

Vision

OZCF Newsletter
March 2019

In Perspective Drawing

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OUR AFFILIATES

Member of



We support



Home of



100th Oakville Zoroastrian Scouts Group

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

March is the month I most look forward to and anticipate as we emerge from the gloomy and cold weather and look forward to longer, warmer and brighter days of spring and summer.

We will be celebrating Jamshedi Navroze heralding New Year 1388 in the Fasli calendar. There will be a Jashan and dinner to follow at the ZRCC on the 21st. Please give your names if you plan on staying for dinner. Whilst this is the official celebration, we get to fête the New Year on a grander scale at the Navroze & Natak function on Saturday March 23rd at Apollo Convention Centre.

There are some really exciting events lined up during the spring/summer months such as the Bollywood Music Night in April and Fashion Blast 2 Fundraiser in July, you are encouraged to come out with your families and friends and enjoy what we have to offer.

In July our youth are planning to attend the 2019 Youth Congress. The OZCF has generously offered a subsidy along with FEZANA in order to reduce individual costs to attend the 2019 Youth Congress. See further details in the newsletter.

For members who have yet not paid their membership renewal dues, I request you to kindly do it soon. You may set up direct deposit payment so that your membership self-renews annually. Forms are available online. Alternatively, pay online by visiting the OZCF Website www.ozcf.com.

As you may have heard the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) will be inaugurating their Atash Kadeh in Houston this month. OZCF congratulates ZAH and all Zarathusthis in the Houston area and joins them in celebrating this auspicious occasion.

Finally as always, I ask that you pray for and keep within your thoughts, those members of our community who are currently ailing. May Ahura Mazda assist them to a speedy recovery.

Natrawala

Neville Patrawala

President

Email: president@ozcf.com

Cell: (416)-846-0785

The OZCF prayer room and facility is not open regularly. For personal requests, you may contact the following:

Prayer Room Access

Nozer Kotwal 905-820 0461

nskotwal1@gmail.com

Hall Rentals

Cyrus Gazdar 647-294 6462

cygazdar@yahoo.ca

ZRCC Coordinator

Armaity Anandasagar 905-271

0366 armaity.a@gmail.com

OZCF President

Neville Patrawala 416-846-0785

president@ozcf.com

Webmaster & Facilities

Rumi Jasavala 647-885-1759

rumijas@hotmail.com

Need a Mobed

Our Mobeds are available to help in times of need to offer their guidance & services to the community. Please contact:

Bamji, Ervad Xerxes (905) 702-1034

Bulsara, Ervad Firdosh (905) 824-7692

Dastur, Ervad Mehbad (416) 917-9195

Dhabhar, Ervad Jamshed (905) 819-0089

Katrak, Ervad Kerman (647) 444-7359

Kotwal, Ervad Nozer (905) 820-0461

Madan, Ervad Xerxes (416) 254-0685

Panthaky, Ervad Jal (905) 568-4946

Zarolia, Ervad Kobad (647) 887-9213

ANNOUNCEMENT

PAPERLESS NEWSLETTERS AS OF 2020

In a bid to go paperless and reduce printing costs, members will be receiving all newsletters from January 2020 in online format. Members will have the newsletter blasted via email and a copy will also be available on the OZCF's website.

APPEAL

FEZANA have sent out an appeal for 62-year old Mumbai resident Dinyar Hansotia who is in urgent need of a liver transplant. For more information on how you can be of assistance, please click on the link below:

<https://mailchi.mp/fezana/medical-organ-donor-appeal?e=ded7ac5bdo>

THANK YOU

Thank you to all families and friends for your help, support and condolences given to us on the passing away of our beloved daughter Firoza Jussawalla, Malcolm's wife and mother to Zarina and Samira.

- Madan, Jussawalla Families and Freny Engineer

ZAH ATASH KADEH OPENING

The OZCF congratulates the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) as they prepare to celebrate the grand opening of their new Atash Kadeh during the Navroze period from March 20 – 24.

Ceremonies will include prayers, social events and lectures. A High Priest has been invited from India, along with many local and foreign dignitaries. The Atash Kadeh will be inclusive and open to all Zoroastrians, their family members, and friends.



The OZCF prayer room and facility is not open regularly. For personal requests, you may contact the following:

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Nozer Kotwal 905-820 0461
niskotwal1@gmail.com

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cygazdar@yahoo.ca

ZRCC Coordinator

Armaity Anandasagar 905-271 0366
armaity.a@gmail.com

OZCF President

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CORRECTION

The back cover of the calendar which our members would have received states that it was designed by Jehangir Hansotia. The calendar and all its art work was designed by Farshad Engineer and compiled by Jehangir Hansotia.

The OZCF regrets the error and thanks both Farshad and Jehangir for their contributions to design and compilation.

CAREGIVER ANNOUNCEMENT

A Caregiver is available for looking after seniors in their home. For further inquiries, please contact Khurshid Engineer at 416-520-8325.

OBITUARIES

Homi Gazdar passed away on January 12, 2019. Homi is survived by his wife Homai, his son Adil, his daughter-in-law Prochi and grandsons Rohaan and Cyrus.

Soshiro Masuda passed away in Chiyoda, Japan on February 28, 2019. Soshiro is survived by his wife Noriko, his son Hideki and family in Japan, and by his daughter Mikiyo Gazdar, son-in-law Cyrus and granddaughter Nina of Mississauga.

Our condolences to the families.


ADIL GAZDAR
905.670.5559
416.704.5499


info@arcprints.ca
www.arcprints.ca


6760 Davand Drive, Unit 10
Mississauga, ON L5T 2L9




SIGNS / BANNERS / WINDOW GRAPHICS / PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS
CHEQUES & BANKING SUPPLIES / REAL ESTATE PRINT & MAILING
WEDDING/NAVJOTE INVITATIONS / FLYERS / PRINT COPY DESIGN



THE FIRE WITHIN

PLACE OF WORSHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Our discussions with Conservation Halton are progressing, albeit slowly. We appreciate the community's support and patience as we proceed along this path. Once Conservation Halton is satisfied and upon completion of other small technical requirements, the rezoning "Hold" on our property will be released at Town of Oakville council. Application for Site Plan Approval is in progress and we are getting all the reports prepared that include engineering, hydrogeology, geotechnical, landscaping, stormwater management, parking lot grading and enlargement, fire pond requirements, outdoor lighting, and wheelchair, bicycle and electric car battery charging stations. Once this is completed, detailed building drawings will be submitted for final building approval. These drawings are also underway now.

This has been a long process as all agencies work together to find solutions that are outside the framework of their Official Plan. This has meant that we are conducting studies and submitting reports beyond the requirements of building just the Atash Kadeh, to ensure that the overall long term development of the site and surrounding areas is unimpeded. Dealing with bureaucracies of various agencies simultaneously has been a challenge at times, with project timing unfortunately taking much longer than anticipated. However, some of the technical studies being doing now would have been necessary later for future development of the site.

We will continue to keep the community informed of progress and arrange a meeting as soon as we are ready to confirm final details. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact philsidhwa@hotmail.com.

May Ahura Mazda always bless our community.

Phil Sidhwa

Chair, PWAC

ACKNOWLEDGING OCGA AND DELTA BINGO HALL (OAKVILLE)

Established in 1997, the Ontario Charitable Gaming Association (OCGA) is a not-for-profit representing their membership base of almost 2,000 Ontario charities and non-profits. The Ontario Charitable Gaming Association represents the interests of charities and not-for-profits that fund raise through charitable gaming. They provide support and advocacy for our members to sustain and grow charitable gaming as an important source of funding for services in communities across Ontario.

We (OZCF) are one of the charities who work at the Delta Bingo Hall in Oakville. OZCF has embarked on a challenging program since 2010. Four times a month you will see two of our members volunteering at the Oakville Delta Bingo Hall.

Our fruitful partnership with Delta Bingo Hall (Oakville) and OCGA allows us to raise approximately \$50,000 a year for OZCF, with various charities taking part in working at the bingo hall sharing a percentage of the net profits each month. The total is proportionately divided according to the number of sessions worked by each charity.

Money raised from bingo helps provides an important source of revenue. From this, we are able to deploy an allotted percentage against various expenses involved in operating of our congregational hall, various initiatives for seniors, youth, community, cultural and religious activities.

We are extremely proud of this partnership with Oakville Delta Bingo Hall and take this opportunity to acknowledge their support which benefits OZCF and other communities across Ontario.

One of our membership requirements is to help promote Delta Bingo Hall to our members who would like to participate in such activities. Delta Bingo Hall is located at 483 Speers Road, Oakville, Ontario, L6K 2G4. Further details regarding hours of operation and activities can be found by visiting their website: <https://deltabingo.com/our-locations/oakville/>

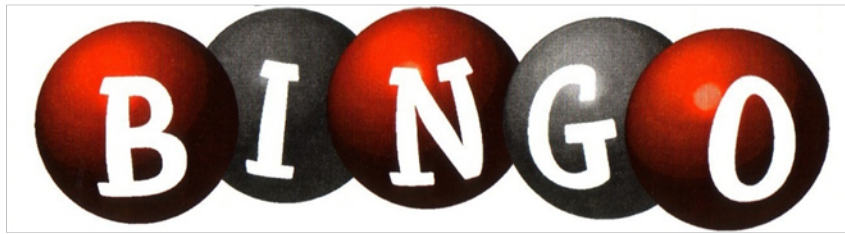
Did you know that when you visit or participate in charitable bingo, a portion of the proceeds support Ontario charities and non-profits, providing funding for various groups and initiatives such as hospitals and provincial health organizations, seniors groups, youth sports organizations, service clubs, legions, educational groups, special needs services, services for children and families, cultural and religious organizations and more. Since its inception \$228 million has been raised and distributed amongst charities to support the above mentioned activities through these efforts.

This partnership has immensely benefited our organization over the last 8+ years and we urge you to support the Oakville Delta Bingo Hall. On that front we are planning an event for members on April 20 2019.

We would be remiss if we did not mention our dedicated group of volunteers who sacrifice their weekends by working two Friday and two Saturday sessions per month.

A BIG THANK YOU to our dynamic Bingo Team comprising of: Armaity Anandasagar, Niloufer Bhesania, Kermin Byramjee, Perviz Bhungara, Firdosh Bulsara, Adil Bhesania, Armita Bhesania, Zarir Cooper, Tauzer Dalal, Kamal Driver, Silloo Dubash, Morvarid Fereidooni, Fred Golwalla, Dhun Gazdar, Yazdi Kharwanwalla, Yasmin Menon, Sid Menon, Jal & Meher Panthaky, Mahiyar & Rashne Panthaki, Benifer & Hози Patel, Neville Patrawala & Rusi Unvala.

OZCF Youth Committee Invites You to



Date: Saturday, April 20, 2019

Location: Delta Bingo and Gaming

483 Speers Rd, Oakville, ON L6K 2G4

Time: Starts at 12:30 pm sharp.

Cost: \$15 per person

Includes: Bingo Booklet of the same value + 1 free dabber and pop

Age: Must be 18 years or older

Contact person: Adil Bhesania at 647-985-0305 or email

dr.adil.bhesania@gmail.com or Ruzbeh Rohinton at

647-523-1537 or email ruzbehrohinton@ozcf.com

Please arrive by 11:30 am.





ONTARIO ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



Invites you to attend the

NAVROZE JASHAN AND DINNER

Date: March 21, 2019

Time: Jashan at 7 PM; Dinner at 8 PM

Adult: Members \$15

Non-Members \$20

Child: (5 to 12 yrs) Members \$10

Non-Members \$15

Venue: OZCF, 1187 Burnhamthorpe Road E., Oakville, ON

No charge for attending the Jashan only

Please send in your names and payment by March 17, 2019

Cheques payable to OZCF:

Mail to: Jeroo Madan

33-2550, Thomas Street, Mississauga, ON, L5M 5N8

Tel: (647) 339-0052

Email: jeroomadan@ozcf.com



OZCF SENIORS BEGIN THEIR NEW YOGA/ZUMBA SEASON

APRIL 2019

The OZCF Seniors Sub Committee Chairs Minnie Mirza, Gulrukh Patel and Kamal Driver would like to take this opportunity to thank all the wonderfully dedicated Volunteer Drivers and Donors who contributed their time and effort in providing rides and warm lunches on Wednesdays for our Seniors during the 2018 season.

We also like to thank our Board of Directors for the enthusiasm and support they have shown for our programs.

We now begin another year of activities in April 2019. We will not be seeing a few of our regular participants who are not able to attend due to advanced age and other health related issues. WE WELCOME ANY AND ALL NEW PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE TO COME AND SOCIALIZE WITH US. Even if you are unable to participate in some of the activities, do at least take the opportunity to get out of the house and laugh and mingle with us. If transportation is a problem please call Minnie Mirza at 905-825-8188 or email her at minnie.mirza@gmail .com to see how the problem can be addressed.

On behalf of the Seniors, the Chairs would like to request that you encourage the Seniors in your homes to attend our Wednesday sessions. We are already providing transportation for about half the seniors who attend and would like to help others as well.

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO INITIATE A NEW PROGRAM OF FRIENDLY VISITS TO THOSE OF OUR SENIORS WHO ARE HOUSE BOUND AND UNABLE TO LEAVE THEIR LIVING QUARTERS.

IF YOU HAVE THE TIME PLEASE VOLUNTEER YOUR HELP TO THE SENIORS OF OUR COMMUNITY EITHER BY DRIVING THEM TO OUR PROGRAMS OR HELPING TOWARD THE HOT LUNCH PROGRAM. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT. IT IS TRULY APPRECIATED.

PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL MINNIE MIRZA IF YOU HAVE A SENIOR WHO COULD BENEFIT BY SUCH A PROGRAM OR IF YOU CAN VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES IN ANY WAY

905-825-8188

minnie.mirza@gmail.com

One car ride for a person can change so much in a senior's life.

When senior citizens come to Yoga or Zumba on Wednesdays, they laugh, socialize with others and feel alive and stimulated.

If they have no family or friends to drive them, they are left alone in isolation.



Be a volunteer. Be the difference.

We Urgently Need Volunteer Drivers for seniors in Oakville, Mississauga and Brampton for a just a few hours once a week.

Volunteer drivers will be matched with the people living closest to them. The OZCF has a policy to protect, to the best of its ability, all volunteer drivers.

**Do it because you would want someone to do it for your mother, for your best friend,
FOR YOU.....**

**Please contact Minnie Mirza at (905) 825-8188 or email at
minnie.mirza@gmail.com**

NOWRUZ: A CELEBRATION OF REMEMBRANCE + RENEWAL, AND THE ETHOS OF DAENA MAZDAYASNI

As another Nowruz approaches, I am again asked to comment upon the significance of this event within the liturgical calendar.

My first reaction is one of bewilderment, which slowly transitions through embarrassment as it progresses into dismay.

The request is not coming from an interfaith forum or group of non-Zoroastrians who wish to know more... but from anjuman leadership who acknowledge that the anjuman knows little about Nowruz. And to be clear, I am not speaking about the namesake Navroze of the Shenshai calendar held in August; but about the Spring equinox, commonly referred to by Parsis as Jamshedi or Fasli calendar Navroze.

Let me repeat a previous analogy I've used, in order to illustrate the seriousness of this situation, how it reflects upon, and what it means for our faith and its fellowship.

Can you imagine a: Jewish community which is unaware of the meaning and significance of Hanukah; Christian community which does not fully appreciate the meaning of Easter; Muslim community which can not articulate the purpose of Eid-al-fitr; or Hindu community that lacks knowledge about Diwali?

Perhaps you're shaking your head, thinking I'm exaggerating or being melodramatic? After all, many Parsi Zoroastrians attend the Nowruz jashan and partake in the communal meal thereafter. Many are also aware that Nowruz occurs at the end of the Muktaḍ period coinciding with the Hamaspathmaidyem gahambar commemorating the 'ashofarohars' (asho faravahars).

However, knowing information is not the same as appreciating significance. Recounting data without being aware of relevance, is meaningless, or at the very least renders a superficial understanding. A good example of this is the reciting of history or prayers—one may know dates of events, or have memorized Avestan sentences, without being able to articulate causes, consequences, and meaning.

For example, why do we recite Ashem Vohu and the Ahunavar (Yatha Ahu Variyo) prayer multiple times during the kusti baj or within a jashan? How do you explain why the battles of the Somme and Verdun lasted several months and were the costliest of the entire First World War?

Rather than 'what', the aspects of 'why' and 'how' are usually more pertinent. Moreover, when one possesses 'why' and 'how'...the worth of 'what' increases. Put a different way, details without context, rarely makes an impact.

The liturgical calendar (whether Shenshai, Kadmi, or Fasli), revolves around the five gahambar. Chronology (time), is often marked by events which are neither fixed to exact date, nor correspond to exact seasons (weather). Upon examination of the names of the gahambar, and their dates, one notices that cycles (not linear, but cyclical time) and liminality (not homogeneity, but variation and the in-between) are being extolled and celebrated.

The Muktaḍ-Hamaspathmaidyem-Nowruz period is an acknowledgement of this. Yes, we remember and honour the dead, but this is not just a solemn ancestors' day or 'all souls' commemoration. Yes, we mark the beginning of Spring, but this is not a repudiation of winter, or a victory of life over death. Yes, this is a new year's celebration. However, we are celebrating the renewal (as in, beginning once-again) of a cycle (annual transition of life cycle through seasons).

“Because Religion never goes out of fashion”

Sport your Zoroastrian brand and support the OZCF youth in their effort to raise funds for the 2019 Youth Congress in LA.

Proceeds from the sale of the Polo Shirts will help those attending the youth to defray the cost for the Congress.

Polo shirts will be sold up until 9pm on March 20, 2019 at the early bird price of \$20

Please specify size at the time of order S, M, L, XL

Polo shirts will be sold on March 21st at OZCF Jashan and March 23rd Navroz Event at the Regular price of \$25

To place your orders, call Farshad Engineer at 289-997-4421 or by email at: OZCFYOUTHEVENTS@GMAIL.COM

Payment for pre-orders by giving cash or check at the Mukta days

Or by E-Transfer to OZCFYOUTHEVENTS@GMAIL.COM

Or by Cheque payable to "OZCF" and mailed to:

Farshad Engineer, Unit #31, 2275 Credit Valley Rd, Mississauga, ON, L5M4N5. For e-transfer, please make answer to the security question- "Farohar".

Quantities are limited so please place your orders immediately.



NOWRUZ: A CELEBRATION OF REMEMBRANCE + RENEWAL, AND THE ETHOS OF DAENA MAZDAYASNI (CONTINUED)

We are not forgetting, denying, or disposing of the past, for a disconnected future. And there is no sense of supremacy or conquest over nature and our environment, because we acknowledge being part of Creation. If anything, Nowruz is a time for humility and reflection, in order to correct any departure from Asha, and to humbly reintegrate ourselves. The Muktaḍ-Hamaspathmaidyem-Nowruz period in its entirety, is a holistic appreciation of the totality of life (which includes death of the body, and faith in the immortality of the soul) and its renewal (which occurs through love, remembrance, and reinvigoration).

This jashan (celebration) provides ritual-visual acknowledgement of the juxtapositions and combinations (life-death, winter-spring). We are through ritual, spiritually testifying that these are not contradictions, but harmonious workings of Asha.

And when we acknowledge the period of Nowruz like this, we begin to further appreciate the setting of the Nowruz table with its 'haft seen' elements (7 items beginning with letter 's' in Farsi). Its significance, as a visual affirmation of the seven aspects of creation, and harmony, are clear. So too, does it make sense, that we simultaneously recall our ancestors and their good works, while pledging ourselves to good works for the new year.

Haft seen items within modern day countries possessing Iranic cultures, include: sabze (sprouts of a grain such as wheat), samanū (a sweet pudding), senjed (a variant of the Oleaster tree also known as 'Russian Olive'), serke (vinegar), sib (apple), sir (garlic), sumac (sumac berry spice). Grain denotes rebirth and one's investment of time/patience towards nurturing and growth. Vinegar denotes age/patience, and disinfection by cleansing away problems and worries. Apples and fruits are representations of bounty, health, and happiness. Garlic is associated with medicinal properties and desires for health and wellbeing. The pudding is a sign of generosity, the sharing of sweetness, pride and strength of commitment. The Russian olive fruit represents resilience and determination, love, tolerance and faith (we have these across Ontario, they survive the harshest climates and resist all types of infections/pests). And sumac is an essential additive to Persian cuisine, which flavours and makes things more palatable, representing being aware and receptive to life.

The Nowruz table may also include additional items or substitutions. As the colour red is associated with warmth/fire/love, pomegranates are often included. And prior to the prohibitions of Islamic rule in many of these countries, wine definitely had a place on the table. Coins may be placed to represent hopes for prosperity. A goldfish in a bowl sometimes makes an appearance to represent life, blessing, victory, and new beginnings. Of course, a symbol of light/fire is also upon the table, in the form of candles. A continuation of many of these associations, with cultural variants/substitutions are found in the laying of items for a Parsi jashan (eg. flowers, malido/ravo, divo/bati lamp, coconut, dates, rice, etc).

What makes Nowruz, and the Nowruz table, particularly unique (and one should note that similar tables are often set up during other gahambar), is that this core celebration of Mazdayasni Daena, is not officiated or maintained by the mobed.

The Nowruz table may be laid out in any (every) home, and/or community setting, for two express purposes: a representation of faith, and a testimony to fellowship. The Nowruz celebration lasts 12+1 days, beginning either March 19-20-or-21 and usually ending on April 1 with a commemorative picnic by families celebrating nature. There is an obligation to visit friends and families.



OZCF
together with
Toronto Parsi Drama Group
Celebrates
Jamshedji Navrouz with a
Hilarious Parsi Natak



"FARDOONJI E FILM UTARI"

Come join us for a great evening of laughter, fun, Dinner & Dance.

Date: Saturday, March 23, 2019

Doors Open: 6.00 pm. **Natak starts:** 6.30 pm sharp

Location: Apollo Convention Centre,

6591 Innovator Dr, Mississauga, ON L5T 2V8

Price: Adult: \$45 Child (Age 5-10): \$35



For Tickets Call:

Meher Panthaky - Tel: 905-568-4946 Email: meherpanthaky@yahoo.ca

PLEASE SEND NAMES AND MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO:
"OZCF", BEFORE MARCH 15, 2019

AND MAIL IT TO: Meher Panthaky at
5508 Spanglar Drive, Mississauga, ON L5R3A2.

Space is Limited. Please book early to avoid Disappointment.



NOWRUZ: A CELEBRATION OF REMEMBRANCE + RENEWAL, AND THE ETHOS OF DAENA MAZDAYASNI (CONTINUED)

The Nowruz table, which usually has upon it (or as an extension to it) dried-nuts and other food items, is replenished daily. The symbolic gesture of this ritual is a pledge to welcome and feed all that arrive, and to share faith and fellowship. Guests partake of their hosts' table. Guests may also bring items to add to the host's table.

The practice of decorating eggs (similar to Russian/Ukrainian Easter eggs) is also common, and denotes the idea of life/rebirth, fertility, and blessings. These eggs may be brought to a host's table. Many people also partake in the practice of adding a new/different daily item to their Nowruz table (or to the table of hosts'), which may represent (or be from) a certain person, have a personal meaning, or be a personal token of faith.

And, one will often see a mirror upon the table, which is symbolic of the sky, the soul, and faith. Many partake in a tradition of confession and pledge, in front of the mirror. One person/guest looks into the mirror (into oneself, as well as honestly speaking to the Creator), and silently reaffirms their faith and/or acknowledges something they wish to be forgiven for or to do better. They also silently wish for and/or promise something. An addition to this custom, is that upon completing this internalization, the host sprinkles (rose)-water into the face of the guest from a gulabaz (that long neck metal object in the Parsi 'sace/ses').

In the evenings of each of the 12 days of Nowruz, families (or hosts + guests) often recite stories/legends, listen to music, play games, and many partake in a tradition where they 'foretell' the coming year. Nowruz tables usually include a scripture or book of poetry, representing respect for wisdom (good thoughts, good words, and good deeds). Each person attempts to open the book, spontaneously/randomly, and to read a passage or the page. Then, to attempt to understand the relevance of that passage/page to one's own life predicament, or alternately to understand the meaning of the author and to utilize this wisdom within the coming year.

The Nowruz table is therefore, essentially an altar that can be catered by anyone, while it also caters to everyone. It is not a formulaic ritual or prescription, but a collaborative act of worship whose components depend on participant desires. It is not a single act confined to a special place and administered by priests on behalf of someone/something—rather, it begins as a personal act, extends outward to all, and is reciprocated by many other participants who may celebrate and contribute in different and personally meaningful ways.

Why is this important? Because when we appreciate the 'how' and the 'why' of Nowruz—then, the 'what' that is our faith and our fellowship, becomes an active and practical theology tied to social justice awareness (good thoughts, good words, and good deeds).

Moreover, we refrain from an understanding that repetition of practise and procedures, and the mummification of faith, constitute 'preservation' and adherence to Asha.

Neville Gustad Panthaki, Ph.D., Ph.D. (ABD), M.A., Grad. Dipl., B.Ed., Hons. B.A., NCCP 1

(Social Justice Education, South Asian Studies, Comparative History and Philosophy, Physical Literacy)

Creator/Director: The Asha Vahishta Initiative (AVI) and its 101 Inspirations

Asha Vahishta Initiative



AVI: Pledge 101!

[AVI Website \(CLICK HERE\)](#) or <https://sites.google.com/site/ashavahishtainitiative/>
Questions-Comment-Contact: ashavahishtainitiative@gmail.com



Going to the 2019 Youth Congress? Worried about the costs? We can help!

The OZCF has generously offered a subsidy along with FEZANA in order to reduce individual costs to attend the 2019 Youth Congress. The Youth Committee is also planning various fundraising events from March until July in order to raise more funds to be distributed amongst attendees.

Funding details:

- Must be a member in good standing of OZCF as of July 1, 2019
- Must provide proof of registration to the Congress
- Deadline for registration is February 28th, 2019 -> information to be sent to ozcfyouthevents@gmail.com
- Up to 12 OZCF/FEZANA subsidies available - FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE

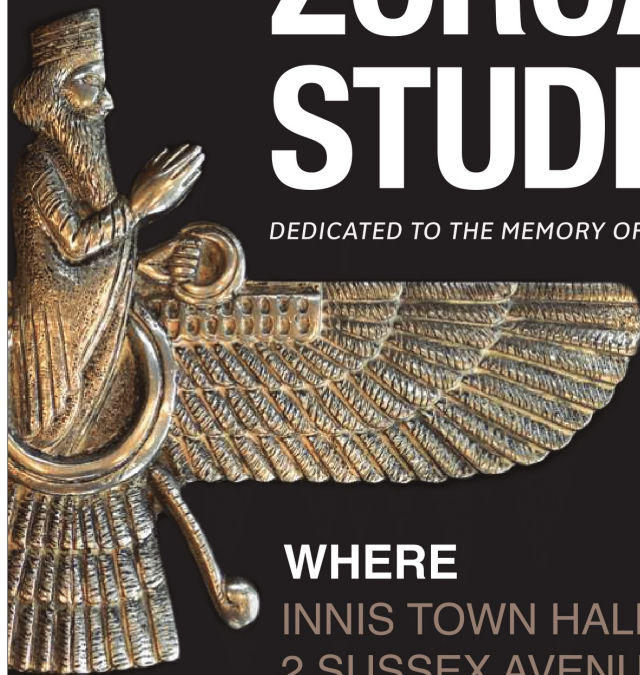
Congress Details:

- July 1st to July 6th, 2019
- Westminster, California
- More information: <https://wzycongress.org/>

Please contact ozcfyouthevents@gmail.com or follow us on Instagram @zoro_youth for more information

See the link below regarding the FEZANA subsidy:

<https://mailchi.mp/fezana/subsidy-program-for-north-america-attendees-of-the-7th-world-zoroastrian-youth-congress?e=9fcf0b4148>



ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES

A SYMPOSIUM

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF PROFESSOR EHSAN YARSHATER (1920-2018)

WHERE

INNIS TOWN HALL,
2 SUSSEX AVENUE,
TORONTO, ON, M5S 1J5

WHEN

APRIL 6TH, 2019
1:00–7:00 PM

1:00–1:30 REGISTRATION

1:30–1:50 INTRODUCTION

Dr. Jehan Bagli, Timothy Harrison & Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi

1:50–2:25 ZOROASTRIANISM IN THE ACHAEMENID PERIOD

Maria Brosius, University of Toronto

2:25–3:00 PURE BODY: THE BARŠNŪM CEREMONY THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Miguel Angel Andres Toledo, University of Salamanca

3:00–3:35 THE EPIC OF SAMAK-E `AYYAR: A LITERARY COMPANION TO MITHRAIC MYTHOLOGY, ETHICS, AND SOCIAL PRAXIS

Parvaneh Pourshariati, New York City College of Technology

3:30–4:10 BREAK

4:10–4:45 DANTE AND WIRAZ: TWO OTHERWORLDLY TRAVELLERS

Enrico Raffaelli, University of Toronto

4:45–5:20 PARSİ TRADERS AND TRAVELLERS: GLOBAL ZOROASTRIANS IN THE AGE OF EMPIRE

Jesse Palsetia, University of Guelph

5:20–6:00 ZOROASTRIANISM AND THE PROBLEM OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION IN THE EARLY MODERN ISLAMIC WORLD

Dan Sheffield, Princeton University

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
DEPARTMENT OF NEAR AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
TORONTO INITIATIVE FOR IRANIAN STUDIES

IN COLLABORATION WITH

THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA,
ONTARIO ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION,
AND ZOROASTRIAN SOCIETY OF ONTARIO



JOINT BOARD MEETING WITH ZSO BOARD



On January 23rd we hosted Board members of our sister organization, the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) for a joint meeting. We discussed ideas for joint events that we could collaborate on; co-ordination and sharing of ideas around Information Technology synergies and communications to our members; co-ordination amongst the youth subcommittees and youth engagement.



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ASHTA NO KAI



Literally translated Ashta No Kai means “For a Better Tomorrow” in Japanese. And you will wonder why I am suddenly into Japanese. No, my Japanese vocabulary only extends to may be 10 words. But I heard about Ashta No Kai (ANK) for the first time on November 2, 2018 at the OZCF, when we invited all the participants and guests who were attending the Parliament of World Religions held in Toronto.

ANK is an NGO started by Armene Modi who gave a presentation on Nov 2 and I was at once impressed and encouraged by what she was doing. From her presentation we learnt how ANK, which started in 1998, helps to empower girls, support them with scholarships for them to stay in school, allows them to dream big and facilitate their path towards achieving those dreams, reaching their goals, and set them up for life.

Armene lives in Pune, India, and her work for ANK is in, and around Pune, in 10 villages in the Shirur District. Being as I always have been passionate about, and involved with girls and betterment of women’s lives, and that I go to India at least once every year, and visit Pune every other year (if not every year), I made a pact with Armene that I would help her organization through whichever means that I can.

To this end, I arranged to spend a day with Armene, on my recent trip to India. I travelled to Pune and spent an entire day on January 9 driving around to see some of the work she has been doing. This was to learn for myself what ANK was all about and how anyone could help.

If I was impressed and encouraged on Nov 2, multiply that by 10, because I was totally inspired and awe-struck with what I saw. Armene travels from village to village personally, overseeing all the work, making sure monies are handled correctly, scholarships are handed out to deserving candidates, etc. Apart from that, Armene has also started helping the women (who were mostly illiterate) to earn money for themselves, and not always have to sit at home and depend on their husbands. And let me tell you, the customs in these villages were still archaic 20 years ago, where women had to take permission from the husbands to go out of the house, and never leave the village without them. ANK has changed all that, it has not only helped literacy and education for young girls, but also provided economic and social development to their mothers and grandmothers by helping the rural women build their self confidence and stand up for their rights, and achieving financial security for themselves and their families.

What is more impressive is that even the husbands have now realized how their lives have changed and how the women can help the family by going out and starting co-operatives, go from village to village, keep their own accounts, meet regularly at the Women’s Vocational centres, (small buildings built by funds donated to ANK), and above all, have been instrumental in keeping their girls in school.

ASHTA NO KAI (CONTINUED)



Before ANK educated them, the families used to get the girls married - around the age of 12 or 13 years - just about when, or even before, they reached puberty. Now the girls go to school beyond the primary level and ANK has facilitated that, by establishing bicycle banks and providing them with bicycles to get to their schools which are at a distance.

We went to three villages. At the first one called Khandale, we met the ladies of the villages close by, and heard firsthand accounts of which grades their girls were in, how they are able to let them continue higher education with the help of ANK and how thankful they were to Armene personally. They call her “TAI” (big sister).

From there we visited a local school funded and run by ANK, where the children learn not only the school curriculum, but also English. ANK has also given them computers and some iPADS from a donor. We also heard from individual children their reports on how the latest ANK initiative “Mulga-Mulgi Ek Samaan” - literally translated it means “boys and girls are equal” - has affected them. Recently, ANK funded a facilitator go around the schools teaching the children about this vital change, and educating them about the equality of both genders.

The boys, one by one, explained how they were doing the chores around the house, helping with cooking, cleaning, getting water from the wells, washing clothes, tend to the domestic or farm animals, etc. As per rural custom, only girls had to do these chores up until now, and they would have to do the work before they went to school.

In the next village, Nimgaon Bhogi, we met some older girls, where there is a secondary school (which some of them attend using their bicycles), and learnt from them how ANK has helped them. Apart from being able to attend and complete their school curriculum, the girls are given lessons on hygiene, sanitation, menstruation, basic sex education, etc. Here again, the girls individually reported how they found this information to be useful. They also mentioned how ANK also facilitated and financed a trip for them to go to Pune (most of them had never gone outside their own villages). they stayed at the Aga Khan Palace which is now a Museum and were tourists in the city, which is about an hour and half drive away, but they never had the opportunity to visit.

Here we also visited the “Women’s Dairy Cooperative” which is a project, where ANK has helped families to buy cows and milk is collected, checked to see that it is pure and cooled and sent to a nearby milk processing plant for which they get paid. When the families are able to return the money given to them to buy the cows, funds are returned and other families get the funds to buy the animals.

OZCF FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO

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*Date: Saturday, April 27, 2019 Time: 700 pm onwards
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ASHTA NO KAI (CONTINUED)

In the third village called Sone Sangvi, we were given lunch by the villagers. During the lunch we met the Sarpanch (Headman) of the village for an informal chat about the proposal before the local entity of the govt - the Panchayat- to allot a free piece of land to build a community building. The lunch was followed by a meeting, again. Of course the women of the village were there and the Sarpanch (Headman) of the village also sat for that meeting. Armene reiterated an appeal for a piece of land to make a "Women's Vocational Centre" for which she already had funding, but was waiting for a piece of land to build on. But as always ANK wanted the villagers to be part of the funding of the building, so they could understand the value of the new building and help to keep and maintain it. We also sat listening to the problems of the local women and this time more of the social issues were discussed. I saw firsthand how Armene has to deal with individual cases of social justice, women getting out of abusive relationships, going to attend the government offices to get divorces (never heard of, or done before, in these villages).

My hats off to this remarkable lady. There is so much more that ANK, and Armene personally does, that I can write about. But that would be a long chapter. So this is just a small snapshot of what I learnt about ANK and Armene. I may also mention here that Armene is a celebrity in her own right having won several awards. Please go to the ANK website www.ashtanokai.org and learn more about her and the Literacy, Self help groups, Kishori Mandals, Bicycle Banks, Scholarships, Karate classes, etc.... and the list of their involvement and initiatives with the girls and women goes on.

If you would like to donate please get in touch with Armene Modi or Armaity Anandasagar. Maybe the OZCF Youth Committee can take a group of youngsters to Pune and give some volunteer time to this very worthy cause.

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100% Club Award

RELIGIOUS EVENTS

FASLI MUKTAD SATURDAY MARCH 16TH TO WEDNESDAY MARCH 20TH

We will be celebrating Fasli Muktaḍ at Z.R.C.C. 1187 Burnhamthorpe Rd. East, Oakville. Following is the schedule of Prayers for the five days:

Saturday March 16th & Sunday March 17th

- 7:30 am Morning Stoom & Baj;
- 8:00 am Afringan & Farokhshi;
- 11:30 am Afternoon Stoom;
- 7:00 pm Evening Stoom & Hum Bundagi

Monday March 18th to Wednesday March 20th

- 6:30 am Morning Stoom & Baj;
- 7:00 am Afringan & Farokhshi;
- 11:30 am Afternoon Stoom;
- 7:00 pm Evening Stoom & Hum Bundagi

If you wish to give the names of your dearly departed for daily prayers please complete the attached form and send it along with your donation cheque payable to O.Z.C.F to reach Ervad Nozer Kotwal by March 13th. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE IT UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT. NAMES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OVER THE TELEPHONE.

Donation of fruits, dry fruits, flowers, Sukhad, Loban, Tachho, etc. are always welcomed. We would appreciate families helping with cooking the stum lunches and dinners for the five Gatha days and the midnight meal on March 20. Please let us know if you are available to prepare a meal by yourself or with someone else as this will help us with creating the schedule. Contact Armaity Anandasagar at armaity.a@gmail.com or Jeroo Madan at jeroomadan@hotmail.com. The morning meal should be at ZRCC by 10.30am and the evening meal by 6.00pm.

It would be of great help when you bring the meal to stay and prepare the stum tray and clean up afterwards. For those families who cannot cook but can stay and clean up after the meal please let us know so we can sign you up for those dates. Please pick a day and meal you would like to prepare and what the menu would be. We are estimating 25 people for the afternoon meals and 50 for the evening meals but since these days fall during the March Break, we may have more than the anticipated number of people.

We also require volunteers to thoroughly clean the Prayer Room, House and Hall before the start of Muktaḍ as well as regular cleaning during the Muktaḍ days. Please contact Ervad Kotwal at (905) 820-0461 if you wish to help.

Thank you, our members, for your continued help, as always.



presents:

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Tickets: Adults \$50
Children: (5-10) \$30

Time: 6:30 pm sharp

Contact: Gulrukh Patel 905-542-0237
gulrukh.patel@gmail.com

RELIGIOUS EVENTS

NAVROZE (F) THURSDAY MARCH 21ST

Navroze Jashan will be held on Thursday March 21st at 7:00 pm at Z.R.C.C. 1187 Burnhamthorpe Rd. East, Oakville, followed by dinner. The dinner is organized by the Entertainment Committee. For details please refer to the flyer within the newsletter.

KHORDAD SAL (F) TUESDAY MARCH 26TH

Khordad Sal Jashan will be held on Tuesday March 26th at 7:00 pm at Z.R.C.C. 1187 Burnhamthorpe Rd. East, Oakville, followed by chasni.

FARVARDEGAN (F) MONDAY APRIL 8TH

Farvardegan prayers will be held on Monday April 8th at 7:00 pm at Z.R.C.C. 1187 Burnhamthorpe Rd. East, Oakville, followed by chasni.

MAIDHYOZAREM GHAMBAR (F) SATURDAY MAY 4TH

We will be celebrating Maidhyozarem Ghambar (F) on Saturday May 4th at Z.R.C.C. 1187 Burnhamthorpe Rd. East, Oakville. The Ghambar Jashan will commence at 11:00 am followed by lunch. The cost of attending the Jashan & lunch is \$5.00 per person; children up to the age of 20 years are free. If you plan to attend please give your name to Ervad Nozer Kotwal (905) 820-0461 stating how many adults and/or children, veg. or non-veg., will be attending, a.s.a.p. but not later than May 1st. Donation of fruits, dry fruits, flowers, Sukhad, Loban, Tachho, etc. is always welcomed at these prayer meetings. Please also volunteer to clean up after the event.

If you and/or your friends wish to sponsor this Ghambar or any other religious event in the future please let Ervad Kotwal know.

ZARTHOST-NO-DISO (S) FRIDAY MAY 24TH

Zarthost-no-Diso (S) prayers will be held on Friday May 24th at 7:00 pm at Z.R.C.C. 1187 Burnhamthorpe Rd. East, Oakville, followed by chasni.

ZAGNY & UNITED NATION NGO COMMITTEE PANEL DISCUSSION



ZAGNY and FEZANA's United Nations Non-Governmental Committee Presents

A Panel Workshop at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Dar-E-Mehr, 106 Pomona Road, Pomona, NY 10901 on Sunday, March 10th, 2019 at 11:00 AM.

FEZANA has 9 participants representing Zoroastrians at the Commission on the Status of Women Conference in New York from March 11th to 22nd, 2019. They will be attending the panel workshop and presenting the topic, "Educating Girls: An Empowering Tool to Promote Prosperity & Gender Equality."

Social change to uplift society comes when men and women are treated equally with respect and dignity. This aspirational goal cannot be reached without educating the girl child. The panel will discuss how education empowers girls in the villages in India, Nepal and Africa to eliminate poverty. The workshop will cover UN Sustainable Development Goal #1 No Poverty, Goal #4 Quality Education and Goal #5 Gender Equality.

Biographies of the speakers:

Adina Mistry is a high school senior. She is a member of her school's academic honors society; founder and President of the Pratham Club, as well as founding member and President of the Limitless Club at her school; Officer of the Lion's Heart Class of 2019 Blue Girls Group, a community service organization; and teacher for 9-11-year-olds at the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) religion class. Adina represents her school's Speech & Debate Team in extemporaneous speech and original oratory competitions and enjoys playing the violin in her school orchestra. Her commitment to the education and empowerment of girls, coupled with her belief in Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds, inspires the several volunteer community service efforts she is actively involved in.

Anahita Verahrami has a B.S. from Cornell University where she majored in the Interdisciplinary Studies of Biology, Anthropology, and Ecology and obtained minors in Biology and Anthropology. She is currently working as a research assistant for the Elephant Listening Project (ELP), a conservation NGO at Cornell. Her work with ELP deals largely with conducting acoustic analyses in order to monitor and conserve the forest elephant populations of Central Africa as well as to generate a deeper understanding of how individual elephants communicate with one another. Last year, she spent a wild four months living and working in the Central African rainforest while conducting research on the forest elephants of Dzanga bai in the southern part of the Central African Republic (CAR). Ultimately, she wishes to become a National Geographic Explorer and one day lead her own research group while continuing to focus on applying acoustic monitoring to the conservation of endangered African wildlife. She is an avid photographer, currently shooting mostly wildlife and landscapes. She has also participated in art exhibitions and even executed one of her own exhibitions through which she showcased photographs that functioned to destigmatize mental illness on the Cornell campus and raise awareness about sexual assault. One of these photos was eventually published online by National Geographic. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking with her dog, Oscar, and writing stories about her time in CAR to share through her blog.



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ZAGNY & UNITED NATION NGO COMMITTEE PANEL DISCUSSION



Tanya Bharda is from Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. She has completed her undergraduate degree in Women and Gender Studies, Italian and Political Science from the University of Toronto. She is a flight attendant and also works at a women's shelter as a women's advocate. She also worked with different Non-Government Organizations in India to make a difference in the world through education of underprivileged children because she believes that, "Every Child needs Equality, not Charity."

Nadia Jam recently received her Bachelors in Social Sciences with an Honours Specialization in Political Science in French Immersion from the University of Ottawa. International affairs has always been part of Nadia Jam's personal and academic interest. Her passion for learning languages and community building has benefited her in the national and global engagement opportunities she has seized; from working with political parties and campaigns, attending model UN conferences, working for marginalized women and survivors for an NGO in Nepal, and so on. Nadia's myriad of experiences has helped her think without borders and further recognize that addressing gender disparities requires meaningful dialogue and collaboration. She hopes that CWS 2019 will be among those spaces of inspiration towards a more gender equal world.

Afreed Mistry has been volunteering for the Zoroastrian Community since the age of 13. She has been actively involved with the local Toronto community, FEZANA and the Global Zoroastrian community. Recently, she was one of the Masters of Ceremonies at the 11th World Zoroastrian Congress in Perth, Australia. Afreed is also FEZANA's main representative to the United Nations.



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MUKTAD PRAYERS

Please include the following names in the daily prayers during the forthcoming Muktaḍ Ceremonies. Please note that **NO NAMES WILL BE ACCEPTED OVER THE PHONE.**

Name of the Deceased

Name of his/her father/Husband**

1. E O Oi B K _____

E O B _____

2. E O Oi B K _____

E O B _____

3. E O Oi B K _____

E O B _____

4. E O Oi B K _____

E O B _____

5. E O Oi B K _____

E O B _____

6. E O Oi B K _____

E O B _____

Please find enclosed my cheque payable to OZCF for \$ _____

Thank you.

_____	_____	_____
Name	Signature	Tel. No

** Names of the deceased are recited together with their father/husband's name

E= Ervad O = Osta Oi = Osti B = Behdin

K = Khurd (child whose navjote was not performed)

Please complete the form in Block Letters, ensuring the proper status (i.e., E, O, Oi, B, K) is circled and forward it to the address below

OZCF, 4244 Taffey Cres, Mississauga, ON L5L 2J2



MEMBERSHIP FORM

January 01 to December 31, 2019

Membership Application: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Membership Category / Fees

<input type="checkbox"/> Youth	<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors	<input type="checkbox"/> Family
Individuals of age 19 to 24 years	Individuals of age 25 and below 65 years	Individuals of age 65 years and above	Includes children up to age 18 years
\$40	\$100	\$50	\$150

APPLICANT INFORMATION

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
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DEPENDANT INFORMATION

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 2. First Name _____ Last Name _____ Age _____
 3. First Name _____ Last Name _____ Age _____
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



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