

VISION



Winter 2004 Edition

Warm Wishes to All

We wish you and your families a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. May our community throughout the world be united as one as we celebrate good times yet remember those less fortunate around us who are suffering daily. May your lives be filled with peace, love, strength and success in 2004.

Best Wishes,
OZCF Board of Directors

OZCF Collects Donations for Iran Earthquake Relief

The massive earthquake that hit Bam on Friday December 26th has destroyed the ancient Silk Road city of Bam in southeast Iran. Over 80% of Bam, a popular tourist spot with a historic citadel and other centuries-old buildings, was levelled. This disastrous event has killed over 35,000 people, injured 30,000, and left 10,000 homeless. It is feared that these figures could be higher.

Along with humanitarian aid coming from all directions, OZCF has sent out a cheque of \$5,000.00 which was collected within 24 hours.

This is a plea to collect more donations to help survivors who "... don't have anything, just our bare hands." Please send your cheques payable to OZCF, Iran Earthquake Relief Fund and mail to 4244 Taffey Crescent, Mississauga, On. L5L 2J2

Bazaar, Craft and Bake

November 30th, 2003 found many of us enjoying the hustle and bustle of a very busy and successful Bazaar. With 27 vendor's tables, six of our own tables for Poinsettias and gently used or new goods, the sale of samosas, hotdogs, burgers and croissants as well as the myriad of eye pleasing goodies and scrumptious baked goods, the bazaar generated nearly \$5,000. There was a continuous flow of buyers throughout the day (over 300) and plenty of choices to make.

From the beautiful paintings and tiles to the "stained glass" work on mirrors, from the gift baskets to the flower arrangements, Tupperware to Avon, spices and pickles, and jewelry to hand made cards and calendars, there was something for everyone. Looks like next year the committee will have to find larger premises! All the vendors have expressed a desire to return next year. Here's to another highly successful and well organized event.

New Year Dinner Dance

The OZCF rang in the new year at the Clarkson Community Centre. It was a fun-filled evening attended by over 150 people. As per one of our community members, "... it was an enjoyable and cozy evening. Most of us danced all night long. Thank you for keeping it affordable for our family of five and for new comers like ourselves". The delicious food was catered by Mr. Unwalla, a newcomer himself.

Up-Coming Events

Saturday, January 31, 2004 at 7pm

Lecture series at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), illustrating the influence of Zoroastrianism through the ages, with a display of Zoroastrian artefacts, as a continuation of the UNESCO series of events.

The Entertainment Committee is in the process of finalizing the dates for the Jamshedi Navroze Jashan in March, the Annual Picnic in July, the Shehenshahi New Year in August, and the Black Tie Gala Event in October. Please look for these dates in our next Newsletter.

Ontario Zoroastrians Celebrate 3000 Years of Zoroastrian Culture

To commemorate the year 2003 as the 3000th anniversary of Zoroastrian culture as declared by UNESCO, Zarathushtis of Ontario presented an evening showcasing Zoroastrianism to a packed 530 seat capacity audience at Markham Theatre in Toronto on Friday November 28, 2003. This evening, sponsored by the ZSO was put together with the combined effort of 132 individuals of all ages. The show's director Ervad Kerman Katrak and Producer Roshan Davar would like to thank this mile long list of dedicated individuals without whom this success would not have been possible. The event was gracefully attended by Honourable Mr. Derek Lee, MP from Scarborough Rouge River and Honourable Mr. Jim Karygiannis, M.P from Scarborough-Agincourt.

More than 100 performers, ranging from ages 4 to 85 gave their best performances with an array of songs, dances, and skits based on Prophet Zarathushtra's teachings.

Some of the highlights of the 17 items included:

Ava-ye-javedan (the eternal sound) A professional group of musicians performing melodies of "Radif" of Iranian Classical Music from "Avaz-e Dashti" in a traditional structure with a contemporary approach

The Zardushtin Umudi, (Silk Road Chamber Orchestra of ancient, modern folklore music from Zoroastrian times) and the "Sari Gelin" Dance, Tabriz Azerbaijanian-Music and Dance Ensemble

Very small children singing "I am proud to be a Zarathushti", "Who made the sky" and other religious songs

The unique philosophy and message of Zarathushtra based on a Question and Answer format

The recitation of "The word of Zarathushtra" from the Gathas by 15 priests of varying ages dressed in their white priestly attire

The Narration of King Cyrus of Persia: Bringing the Zoroastrian Doctrine to Life

The well received skit on how Zarathushtis were welcomed on the Indian soil in Sanjan

There were displays of Zarathushti artifacts, a continuous running of a video in the lobby on "Zoroastrians", a power point presentation on "Who were the Zoroastrians" depicting famous Iranian and Parsi Zarathushtis, land mark achievements, some history, archeological findings.

An attractive program booklet with a specially prepared booklet "Zoroastrian Religion, Beliefs, Culture and Ceremonies" marked the occasion.

The audience also had a taste of typical Zoroastrian snacks

A special thanks goes to all our youth who participated in making this a proud moment.



Zoroastrian Children's Day - a historic event of epic proportions

Zoroastrian Children's Day was held on Sunday November 23rd 2003 at Albless Baug in Bombay. This mega event was the brainchild of Kyoshi Shihan Vispy Kapadiawho approached ZOSTA with this idea. The Zoroastrian Student Teacher Association, in its 25th year, was originally formed to bring students of various schools of Mumbai for the purpose of encouraging cultural progress, research in the doctrines of Zoroastrianism and recognize academic achievements.

The Children's Day was a runaway success congregating over 900 Zoroastrian students from 35 schools. While a galaxy of priests and scholars shared gems of wisdom, comedians like Dinyar Contractor did humorous skits and plays with children. The evening reached its zenith with 100 children dancing with the famous Shiamak Davar electrifying the stage with positive energy.

There was no entrance charge for this event. Sumptuous meals were served during the 8 hour long event. Lavish gifts were given to every child and 25 buses were hired to safely ferry the children to and from even the remotest part of the city. All this was done with no handouts, no donations from within nor from overseas.

It was a day to be remembered by all. The hard work by a band of volunteers was truly commendable. Due to the tremendous success, the organizers have been requested to make this an annual event.



Medics in Sri Lanka

"Home is where the heart is" and "charity begins at home." Well Jasmine Jasavala, once again, reminds us that these adages are still applicable in this day and age. Her charity is certainly coming from the heart and she is reminding us that Parsees have long been known for their charitable works.

Jasmine Jasavala has recently returned from Sri Lanka where she volunteered to teach emergency medical techniques and help reconstruct a school in one of the villages.

Once again, City TV's Gord Martineau chronicled the mission. Last year Jasmine went on a similar mission to Cambodia.

These trips to poorer third world villages are particularly gratifying when witnessing the coming together of two people from opposite sides of the warring factions that exist in Sri Lanka.

"There was one fellow from the Sri Lankan Army and we paired him up with one of the Tamil medics. Right there was the peace process being demonstrated and by the end of the session they were exchanging addresses with each other."

"..... We live in the part of the world where one only reads about it in the local newspaper and T.V. coverage. To actually stand among the ruins is a whole different ball game. I keep thanking my lucky stars that I have had the opportunity to do this now."

Jasmine would like to see this project expand and include medics from all over the world who would be willing to participate and maybe sponsor a village or city in the third world.

Of course it would be impossible for a Parsee to visit any part of India and not visit a place of worship! While in Colombo Jasmine visited an atash dadgha built in 1927.

There, she met with former Torontonians, Soli and Dina Panthakee, who hold jashans once a month for the 40 Parsees living in and around Colombo.

As a point of interest, the Finance Minister also happens to be a Parsee-a member of the very influential Choksey family.

Good Luck on your next adventure Jasmine and keep up the wonderful work.

Achievement

Congratulations!

Farishteh, daughter of Meher and Jal Panthaky graduated from Cawthra Park Secondary School with a host of awards.

The Ontario Scholar, Gold Shield, Gold Medallion, A.A. Pleasance Arts Awards (awarded to students showing exceptional leadership role in arts programs) Post Secondary Scholarship (awarded to student on the basis of music and academic achievement, extra curricular involvement).

Farishteh has also received a Scholarship from University of Toronto where she is pursuing her career in teaching Music. Well done!

Gratitude

Khushnuma and Hoshedar Bamboat together with the Mirza family would like to thank the whole community for the two Hum Bandagis held for our daughter Sanaya born on Oct. 4th. Since then Sanaya has received a liver transplant from a child donor on Nov. 4th. The operation was 10 hours long.

We acknowledge the care and remarkable talents of all the Doctors, Nurses and the professional staff of the Sick Children Hospital. Our special Thanks to all the Mobeds and our friends who have been a constant source of strength and support to us in this time of crisis, specially Dr. Katy Driver for being there for us at any hour of the day.

May Ahura Mazda through all our prayers continue to watch over Sanaya as she struggles through the many post operation problems. Sanaya is the smallest baby in the world at 5 lbs. to have received a liver transplant.

The parents of the donor child have given hope to 2 other very sick children through their noble gift. May Ahura Mazda bless them and all of us. Thank you all for your thoughts and prayers." Putli Mirza





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Help the OZCF save on postage.

Make this vision a reality

Your donations are tax free.

Please send your donations to OZCF, 4244 Taffey Cres., Miss., ON, L5L 2J2 or speak to one of our directors.

Thank-you for your generosity.

For more information visit ozcf.com

Obituaries

"Dolat Rustom Sethna, mother of Yasmin Darius Contractor and grandmother of Percy and Nazneen Contractor passed away on October 30th, 2003 in Ahmedabad, India".

Bomi Rustomji Bulsara father of Farokh Bulsara , better known as Freddie Mercury passed away in England on December 28th, leaving his wife Jer and daughter Kashmira and family.

Shirinbai Nariman Dastoor, wife of Late Ervad Nariman Jamshedji Dastoor, mother of Phiroz Dastoor, Perin Pardiwala, Noshir Dastoor, Sheroo Bhatena and Kety Mirza, and mother-in-law of Dolly Dastoor, Soli Pardiwala, Sarosh Dastoor, Minoo Bhatena and Freddy Mirza, grandmother of Farhad, Ervad Zubin, Natasha, Zenobia; Shenaz; Tanaz, Neville, Merzi, Dinaz, Anahita, Roxanna and Ervad Farzad; and great-grand-mother of Jehan and Zane, Roxanna, Aiden, Rachel, and Darius, passed away on Tuesday November 25th, 2003, Roz Amardad, Mah Tir 1373 YZ. May her dear soul rest in eternal peace and may Ahura Mazda give the bereaved family strength to bear the irreparable loss.

Appreciation

Dolly and Phiroz Dastoor, Soli and Perin Pardiwala, Sarosh and Noshir Dastoor, Sheroo and Minoo Bhatena and Kety and Freddy Mirza, and their children and grandchildren, would like to thank all their friends for their love, caring and sympathy expressed during their time of grief. Our sincere appreciation to Ervads Nozar Kotwal, Noshir Mirza and Zubin Dastoor for their support and religious services and to the community and to the OZCF and the telephone committee for their spontaneous response to the request from the family members to inform the community.