focused on enhancing 'human security', which requires NGOs to promote policies and programmes that emphasize sustainable economic and social development, human rights and environmental protection.

The FEZANA UN team brought together Zarathushtis from all across North America. Several members were 'youth participants', which confirms that the youth in our community have a strong interest in getting involved with FEZANA's various NGO initiatives.

(Participants include Homi Gandhi, Behram Pastakia, Susan Karani, Aysha Ghadiali, Neville Antia, Freyan Billimoria, Roda Patel, Trita Parsi, Rohan Vilms, Shanaya Mistry)

FEZANA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE "WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY"

Geneva, Switzerland, December 10th - 12th, 2003

Jenny Presswalla, from Tampa, Florida, currently a graduate student in International Communications at American University, Washington DC will represent FEZANA at the "World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)" in Geneva, Switzerland from December 10-12, 2003. The summit is organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and is endorsed by the United Nations Security Council under the patronage of Secretary- General Kofi Annan. As stated by the ITU, "the summit aims to bring together Heads of State, Executive Heads of the United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, civil society entities, industry leaders and media representatives to foster a clear statement of political will and concrete plan of action to shape the future of the global information society and to promote the urgently needed access of all countries to information, knowledge and communication technologies for development."

Jenny's participation is made possible on account of FEZANA's status as an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) in consultative status with ECOSOC, the Economic and Social Council of the UN. She believes that in this new era of globalization and the information society, all nations need assured access to telecommunication resources in order to prosper in the future. She aims to represent FEZANA as a global partner in worldwide technological communication while furthering understanding of the Zoroastrian faith among the attendees at the Summit.

The second section of WSIS is scheduled for November 16-18, 2005, in Tunis, Tunisia. For more information go to: www.un.org

Youth interested in participating in future United Nations events with FEZANA are requested to contact Behram Pastakia (bpastakia@aol.com) and Homi Gandhi (Homi_gandhi@usa.net)

➤ **ZYNA committee**

FEZANA would like to recognize the outgoing chairs, **Sherazade Mehta, Armaity Bamji, Morvarid Behziz** for their sincere hard work and dedication. In their three years of service to the community they have done an outstanding job of organizing and coordinating different youth activities. The 10th North American Congress was a resounding success thanks to their efforts together with the Congress organizing committee.

➤ **Religious Education committee, chair Kayomارش Mehta**

The committee announces the recipients of the Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty Religion Education Scholarship. The scholarships are awarded to eligible Zarathushti's to pursue higher education in Zarathushti religion and its languages at a recognized institute of higher learning anywhere in the world. Four recipients were chosen and awarded US \$1000 each.

- Zartosht Atropatene, School for Oriental & African studies, London University

- Mandana Moavenant, School for Oriental & African studies, London University
 - Bahman Moradian, University of Paris
 - Burzine Waghmar, School for Oriental & African studies, London University
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FEZANA PROJECT UPDATE

THE DARI LANGUAGE PROJECT

The Dari Language Project has successfully completed its 2003 summer fieldwork. A report written by Maziar Doustdar Toosarvandani and Anahita Farudi (www.darilanguageproject.org) is worth a peek. The focus is on one of the thirty varieties of Zarathushti Dari belonging to one of the two main dialects (those of Yazd and Kerman), extant in the village of Qasemabad. The report has additional observations on the social and cultural practices of the Zarathushti community surveyed. In the year 2003 with its focus on cultural aspects of Zarathushtis under the aegis of the UNESCO declaration, it is heartening to see efforts supported to document a language threatened to extinction, faced with decreasing populations and emigration. A few Dari language speakers do live in North America -- we were privileged to enjoy the Dari songs sung by Mr. Khodadad Sekhvat-Tafti at the UNESCO related event held by Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington in October 2003. Plans are afoot for a Dari Language Project's Fieldwork effort for 2004.

Contact: Anahita or Maziar at 127, Cheat Canyon Park Drive, Morgantown, WV 26508; info@darilanguageproject.org

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Featuring

4th MILLENIUM OF ZARATHUSHTI CULTURE
Article on 3000th Anniversary Celebration of Zoroastrian Culture
Throughout the world and in North America

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www.fezana.org

For upcoming FEZANA events and more