

ONTARIO ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

VISION

February 2008

Up-Coming Events

February 17th, 2008
Family Fun Day

March 21st, 2008
Jamshedi Navroze
Function

May 31st, 2008
Parsi Natak
Details to Follow

Launching Zoroastrian YellowPages for 2008

Place an ad in the yellowpages to grow your business. For details on price and ad placement categories call Rayo Irani 416-844-0932 or email berges_9@sympatico.ca

Newsletter Committee

Roshan Byramjee, Michelle Patel,
Rayomand Patel, Charis Wania.
Board Liaison: Hanoz Kapadia

Entertainment Committee

Kashmira Laher (Chair), Armaity
Anandasagar, Niloufer Bhesania,
Zarina Gutta, Ferzin Bulsara, Hanoz
Kapadia, Natasha Kharwanwalla,
Fred Laher, Niloufer Mavalvala,
Benifer Patel, Coomi Sorabji

Message from our President

Happy New Year to all our members! As we enter 2008, I look forward to another successful year for the OZCF. There are certainly many exciting things being planned including the renovation, activities for members of all ages to come out and enjoy and fundraising events like the Natak and Gala. Be sure to check the website often to stay on top of this very full calendar. And make sure your membership fees are paid up so that you continue to receive your newsletter and autodialer messages.

I look forward to seeing all of you soon.

Niloufer Bhesania,
President

Building Committee Update

The Building Committee is in the process of evaluating tenders received from a number of contractors. Contractors asked for an extension to the closing date, which was granted, as they are very busy in this heated construction market. The town has reviewed our Minor Site Plan Approval application and we have provided some more information requested around the fire pond and other items. This approval is now ready and awaits provincial approval as outlined below.

Background:

The Site Plan Approval to be issued by the town is now awaiting provincial approval for these lands to be converted from an agricultural designation to other urban uses that permit development. As the membership will recall, the general North Oakville development area, including our property, has been the subject of amendments to the Region of Halton Official Plan to incorporate the lands into the "urban area" as required by the Province in its future growth plan. This required amendments to the Oakville Official Plan including secondary plans for urban uses. This was accomplished in mid 2007 to the satisfaction of the province, town, region and developers. Through this process our land is designated Transitional Land that enables OZCF to perform the activities in our vision. The old Provincial regulations that permit only agricultural uses in these areas is therefore no longer relevant.

In large scale planning changes such as the town of Oakville and Region of Halton have undertaken, there are various pieces of legislation and policies that need to be amended. Our proposed development is moving at a somewhat faster pace than the town and province anticipated. Since ours is one of the first developments on the site, and the town and province have both approved the new Official Plan and land designations for all of the North Oakville lands, we and the town have asked the province to move quickly on approving the necessary amendments required to permit development. We met with the Mayor and MPP who are in support of our development plan and we are pleased to report that the town received a review letter from the province requesting information about our proposal to which the Town has responded positively with no issues. The province will now commence undertaking the amendment to the regulation which is foreseen to occur by February end. As soon as the province amends the land designation, the town will issue the Site Plan Approval. The Building Permit application will be reviewed and issued shortly thereafter and construction can commence.

With the delay in the tender process, busy schedule of contractors and wait for provincial amendment, there will be a delay in construction start. As we are now in the middle of the winter season, the new timeline will see anticipated start of construction in mid March. While these planning activities have been going on we have been able to talk to a number of Zoroastrian sub-contractors who are willing to perform specific skilled work at reduced cost to us. We have spoken to the preferred building contractor to replace these items in their quote with our own sub-contractor pricing, which they are willing to do, resulting in an overall discounted price to us. The Board of Directors and building committee will keep you informed of progress.

Elections for the Board of Directors

Do you have a strong sense of commitment to the goals of the OZCF? Do you have personal time that you would like to use to benefit your community? Are you able to relate well to and work well with people? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are a good candidate for the Board of Directors of the OZCF.

We are looking for a variety of skill sets on the Board – mobeds, accountants and lawyers, fundraising experience, planning events, construction/building experience.

Every 2 years, a maximum of 13 members are elected to the Board of Directors (“the Board”) by the membership. The next election will take place at the AGM in the summer of 2008. These Board members then elect the 4 officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) from the 13 Directors.

If you are interested in being elected to the Board, please contact any Board member and let them know. Official nomination forms will be sent out prior to the AGM as specified in the By-Laws.

Children’s Religion Classes - 2008

Please note that starting January 20, students that are from the western GTA are able to attend religious classes in Mississauga!

Regularly scheduled classes for children who have opted for classes in Mississauga will now attend JOHN FRASER SECONDARY SCHOOL (2665 Erin Centre Blvd. near Erin Mills Town Centre, at Erin Centre and Glen Erin Drive).

NEW CLASS TIMES ARE 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. on the following dates:

- February 10
- February 24
- March 30
- April 20 – JOINT SESSION AT THE MGDM
- May 4
- May 17 and 18 – Graduation Class Retreat Camp
- May 25
- June 15 - JOINT SESSION AT THE MGDM

2008 Religious Events Calendar

Date:	Time:	Event:
March 15-19	All Day	Muktad (F)
March 20	All Day	Avardadsal Gah
March 21st	7:00pm	Navrooz
March 26th	7:00pm	Khordadsal (F)
April 8th	7:00pm	Farvardegan (F)
May 4th	3:00pm	Maidhyozarem Ghambar(F)
May 26th	7:00pm	Zarthost-no-Diso (S)
July 1st	3:00pm	Maidhyoshem Ghambar (F)
Aug 14-18	All Day	Muktad (S)
August 19th	7:00pm	Navroz (S)
August 24th	11:00am	Khordadsal (S)
September 6th	11:00am	Farvardegan (S)
September 14th	3:00pm	Paitishahem Ghambar (F)
October 12th	3:00pm	Ayathrem Ghambar (F)
December 26th	11:00am	Zarthost-no-Diso (F)
January 1st 2009	3:00pm	Maidhyarem Ghambar (F)

Fun Skate 2008

We were barely a few days into the New Year before the year’s first event got under way. A group of over 30 “youngsters” and parents faced off at the Meadowvale Four Rinks for some skating and shinny.

While some bladed ovals around the rink, others were taking their first steps and strides. Of course, with many hockey enthusiasts in attendance, a game was inevitable, be it amongst experienced players or those holding a stick for the very first time.

Well done to Rayomand Irani, Rumi Jasavala and the Sports Committee for stick-handling through a busy holiday season to arrange the event and scoring with an enjoyable day.



Interfaith Youth Festival

On November 20, 2007 the Interfaith Council of Halton together with the Halton Police hosted the 3rd Interfaith Fair at Iroquois Ridge High School in Oakville. The object of the Fair was to educate the children about different faiths and to promote tolerance & understanding. Nine different Faith Groups participated in the program and about 250 students attended the fair. Nozer Kotwal together with Nilofur Aga and Kermin Byramjee represented OZCF at the Zoroastrian booth. Our booth displayed the history, tenets and principles of Zoroastrianism, the Holy Days & the Navjote Ceremony pictures and write-ups. Two young students Anahita & Leena, who were coached by Nozer, presented at our booth to the students who arrived in groups of 10 to 12 and also answered any questions they had. Distribution of Good Thoughts, Good Words & Good Deeds Wrist Bands were, once again, the hot topic of the day. Feedback at the end of the day was very positive and the Council plans to continue holding similar fairs at various high schools in Halton & Peel in the future.



High school students from Halton and Peel Regions interested in taking part in similar interfaith presentations would be most welcome. It was obvious from this time's presentation that students at the school responded positively to the two young enthusiasts on our team. It is also a great way to earn extra high school volunteer hours. Contact Nozer Kotwal @ 905-820-0461 if you would like any information regarding future events.

Children's Holiday Party

The OZCF Children's party finally held on Dec 23, 2007 was a rousing success!! There were crafts and games carefully selected for all the children to do according to their age groups. The hall at the Burnhamthorpe Community Centre was transformed into a Christmas Wonderland thanks to the efforts of all our volunteers. Coomi Sorabji and Pervin Katila were our greeters for the evening as they welcomed the children and directed them to their craft tables as per their groups.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to be able to witness the talent and creativity of all our children as they completed the various crafts that were to be done. We even had a few enterprising youngsters who completed their own craft and proceeded to the other tables to show their peers how the other crafts were done.

As soon as the crafts were completed we moved on to the fun and games. Santa made his entrance to excited shrieks and delighted welcomes from the children. He even helped them play the Santa Left Right Game.

Pizza, Doughnuts, Christmas Cookies, Chips and Plenty of Juice were served to all who attended with seconds and thirds to spare. At this point it seemed as though the accompanying parents were having just as much fun as the children.

At the end of the function we had all the children singing Christmas carols as Santa handed out not just lovely gifts but also their loot stocking full of goodies. The look of absolute pleasure on the faces of the children as they accepted these was a wonder to behold.

Thank you to all the children and parents who participated. A special Thank you to Ferzin and Hanoz Kapadia for donating the gifts for the children, and an even bigger Thank You to all our volunteers, Niloufer Bhesania, Benifer and Hozhi Patel and their sons, Zarina and Arish Gutta and their son, Pervin & Khurshed Katila and their daughters, our Santa Claus (Farrokh Pavri) for all his help and especially for his kind donation of the Pizza for the event, Coomi Sorabji for her absolute dedication and focus on welcoming the children. Fred and Kashmira Laher for their hard work and an extra special thank you to Armaity Anandasagar for all her efforts and dedication and guidance. If ever there was an award for a volunteer who went the extra mile, she would win it hands down.

Our sincere gratitude to all those who worked so hard and so long to make this party a success!! Here's looking forward to many more such events from the OZCF Entertainment Committee....



New Year's Eve 2007

Always a cause for celebration, New Year's Eve 2007 was no exception. With their anticipation and optimism of the New Year, Zoroastrians fêted the final hours of 2007 and rang in 2008 with good cheer.

The venue at the Claireport Place Banquet and Convention Centre provided a cozy setting for the revelers (many of them from the States). With their raffle tickets bought, their resolutions for the coming year made and their palates satisfied, disc jockey Richie D'Souza played the popular numbers to ensure the dance floor remained packed.

Congratulations to the organizers, Mehroo Chothia, Khushnuma Doctor, Katy Driver, Morvarid Fereidooni, Anahita Daryushnejad, Lily Kotwal and Gulrukh Patel for collaborating to present an enjoyable evening.

As the crowd adorned themselves with hats and tiaras, bazookas and bracelets, with glasses teeming full of champagne, the final seconds of 2007 whittled away and Auld Lang Sne signaled the arrival of 2008.

The OZCF wishes the entire community a healthy and prosperous 2008.



Fundraising - OZCF Partners Program New Member

Percy Gyara – "Let me help you get the right mortgage at the best possible rate your credit can buy."

Northwood Mortgage Ltd. is one of the largest brokerages in the GTA. Our well-established relationships with over 100 lenders – including Canada's four major banks – allows us to guarantee you the best possible mortgage rates.

Be sure to check out the OZCF website and see who all our partners are. When you give them business you are giving to the OZCF.

Yalda Festival is the Root of Christmas Tree Decorating

While the Christians celebrate Christmas, the Iranians, particularly Zarthushtis celebrate one of their most ancient celebrations, called Yalda, which means Birth. Yalda is the night of Mehr or Mithra's birth. This is traced to the primal concept of Light and Good, against Darkness and Evil in the ancient Iranian religion. From this day forward, Light triumphs as the days grow longer and give more light. When Mithraism spread to ancient civilised world from Iran, Dec 21st was celebrated as Mithra's birthday. But in the 4th century AD because of some errors in counting the Leap Year, the birthday of Mithra shifted to Dec 25th. Until that time the birthday of Jesus Christ was celebrated on Jan 6th. But the religion of most of the Romans and the people of many of the European countries was still Mithraism.

When Christianity spread, the priests could not stop the practice of celebrating Mithra's birthday on Dec 25th, so they declared this day as Jesus's birthday which is still so. In ancient Persia, Yalda festivities were symbolized by the evergreen tree. Young girls wrapped their wishes in silk cloth and hung them on the tree. Eventually, it became a custom to place presents/gifts under the evergreen tree. As late as the 18th century a German learnt of the Yalda tree and created what we now know as the Christmas tree.

For decades the entire Iranian nation, particularly Zarthushtis, celebrate Yalda more as the night of the rebirth of the "Sun" than connect it with the birth of Jesus.

Operation Eyesight - Supported By Members of the OZCF

Operation Eyesight is implementing a Trachoma Control Project in the Narok District targeted at approx 30% of the population currently infected with Trachoma. The project involves the implementation and coordination of the WHO-endorsed SAFE strategy (Surgery, Antibiotics, Face-washing and Environmental Infrastructure), as well as the provision of 51 deep water wells. Poverty and the lack of water are major problems in the district. Water is one of the most critical elements of this project. The provision of clean water is the key to not only eliminating trachoma, but also improving infant mortality rates, reducing malaria, reducing upper respiratory tract infections, mal-nutrition, and improving school attendance. As Operation Eyesight works alongside with the Ministry of Health in Narok and various other government and non-government agencies, many improvements have already started to take place. Two pilot borehole sites have been surveyed and drilled in the last few months and the local community is being education on how to maintain the wells through local well management committees. There are several other improvements taking place anywhere from a mass antibiotic distribution last September to the training of surgeons, and the training of health workers and community members in the behavior change component of the program (face-washing, and hygiene education. Thank you for supporting the Narok District Trachoma Program to help people living in poverty and threatened by blindness.

Fezana News

NEW YORK, Dec. 28, 2007 – FEZANA, the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America, today announced Zoroastrian community leaders to participate at the 52nd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Conference Feb. 25 – March 7, 2008, at UN headquarters in New York. More than 2,000 representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) from over 80 countries are expected to attend and participate in roundtable, panel and workshop discussion during the two week event. The theme of the conference is "Financing for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women."

The Zoroastrian delegation will be represented by Mantreh Atashband, Afreed Mistry and Shekufeh Zonji (all of Toronto), Homi D. Gandhi (Glen Rock, NJ), Farah Minwalla (New York City), Sanaya Nawaz and Tahmoures Hormozdyan (Vienna, Va.) Behram Pastakia (Bethesda, Md.) and Dolly Dastoor (Montreal). Dastoor also will be at the United Nations on behalf of Zonta International, a global organization of executives and professionals working together to advance the status of women worldwide, and is the organization's incoming International Chair for the Service Committee of the 2008-2010 biennium. FEZANA is a UN NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The CSW conference integrates into its program a review of the critical areas of concern from the Beijing Platform of Action and to develop its main role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities. The CSW brings forth new approaches to issues affecting equality between men and women. For more information on the 52nd CSW please visit: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/index.html>. For more information on Zonta International please visit: <http://www.zonta.org>.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Dinaz Dadyburjor** on being selected by the Women's Executive Network (WXN) as one of the "Top 100 most powerful women in Canada". The Top 100 award is given to 100 exceptional and influential women in Canada each year in eight categories and all fields of endeavour. This award was given to Dinaz at public function held at Metro Convention Centre, Toronto on November 21st, 2007.

Dinaz, a Senior Vice-President at Brookfield Asset Management Inc., won the award in the Corporate category.

Dinaz completed her graduation from Miami, U.S.A. and is a Chartered Accountant by profession. She is daughter of Sheroo and Minoo Bhathena and is married to Khush Dadyburjor. She is mother of Darius and Cyrus.

We are proud of Dinaz, who received this recognition at our country's leading organization (WXN) of executive - minded women in work place with membership of 10,000+ members.

We applaud you Dinaz and wish you, good luck.

Congratulations to **Xerxes Wania**, President and CEO of Sidense. Sidense was selected as one of two finalists at the 2007 IRAP Regional Innovation Award that was presented on behalf of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) and the National Research Council of Canada (NRC-IRAP) in December 2007 at Queens Park. The award for new technology recognizes innovative excellence in the development, adoption, and application of new technology in processes or products in Ontario. Sidense has designed and developed a new type of memory that is smaller, faster and low cost to manufacture. Sidense joins an elite group of companies that have provided an outstanding contribution to the growth of new manufacturing technologies and enhanced the intellectual property in Canada.

Congratulations to **Phil Sidhwa** (apro Phil) on his promotion as President of Terratec Environment Ltd. Way to go Phil.

Congratulations to all three of you and we wish you much more success in the future.



The Year In Review

2007 saw many successes for the OZCF as well as being a year of moving forward with our goals to build a more suitable hall on the property. As 2006 ended the New Year was brought in at a joint OZCF/ZSO NYE function followed by a highly successful Family Fun Day and the annual Black Tie Gala. Navroze was celebrated with the Seniors Choir singing traditional Zoroastrian songs and a wonderful function. The OZCF held it's first Youth Dance in March and it was well received by our younger generation. In May the OZCF presented Laadakwai a dance drama in English performed by Navrang Academy and a Parsee youth playing the lead role. The ever popular Hindi Music night, enjoyed by the community, was also held in May. After a highly successful North American Congress we held an open house barbeque on July 2nd for all the visitors attending the congress and displayed plans of the future construction of our community centre and place of worship on picture boards for all to view. Over 500 people came to the event. The sold out YVP show brought July to an end with the talents of our amazing youth wowing the packed theatre. The Board shared plans for the updating of the "garage" to make it a usable congregation hall at the EAGM and it was voted by the members to go ahead with the dispensing of funds to start the renovations in 2008. After the voting was over the festival of the annual Lamb Roast Picnic began. Another successful camp Z-Rock was held on the property in August. October was celebrated with a Halloween party for the children (and their sporting parents who also dressed for the occasion). The year ended with a wonderful Christmas party for the children and the New Years Eve Dinner and dance.



Special Offer for Youth - WZC 2009

On behalf of the Organizing Team of WZC 2009, it gives me great pleasure in informing you all, that a special registration rate of US\$ 300/- will be offered to Youth attending the 4th WZYC in Australia, for registering themselves for the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress taking place in Dubai from 28th December to 31st December 2009.

The offer is valid for a limited period (27th December 2008 to 3rd Jan 2009) and will be applicable to age group 18 to 35 years. The registration fee will cover free entry/access to all sessions, coffees/teas, lunches, dinners and cultural programs.

The good news is - the first 11 registrants will pay a sum of US\$ 200/- only. The balance amount of US\$100/- will be contributed by the organizers of the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress, 2009 as a gesture of goodwill.

Youth may contact Percy and Zarine Tantra, the World Zoroastrian Congress Representatives, from Dubai at the University of Bal-larat, Vic. Australia to complete the registration formalities and pay by cash.

We request you to kindly cascade this information to all friends and families in your region so that this excellent offer can be availed by the youth who are attending the 4th WZYC in Australia.

Articles and news are welcome from everyone and will be put in the newsletter at the discretion of the committee. Please send your articles to Michelle Patel at ron.michelle@rogers.com or Charis Wania at 2cxw@rogers.com

Submissions for the next newsletter must be received by **February 15th, 2008**. If you wish to place an advertisement please send all artwork to Roshan Byramjee by February 25th, 2008.

Membership Fees

It's that time of the year. Be sure to renew your fees

The membership fee is for the term of one year from January 1 to December 31st.

New members joining after November 1st can start paying for the following year.

Newcomers to Ontario can be exempt from the membership on the year of arrival.

Senior	\$15	per person - age 65 and over
Family	\$50	Family of adult couple and their children under age 18
Single	\$30	per individual adult person
Students	\$10	Full Time Student - age 18 – 25 years old

Help Wanted!

If you would like to read the newsletter on-line rather than receive it via regular mail, please contact any member of the newsletter committee. Help the OZCF save on postage.

Advertising Rates

We will only be putting ads into the Black and White issues of the newsletter. There will be four B/W issues per year and two colour issues. Below are the new advertising rates for 2008.

\$75 per full page

\$45 per half page

\$25 per quarter page

For more information please email Roshan Byramjee at zbyramjee@cogeco.ca

Births

Ella Kapadia, was born November 12th, 2007 in Mississauga to proud first time parents Hanoz and Ferzin Kapadia. The proud Grandparents are Viraf and Pouru Kapadia and Sarosh and Dilnavaz Bulsara.

We congratulate the new parents and grandparents and we welcome Ella to the world.

Obituaries

Kekie Sorab Bulsara, father of Suman, Adi, Jehaangir and Havovi succumbed to cancer and related illnesses on January 13, 2008 in Bombay, India. Kekie was born July 12th, 1931 in East Africa. He came to Canada with his wife Freny and four children and settled in Ottawa.

"While dad was debilitated by this disease during the last 18 months, it is important to remember that he put a lot of life, joviality and excitement into the lives of those around him for most of his life. He had a bit of a wild spirit about him starting from his adventurous days in Africa, and that spirit remained young, optimistic, and forward thinking to the very last days. He will be missed by his children, grandchildren, family and friends." (Jehaangir Bulsara)

Sam Batliwalla, husband of the late Roshan Batliwalla and father to Neville Batliwalla, Daraius Batliwalla and Veera Bharucha passed away January 8, 2008.

Our prayers and condolences got out to the families. May Ahura Mazda give them the strength to endure their loss.

Be Sure to Check This Out!

It gives ZYNA great pleasure to present to you the latest initiative in community building - we like to call it ZynaTalk.

Please check out www.ZynaTalk.Blogspot.com right now and find out what the latest talk is all about.

And while you're there, be sure to drop a line or two - it's easy and you don't have to be a member to do so!!

Donations are always welcomed.

Donations are tax deductible.

Make this Vision a Reality.

For more Info go to **www.OZCF.com**