

## **FEZANA 2004 AGM REPORT FOR THE JOURNAL**

The 17th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the FEZANA was held on May 28 and 29, 2004, at the Amerisuites Hotel in Tampa, Florida.

The Zoroastrian Association of Tampa Bay area (ZATAMBAY), although a small association, did a commendable job of hosting the AGM, which was attended by over 40 people.

The Meeting commenced (on both days) with a benediction by Ervad Soli Dastur, a member of ZATAMBAY.

### **ELECTION**

Results of the election:

President – Firdosh Mehta... unopposed

Treasurer – Rashid Mehin... re-instated at the AGM in the absence of any other candidate.

Asst. Secretary – Farrokh Mistree... unopposed

### **FEZANA OFFICERS' REPORTS**

Firdosh Mehta – President, welcomed everyone present and thanked Hoshedar and Anahita Tamboli and the ZATAMBAY committee for hosting this event and pulling together their limited resources to successfully organize this event.

Firdosh then requested support and co-operation from all members for the success of the Z-Games in Vancouver in July 2004 and for the North American Congress in San Jose in December 2004.

He noted that the UN – NGO after some period of dormancy was now active due to the untiring efforts of Homi Gandhi and Behram Pastakia and thanked them,

The 3000th Anniversary celebrations were a huge success worldwide and thanks due to Dolly Dastoor and Homi Gandhi for co-ordinating FEZANA's efforts,

Houtoxi Contractor and Hosi Mehta were recognized for their contributions to world wide community Welfare and Critical Assistance. These donations were possible in part by private donations and from the proceeds of the Damkewala Endowment.

Firdosh reported that \$100,000 has been donated by a private anonymous donor through FEZANA to The B D Petit Bombay Parsee General Hospital.

He also reported that many FEZANA Scholarships have been awarded and thanked the donors who make it all possible. Firdosh thanked and acknowledged all the Committee Chairs for their active participation and hard work throughout the year. He reported that the Mehraban Dorab Kheradi and Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty Scholarships continued to be awarded and that a new Scholarship Fund for Creative Arts will soon be announced. He touched upon the world class Fezana JOURNAL, under the leadership of Roshan Rivetna and Khorshed Jungalwalla.

Referring to the World Body Meeting in Mumbai in January of this year, Firdosh mentioned that there seemed to be a convergence on the World Body issue and that was sensed after his meeting with the BPP trustees in Mumbai. He once again thanked the FEZANA World Body Working Group for their efforts.

Mahrukh Motafram – Vice President , thanked everyone for attending the Open Forum held on Friday May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Maharukh noted that the FEZANA Executive Board has learned how to work together as the dynamics of each member playing an important role. The FEZANA News Bulletin was published 3 times last year and Maharukh stated that she would try to increase the frequency this year. She touched upon the BAM earthquake and the Gram Seva Project in India. She emphasized once again that every effort needs to be made to keep small Groups involved and that it was time for Small Groups get together by Regions.

Rita Engineer – Secretary thanked the EB for helping her do her duties and that it was enlightening to see all the work done by all the Fezana member associations and Fezana Committees. She felt that Fezana was achieving what it was set up to do.

Treasurer Rashid Mehin’s report was presented by Firdosh Mehta in his absence. It thanked Framroze Patel for filing the Tax Reports on behalf of Fezana and that the reporting procedures was modified to improve clarity & understanding. The Financial Statement for January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2003 was presented and approved.

Farrokh Mistree, Assistant Secretary gave a short update on the Website about the new features for 2003-2004 and the plan for 2004-2005 to get the Fezana publications on the Web. He distributed a copy of the Directory on CD to all member association representatives, as a gift from Noshir Jesung Chair of NA Directory Committee, and that ordering the directory CD on line would be made possible.

#### **ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES:**

Delegates of various Associations, who were present, made brief reports on the activities of their Associations during the past year.

All the Associations indicated having religious classes for youngsters, and some even having them for adults. All Associations have social events for the celebration of Fasli and Shehanshahi Navroze, Jashn-e-Sadeh, and have picnics and outings. Most associations have increased their efforts to encourage youth in to the association activities and also inviting them to get involved at the Fezana level.

Many associations indicated their efforts to raise funds to enable host events and assist the involvement and participation of all their members. Local Interfaith activities continued to grow as other associations participated in their area interfaith activities.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Complete Reports may be viewed on [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org)

\* = Reports in absentia.

*Awards Committee - Yasmin Pavri.* Chair of the Awards Committee, gave a report.

Nominations were requested for the 2004 awards. Nomination forms will be sent out to all. The Awards Committee continues to recognize and work towards the need to establish and adopt standards and streamline all aspects of Awards presentation.

**Census and Survey – Rashna Ghadialy\*** suggested that member associations conduct their own census and share their results with the FEZANA Census Committee or rethink ways to share their member and address list with the Committee. Fezana to look in to another way of conducting the census. Need a representative from each member association to assist in the census gathering.

**Coordination and Planning - Mahrukh Motafram** reported that the Calendar of Events for 2004-2005 will be out soon. She expressed that the Fezana New Bulletin and the Fezana Journal were two powerful tools in bringing together Zoroastrians, but felt that now there was a stronger need for more outreach programs to reach all Zoroastrians. Stressed the need for more youth involvement and Fezana's involvement in an outreach effort.

**Funds and Finance - Jerry Kheradi** reported that 2003 was a very slow year for fund raising as the economy still sluggish. But on a positive note the 1000 Points of Light was nearing the goal of 1000 points totaling to 840 points totaling to \$84,00 end of 2003. The Committee's main goal is to continue to strive towards achieving the \$100,000 that will be to provide a solid financial base for Fezana to continued doing all the good deeds. Canadian Associations to encourage participation in this program. Second phase of this program is a goal of 10,000 points of light.

**Information Receiving and Disseminating - Khorshed Jungalwala\***. The Fezana Journal continues to show remarkable improvement in display of pictures and information. The demand for the Legacy of Zarathushtra booklet continues as currently out of print and 2 Universities have asked for 30 copies for semester projects. The new Committee members appointed last year have added to the Journal's content. Success of this committee is assured due to the process of uncompromising and unbiased accuracy in reporting of facts, events concepts and ideologies via the website and journal.

**North American Congress – ZSO** was awarded the North American Congress in the absence of any other intent received from any other association. Date to be decided.

**Congress TOR Committee – Rustom Kevala** The North American Guidelines Review Committee presented the TOR and will go ahead to develop further as was the sense of the meeting. Stressed the use of "Zarathushti" everywhere. Chicago offered to archive all Congress transcripts.

**Small Groups Committee – Hoshedar Tamboli;** Individuals need to be made to part of the organization as there is a significant mass out there and they need to be brought into the fold. The committee requested Fezana's assistance in spreading FEZANA's role in the community by getting updated emails, addresses and telephone numbers. How can we get everyone involved and on board. This issue needs to be addressed further.

**Academic Scholarship Report – Dolly Dastoor.** During the academic year 2003-2004 the FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program Committee received 20 applications for the FEZANA scholarships and the Mehraban Kheradi Endowment Scholarship. This year the Kheradi Scholarship was judged only for Merit and the recipient named the FEZANA SCHOLAR. The FEZANA scholarships were awarded for a combination of merit, need, extracurricular activities

and community service. The \$5000 Kheradi Endowment Scholarship for Merit was awarded to Roshni Cooper of Macungie, PA., in the Engineering and Computer Science Program of MIT.

The FEZANA scholarships from the \$10,000 allocated were awarded to the following  
Suzie Karani (Illinois) Human Rights  
Freddy Mistry (Colorado) Biochemistry,  
Shekufeh Sonji (Toronto) Medical Studies  
Pouya Bastani (Vancouver) Computing Science and Music  
Zarin Behramshah (Houston) Business  
Cyrus Sarkari (Indiana) Aviation Maintenance Technology  
Adil Tata (California) Computer engineering  
Navaz Mistry (Mississauga) Psychology/double minor in Physiology and Zoology

The call for applications for the 2004-2005 competitions has been announced

**Religious Education Scholarships- Kayomarsh Mehta\***. The applications for the 2004-2005 Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty Religion Education scholarships have been processed and 5 candidates have been pre-qualified for \$1000.00 each. This is the second year of awards and will continue on till 2007. Committee is working on a TOR to look into the issue of candidates being eligible for multiple years.

**Sports Committee- Bijan Khosraviani\***. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Unity Soccer Games took place on August 29 - 30, 2003 in Torrance, California with athletes participating from all over the United States. 48 athletes comprised 8 different teams who competed to become the proud winners of the Unity Cup. Our next event will be the 9<sup>th</sup> Zarathushti Games scheduled to take place in Vancouver, Canada from July 1- 4, 2004. Presently, in the process of looking for our 10<sup>th</sup> Zarathushti Games host city, scheduled to take place on July 1<sup>st</sup> through the 4<sup>th</sup> of 2006. All interested associations who see potential for their city to host the 2006 Games contact ZSC at [zsc@fezana.org](mailto:zsc@fezana.org).

Sports Committee requested a move from being an Ad Hoc Committee to Fezana Standing Committee. The move was put to vote and results to be announced later.

**ZYNA (2003) Sherazade Mehta** gave a report on its various activities. Issued (4) \$500 travel grants for WYC-2003. Organized walks to raise funds throughout USA. ZAMWI participated in the 3-day Breast cancer walk. ZYNA hopes Fezana members will push this at their local level. ZYNA announced a new Creative Arts Scholarship and will work on a TOR to get this started. ZYNA has donated \$5000 towards this scholarship and requested FEZANA to approve this amount from the Youth Fund Account. This was unanimously approved. The members also approved a \$ 5000 contribution to this fund from the General Fund.

**ZYNA (2004) Afreed Mistry & Freyaz Shroff**: Youth Congress in Pune December 2003 was a huge success. Introduced the HYP program – Holiday Youth Program in North America similar to the one in India. Fezana member associations and other committee members offered to assist ZYNA in getting the HYP program off the ground. Bomi Patel confirmed that ZANC would donate \$1000 towards this program. A ZYNA New York meet is planned for summer 2004.

ZYNA is intent on creating a global e-newsletter and a youth database to send out e-newsletter as an outreach program to get all the youth informed.

**Welfare Committee; Houtoxi Contractor & Hoshi Mehta** reported that \$10,000 was sent out last year, \$6000 overseas and \$4000 in the US. This year a sub committee has been formed under the Welfare Committee, Critical Assistance to Zarathustis presented by Freyaz Shroff. The Committee has established a Family Emergency Assistance Hotline to assist Zoroastrians in need. To get this program working there was a need for advisors in the fields of legal, counseling, food, daycare, transportation, jobs, etc. This will enable the Committee to have a point of contact for the type of assistance needed. There were funds in the Welfare committee to get this sub-committee working. Also the Welfare Committee plans to have their first fund raising gala in Chicago on September 4, 2004 to raise more funds and urges all other associations to do the same.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: Rohinton Rivetna:** Increase in Interfaith activities; 10 Zoroastrians to attend the Parliament of World Religions conference in Barcelona, Spain. Active participation at the UN level due to extensive efforts of Homi Gandhi and Behram Pastakia. The NGO status working towards peace and The Peace summit in New Delhi went very well as Zoroastrians continued in their role of bride builders between the Hindus and Muslims.

**WZCC Rohinton Rivetna:** Currently 6 chapters in NA. Two sessions have been planned in San Francisco before the start of the Congress. Visited Dubai and made contact with the Middle East Group increasing the contact list. The India Region has 300 members and the newest addition was the Australian chapter inaugurated May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

**UN-NGO Committee – Behram Patakia/Homi Gandhi:** 2003 was a year full of challenges. Fezana's participation at the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual DPI/NGO conference entitled "Human Security and Dignity: Fulfilling the Promise of the United Nations". The team included Neville Antia, Feyan Billimoria, Aysha Ghadiali, Susan Karani, Shanaya Mistry, Trita Parsi, Roda Patel and Rohan Vilms. This helped publicize Zoroastrian participation at the UN level and helped renew contacts. The conference was attended by more than 600 NGOs. Participated in the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The Committee efforts in this direction have resulted in making their presence felt at the United Nations.

**NORTH AMERICAN CONGRESS, San Jose, San Francisco Bay Area, CA;**

The Thirteenth North American Congress will be held from December 29, 2004 to January 1, 2005 in San Jose, San Francisco Bay Area, CA. The Theme of this Congress is "*Being Zarathushtri: Looking At Issues, Searching For Answers*". It will be held at the Doubletree Hotel, San Jose, Silicon Valley in the San Francisco Bay Area at a special rate of \$69 plus tax—suite will be at \$139.00 plus tax. The Congress Registration forms are on their website and all associations are urged to keep their members informed.

**DIRECTORY Noshir Jesung\*:** Directory in CD format will be sold for \$10 each. Ordering the CD on line will also be made available. A printed copy can be obtained from Farrokh Mistree on request for a charge of \$30 per copy. Noshir Jesung was commended for his contributions and hard work towards making this possible.

**SUN CITY PROGRAM – Yasmin Kevala.** Very enthusiastic with the overwhelming response; 20 were turned down as all rooms were booked. Since there were so many the group tour was divided in two to enable everyone maintain their schedule. Yasmin thanked FEZANA for their full support in this endeavor and for ZATAMBAY hosting the AGM in Tampa enabling this visit to Sun City Centre.

**Public Relations Committee- Firdosh Mehta:** Put together a promotional CD or a PowerPoint presentation that could be taken and shown around to everyone. Publication Committee will assist in putting together CD/PowerPoint presentation. The original Fezana Brochure needs to be put in to a PowerPoint presentation as well as additional copies printed. Need volunteers to take lead on promotional materials.

**NAMC: Jehan Bagli:** 2003 was a busy year with several seminars on Zoroastrian rituals. Many mobeds were involved in the 3000<sup>th</sup> year anniversary celebrations. Education program advanced as Minocher Homji tapes were made available in Chicago. \$2000 was allotted for copies to be made available to all associations. The committee was working towards putting the Gathas on 2 CDs by Ervad Bhedwar in UK with translations. After reviewing the CDs will be made available to all associations. The committee continues buy books for NAMC library.

**DARI PROJECT:** Anahita Faroodi continues to research the Dari language and an additional \$500 was proposed and \$1000.00 was allotted to the Dari Language project.

**ZTFE Manuscript Restoration: Malcolm Deboo\*:** This continues to be an expensive project as the manuscripts need to be moved for restoration. Funds are needed to move these manuscripts so that the restoration can be applied. \$4000 was needed for one book and there are 7-9 such manuscripts. A proposal for \$2000 by Fezana was approved towards Malcolm's travel assistance for the manuscripts restoration project and to make a presentation at the NA Congress.

**Heritage Building Restorations: Firdosh Mehta;** \$2000 was requested for heritage building restorations and unanimously approved. This will be towards the purchase of equipment needed to restore the sites.

**3000<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations- Dolly Dastoor-** thanked Homi Gandhi and Behram Pastakia for their active involvement in this historical event and also to Aban Rustomji, who was responsible for putting this program together. A complete chronological list of events is available on Fezana website, [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org). By UNESCO throwing the spotlight on 3000<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Zoroastrian Culture, it has generated a cascade of events in North America and around the world. In many events public officials attended and spoke e.g. the Commissioner for Immigrant Affairs in New York, the Ambassador of Tajikistan to the UN, the District Attorney General of Orange County, representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tehran, and in India, the Prime Minister himself, Government Minister and Legislators in Alberta. These celebrations gave the community a high profile in the US Congress, the White House, major universities, and Think Tanks across the country. Statements were made by the head of a country like India, and by important government officials in North America, creating awareness for and of the community.

A PowerPoint presentation of all the activities from around the world will be displayed at the upcoming Congress in San Francisco.

**Strategic Planning – Dolly Dastoor:** What was suggested in 1995 is now carried on. Need to move on and get the buy in from all communities is needed. What needs to be done now is to modify the infrastructure, empower the Fezana officers to undertake this project and hold them accountable for the progress.

Fezana member associations need to embrace the strategic objectives of:

- Nurture the NA Zarathushti community towards health, wealth and happiness;
- Create the ambience that promotes a sense on belonging amongst all in the community
- Facilitate the growth of the Zarathushti community
- Increase the awareness of the Zarathushtis in the community at large in NA and the world.

**CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS Firdosh Mehta:** The intent of the resolution was to separate the Constitution into Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. The extension of time by 30 days twice over the initial 90 days from the date sent out, was confusing to members. Since the needed 75% votes for passing the amendment were not received the Resolution failed. The committee explained the structure of the separation and the need to facilitate some changes of unsubstantial nature by virtue of simple majority. The committee was requested by the Board to solicit further comments and to re-send the separation resolution.

**WORLD BODY: Farrokh Mistree:** The draft of the World Body – Principles of operation, IZO and MOU was discussed at length by all present. The sense of the meeting was to approve the Draft as presented to empower Firdosh to attend July 04, World Body meeting in London UK.

**The next AGM** will be held in Pittsburgh, PA over the 2005 Memorial Day weekend.

Report prepared by Rita Engineer—FEZANA Secretary - 25 July 2004