



NEWSLETTER

THE EVOLUTION OF A TEEN (ROOM)

BY TINA DAROOWALLA

My 15-year-old son Rayan is on the verge of earning the highest rank in Boy Scouts. He will soon be an Eagle Scout, which is Scouting's highest achievement. If you don't already know this Rayan's Eagle Project is the Teen Room in our new Dar-E-Mehr building.

How does a kid who has breezed through life without a care, become a project leader and a problem solver? It's hard for even me, as his parent, to understand. My son is an All American Teen who loves his video games, his friends and above all, his fun. He is no child protégé or scholar. As parents we have let him lead the way, and encouraged and supported his pursuits. He was never pushed in any direction, but was only encouraged to finish what he started.

The idea behind the Teen Room started with a simple question that Rayan asked.

We were at the old Dar-e-Mehr building, when the plans for the new building were revealed. After staring at the plans for a bit, Rayan asked a simple question, "How come there are so many classrooms but no space for teenagers like us to hang out", he asked. "Hang-out" the most basic of teen needs, had not been met in our soon to be built Temple and Community center. "Well" I said, "maybe you should create one". And the seed was planted. But nothing happened, as distractions are many.

Many months later, Rayan achieved the rank of a "Life Scout". Life Scouts, one rank lower than Eagle, is generally when the boys start to think about their Eagle Project, which is their Grande Finale Community Service project. He mulled with several ideas but the one that felt right to him, was to create.....continued on Page 3



CONTENTS

TEEN ROOM	1
FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK	2
HALLOWEEN 2016	3
ACADEMIC COMMUNITY	
REACHES OUT TO ZAGNY	4
ROADMAP TO RELIGIONS	5
SENIORS GROUP REPORT	5
ZARATHUSHTRA'S VISION &	6
ZOROASTRIANISM TODAY	
JAMVA CHALOJI 2016	8
MAYA MISTRY BLACK BELT	12
BOOK REVIEW: PLATO	12
Er. PORUS PAVRI	13
NEW YEAR'S GALA 2017	13
WZCC AWARDS	15
FEZANA NEWS	15
COMMUNITY NEWS	16
ABSENTEE BALLOTS	17
MEMBERSHIP FORM	19

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

ASTAD J. CLUBWALA

2016 was the first year in our new Dar-e-Mehr and we got off to a running start! - from our amazing inauguration, to the first ever joint religious class with ZAPANJ and ZAGBA (which is now an annual event), to the first all day religious seminar in over 10 years, to various visits from schools and colleges, to the many other interesting activities that followed and ending with our spectacular New Year's Eve Gala. It was a memorable year. My personal thanks to our fun loving but hard working board members and to the many volunteers throughout the year who made it all possible.



2017 promises to be even more exciting. Your ZAGNY Board is gearing up for even more activities and in order to keep the momentum going, we would like to establish several Sub-Committees to help us. We welcome your initiative, participation and ideas. Here are some of the Sub-Committees recommended:

SOCIAL/ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE:

To plan and execute entertainment throughout the year including for our own annual events such as Navroze, Parsi New Year, New Year's Eve, etc.

Please contact Khursheed Navder at knavder@hunter.cuny.edu.

RELIGIOUS COMMITTEE:

To organize religious seminars; articles for newsletters; attendance at interfaith events; hosting school/university groups; prayer room maintenance.

Please contact Astad Clubwala at clubwala@aol.com.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES:

Z-Youth wanted for planning activities during major events that will bring great spirit, fun and games for all to enjoy. Well minded individuals (including adults) must be able to develop games, activities for scheduled events such as Navroze, Z camp, summer picnic and other special events throughout the year.

Please contact Mayyar Naushi at oscarmayyar@yahoo.com

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND WEB-SUPPORT:

We already have one volunteer but may be able to use an additional person with website design experience to augment the team.

Please contact Arzan Sam Wadia at arzan@wadias.in

Many thanks, the Board looks forward to working for and with all of you.

With warm regards and wishing all a happy and eventful year ahead.

Astad

.....a new Teen Room for the Zoroastrian youth, in our Dar-E Mehr. That is the key, finding that which is nearest and truest to their heart, and then encouraging it.

He put together a brief presentation and went before the ZAGNY, DMZT and IZA Boards. They loved the concept and encouraged his enthusiasm. Rayan was brimming with ideas and was on a mission. The mission evolved from just hanging out, to getting our teens more involved in our community. Typically most teens, after they graduate from the religious classes, tend to stop attending the monthly meetings. Teens are an essential untapped resource and the future leaders of our community. The aim is to encourage teens to be more active in the community. More teens means more volunteers, teachers and leaders for the younger kids.

To win the attention of the teens, Rayan knew that the room had to be awesome, and worthy of our beautiful new building! So he set out to create a space that is modern and teen friendly. A functional and casual space, where teens can congregate and help each other with homework, projects, and other school issues. A space where they can interact freely, and exchange ideas and viewpoints, about being young Zoroastrians. Above all, a space that they can call their own!

The DMZT, ZAGNY and IZA Boards approved, as did the Boy Scouts Council, and a 160 SF room was assigned to the project. Rayan reached out to the community, and to friends and family to raise funds, and turned to his Boy Scout Troop 138 to help build the room. The room is basically divided into 3 areas: a computer area, a group study area, and a lounge area. It is full of vibrant colors and fun flexible furniture.

As parents our task is to sow the seeds and to encourage involvement. The rest, as they say, will follow.



HALLOWEEN 2016

BY CARINA DARUWALA.

This was the first Halloween at our new Dar-e-Mehr! There were over 45 children who were brave enough to dress up, and give the judges a sense of why their costumes were the best. I loved

seeing the enthusiastic smiles on the kids' faces when they came up onto the stage to give their names, ages, and characters to the judges. Each of them had a unique costume that they put time and labor into to make them "look the part" of their characters. The three judges, Adina Mistry, Vispi Kanga, and Dinaz Bengali, had a tough choice ahead of them to choose each category of costume from each age group.



From the kids ranged 0-4 years old, Firoze (Kangaroo) was the cutest boy and Zara (Elsa) was the cutest girl. The most original of the 0-4 year olds were Kean (Hulk) and Asha Gandhi (Green Fairy). In the 5-8 years old group, the cutest boy and the cutest girl were Neville (Racecar Driver) and Audrey (Annie). The most original were Cyrus (Zombie) and Leah Sanjana (Minion). The scariest of the 5-8 year olds were Xerxes (Skeleton) and Jade Merriweather (Vampire). The silliest costumes of the kids in this group were Azad Antia (Old Man) and Madison (Rutgers Fan). The last group was the 9-13 year old age group. The cutest of these kids were Frayan Vimadalal (Freddie Mercury) and Shirin Unvala (Wonder Woman). The most original kids were Firoze Scherick (Oreo) and Iyana Mehta (iPhone). The scariest costumes in the 9-13 year old division were Yohan Mehta (Zombie) and Yasna (Elsa). The silliest costumes were Jasper (Gremlin) and Dina (Joy).

After the prizes were awarded, each child had the opportunity to take a swing at the piñata. Each child raced to grab the sugary treats spilling out of the torn piñata and add them to their already overflowing goodie bag. It was a fun experience and everyone enjoyed it thoroughly. I was so happy to emcee this Halloween parade and to witness the creativity and imagination of each of these children. I applauded them and our judges and the organizers Sasha and Mayyar Noushi, and Sam Shroff. I wish everyone happiness and health in the upcoming holiday season.

ACADEMIC COMMUNITY REACHES OUT TO ZAGNY TO EDUCATING OUR AMERICAN YOUTH

BY: FERZIN PATEL

On November 16, 2016, 17 curious and eager first year students from Bard College arrived on a bus to the Dar E Mehr for a new kind of academic class experience. After their long ride, the students were welcomed by Ferzin Patel, DMZT Trustee, Dr Lovji Cama and Ervad Pervez Patel. These 17 students from Bard College were students of Professor Shai Secunda, the Jacob Neusner Associate Professor in the History and Theology of Judaism. Professor Secunda has introduced a new course on Judaism and the Zoroastrian religion for the first time at Bard College. Professor Secunda reached out to ZAGNY to coordinate a trip with his students to infuse his students interest in Zoroastrian religion and culture and bring them to see an actual Dar E Mehr and Atash Gah. He recently read a piece on a new Zoroastrian Temple being built in the lower Hudson Valley area and wanted his students to have the experience to see a Zoroastrian religious center.

The visit began with a 45 minutes talk given by none other than our own Chair of Religious Studies, Dr. Lovji Cama. He began a brief talk and presentation on the history and culture of ancient Persia and how Zoroastrian religion was the Imperial religion of the Persian Kings. He continued his talk on the basic rituals, prayers, and practices of the Zoroastrian religion. He explained how the navjote ceremony was similar to the bar/bat mitzvah ceremony in Judaism. The students were given an opportunity to ask questions on the rituals, history and culture of the past and



modern day practices here in North America. They were curious as to how we practice our faith day to day in a country which is outside the spectrum of mainstream theology. As the students toured the building they could identify with the architecture and motifs that they studied in their text books over the course of the semester. Several students posed questions to Dr. Cama regarding the belief of good and evil, the afterlife and how we educate our children here in North America.

The tour was followed by the students and Prof Secunda observing the Boi Ceremony performed by Ervad Pervez Patel. Ervad Pervez Patel welcomed the students into the Atash Gah. They experienced the pre-ritual cleansing of the hands and face, covering their heads, and removing their shoes. As he began reciting our Avestan prayers aloud, the students solemnly stood, watching and observing the rituals and practices of lighting and tending to the fire, and listening to the sacred blessing. He completed the ceremony with a brief translation and explanation of what took place and the meaning behind the fire.

The students were ever so grateful to have had the opportunity to witness such a rare and special ritual. They were also grateful for the opportunity to listen to Dr. Cama give his talk and learn about the different periods of when Zoroastrianism prevailed and how it has migrated to the west and in North America.

As the students left they all felt very compelled to have had this experience and be able to walk about and see how the Zoroastrians practice their faith here in North America. A sincere thanks to Professor Secunda for reaching out to us and coordinating this effort. Also a special thanks to Dr. Lovji Cama and Ervad Pervez Patel for their time and effort to educate

students who may one day bring their own class of students to visit our Dar E Mehr. Our hope is to invite Prof Secunda back to give us a talk on his topic of Zoroastrianism and Judaism in the near future.

ROADMAP TO RELIGIONS

BY FERZIN PATEL

Shortly after the visit from Bard College, DMZT was contacted by Ramsey High School Social Studies teacher, Daniel Willever from New Jersey. Mr. Willever teaches 11th and 12th graders a course on Human Geography involving the study of different cultures and religions. In years past, he takes his students on a field trip to several different houses of worship in the Bergen/Rockland County area. The different houses of worship include a synagogue, Hindu temple, and mosque. This year his plan was to include our own Zoroastrian Dar-E-Mehr on their multi-cultural tour after learning that we had recently built a new Zoroastrian Cultural Center through a recent press release to the newspapers.

The purpose of this trip was three-fold. First, it gives students the opportunity to engage with an environment and individuals that they typically would not encounter or have the opportunity to know. Secondly, it provides a learning experience outside of the school—something that students typically value and remember. Finally, a significant part of the curriculum involves the study of different cultures and religions. This trip engages students with

the curriculum and allows them to apply what they have learned in class to this real life experience, and has been proven to be a highly valuable experience in the past.

The class of 67 students, along with 3 chaperones made their last stop to the Dar-E-Mehr. They were quite eager to look around, take photographs and video clips, and were awe-struck by the vast columns outside the entrance of the building, and very curious to view the shiny afargunyu from the glass window. As they entered they were greeted by DMZT Trustee, Ferzin Patel and Ervad Pervez Patel. The students were escorted into the Main Hall where they given a brief explanation for 30 minutes by Ferzin Patel of the basic ideologies and rituals of the Zoroastrian religion. Ferzin also explained what was done during the navjote initiation ceremony using a young male mannequin dressed in a sudreh/kusti, legha and topi. The explanation included comparisons to other religions and how we conduct the initiation ceremony here in North America. Students had several inquisitive questions regarding why the Persians migrated to India and how we preserve the faith between the two cultures of India and Iran. The students also asked questions regarding how the building was funded and built, and how our community has adapted into the North American Diaspora.

Ferzin led the group of 67 students and 3 teachers into the prayer hall where Ervad Pervez Patel led the initiation of the Boi Ceremony. The students experienced and observed very patiently the recitation of the prayers, tending of the fire, and the rituals associated with the Boi Ceremony. Ervad Pervez Patel gave a beautiful explanation of the meaning behind the ceremony, along with differentiating that we are NOT fire worshippers as is sometimes believed, but pray to the fire the same way one may pray to a cross amongst Christians or Star of David in Judaism. Ervad Pervez engaged the students in a very good discussion.

As the class was ready to head back to the school, the students voiced to us that most of them had never been to a Zoroastrian Center and will treasure this moment. They were very gracious and thanked us for sharing our culture and religion with them. We knew from then, that we had embarked on something quite amazing; and that was to open the eyes of a young student who knew nothing of one community and show them that we exist. They also realized how so many of their own beliefs stem from the same ideas and universal truths of so many religions. As the group was getting ready to depart, Mr. Willever shared with me that his cousin married a Zoroastrian in Canada two weeks prior. Mr. Willever stated as he left the building that we will be on their Roadmap to Religions for years to come.

ZAGNY LAUNCHES NEW SENIOR GROUP

BY NAWAZ MERCHANT AND PIROJA PRESS

On Dec 11, despite the impending snowfall, about 45 seniors met in the new Pomona Dar e Mehr, to launch a new senior group in the tristate area, serving NJ NY and CT. Inspired by Houston Association's Golden Group, the group adopted the



name Z-Goldies (Zarathushti Goldies) since it does not specify any age cut-off. All seniors are welcome.

This program is an outcome of the Population Needs Assessment conducted last year by Nawaz Merchant, Piroja Press and Dolly Dastoor, which identified the need for a transportation



coordinator role and diverse activities in the local area as being key for seniors to maintain engagement and keep active. Increased engagement and participation is associated with improved physical and mental health. The research which is summarized in a recent issue of the FEZANA Journal, suggested that by building small groups of friends, Zarathushtis can avail of the local events held by senior centers, Persian and Indian associations and others. The objective of this program is to increase activity level and engagement through community participation and companionship.

After a lunch of Dhan-dar-chicken-fish-veggies (courtesy of Yasmin Ghadiali, Piroja Press, Nawaz Merchant, Kamal Merchant and Khush Bellihomji) an Atash Niyayesh prayer was performed by Ervad Pervez Patel, followed by Hum-bandagi, wherein Ervad Pervez Patel invoked Dadar Ahura Mazda's blessings upon this new community initiative.

Since the NY-NJ-CT area is quite large, the group is organized into about six local areas: Northern NJ, Central and South NJ, Manhattan+Queens, Long Island, Westchester+NY, and areas of CT+NY. Members from each area sat together, introduced themselves and participated as a team. Each group decided upon local activities that they would like to join. Yasmin Ghadiali accepted the role of Transportation Coordinator, supported by Teshtar Irani.

Members joined a singalong of golden oldies (lyrics located by Rusi Sorabji) by Sinatra, Streisand and Julie Andrews, followed by requests by members for old favorites in English, Gujarati, Farsi and even Marathi! Our seniors also collected non-perishable food items for the Food Pantry in Rockland county, called People to People of Rockland. Four large boxes of canned goods were donated to the Rockland county this January.

Future events planned are (April 9th) Housie/Chaat Food Party, and (date pending) Golden Oldies music dance with families and grand-kids. We hope that those who could not join us at our first event will be able to do so at many more upcoming get-togethers. Contact Nawaz at 908 892 2115, or navmerch2002@yahoo.com or Piroja at rdpress@aol.com

ZARATHUSHTRA'S VISION AND ZOROASTRIANISM TODAY

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SEMINAR HELD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2016

BY KEKI DADACHANJI

In the Gathas Zarathushtra expressed a vision that was revolutionary for his times, and remains revolutionary today. The activities of the Zoroastrian community often focus on rituals (such as Jashans), charity, celebrations, and religious education of our children. We seldom talk about the essence of Zarathushtra's teachings and, when we do, we reduce them to "Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds". Zarathushtra had a comprehensive vision, which, if we grasped it, would shape our very life. It is with the intention of reminding ourselves of that vision that the Board of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York organized a seminar. The presenters included a philosopher, an ordained priest, a linguist who translated the Gathas, a lawyer, and a chemist who has organized the religious education of our children. Each speaker in this distinguished panel possesses a deep knowledge of, and affection for, our faith.

Professor Kaikhosrov Irani sadly could not attend the event in person due to health issues. However, he was interviewed by Shahrooz Ash earlier, and that conversation was recorded. The audience had the privilege of hearing Professor Irani give a most lucid and precise interpretation of Zarathushtra's vision. This is briefly summarized below.

Ahura Mazda conceived of an ideal creation. The totality of that vision of ideal creation is Asha, an untranslatable word generally rendered in English as Truth. Asha postulates an ideal form of existence where all its constituents are in perfect harmony. In practical language, this means that no one prospers at the expense of someone else. This vision was then actualized in the material world. In the material world, which we inhabit, it is possible that Asha may not be realized. Spirit which promotes Asha is called Spento Mainyu, and the one which frustrates Asha is called Angro Mainyu. This struggle of Good versus Evil is the essential duality of Zarathushtra's presentation. To enable his creation to move towards his ideal vision, Ahura Mazda gave everyone an inner intuition, called Vohu Mano (Good Mind), this inner intuition enables each person to grasp what is right and what is wrong in every situation. Once what is right is recognized, we are expected to try to correct the wrong. This is called the practice of "Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds". Acceptance of this vision and this way of life is an individual decision, not a tribal decision (an accurate characterization, which offends some people if used in our times). Each of us makes this choice, and lives with the consequences of that choice. This is the revolutionary aspect of Zarathushtra's vision, because it rejects the force of tradition. When we do something that goes against our inner intuition because tradition calls for

it, we are going against Asha. Thus Free Will implies the right to question the tradition. Finally, individuals are sometimes unable to distinguish between right and wrong. This is so, because their inner intuition is clouded by self-interests. When we can remove selfish motives from our mind, the Good Mind will unfailingly tell us what is right.

There are many parallels between Zarathushtra's vision and the vision of the Upanishads. In order to develop unerring wisdom, we must ensure judgment is not clouded by selfish desires and the ego. Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita give penetrating insights into the nature of selfish desires and the ego. At some point in future we should try to understand these commonalities, so that we can better communicate our faith to our brethren from other faiths, and better guide our own life along Zarathushtra's vision.

Dastur Dr. Kersi Antia first cited Gathic verses (Yasna 30.2, 3

was noticeable in the Younger Avesta that followed the Gathic period. This text incorporated many of the pre-Gathic beliefs, which pervade our practices and beliefs to this day. Zarathushtra would have asked each of his followers, individually, to question the changes using his/her Good Mind, and decide what to accept.

Dr. Stanley Insler is best known for his translation of the Gathas in English. He is a linguist, and a scholar of Sanskrit and the Vedic literature. Thus he is eminently qualified to identify similarities between Sanskrit and the Gathic language, as well as between the vision contained in the Gathas and that contained in the Upanishads.

His presentation focused on the concept of Asha, which he regards as central to Zarathushtra's vision. Asha is variously translated as Truth (preferred by Dr. Insler) or Righteousness. Truth is not interpreted here as the opposite of falsehood. It stands for the abstract Right, and an action in accord with Right.



and 4), which succinctly and beautifully capture the basic Gathic teachings such as freedom to choose and our responsibility towards approaching Zarathushtra's vision. Our role in promoting Asha is two-fold: first, knowing what is right, and second, having the will and courage to correct what we know to be wrong. The first part impels us to purge our Good Mind of obscuring clouds of selfish desires and ego; the second asks us to be spiritual activists. Gathas emphasize gender equality (Yasna 51.22) so as to give equal role to men and women in progressing towards perfection (Frashokereti).

This Gathic message remained deeply rooted in the consciousness of Zarathushtis as an archetype, even before the Gathas were translated. Thus Parsis have reputation for honesty, philanthropy, and concern for the environment. The Dadestan e Dini (questions 1, 2 and 3) regards mankind as more important than even the sun, moon and other planets, because mankind alone can bring about Frashokereti, which is our final destination.

The Gathic teachings were transmitted as symbols, since writing was not known then, such as Sudreh, Kushti, Fire, flower arrangements in the Jashan ceremony, etc. Even our Ashirvad (wedding) ceremony represents the essence of Gathic teachings, according to the famous scholar Hodivala.

Changes to Zarathushtra's vision as articulated in the Gathas

Right is what makes the universe move towards perfection. The importance of Truth in Hakhamenian times is shown by the myriad of people's names in the Persepolis tablets which have the word Asha in them. A close approximation to Asha is the concept of Rita in the Vedas.

The best-known reference to Asha is in the Ashem Vohu prayer. This short, powerful prayer tells us to do the Right because it is Right, and for no other motive. It is remarkably similar to the famous line in the Bhagavad Gita which states: "You must do what is right; but it is not in your jurisdiction to expect the fruit of your act." If we cannot control the result of our action, then the reason to do the Right is simply because it is the Right thing to do.

When we know what is Right, and act upon it, then our consciousness will be at peace. This blissful state is called Ushta. When we do this all the time, we are helping the universe move towards perfection, and we attain Ushta, the joyous enlightenment.

Kersi Shroff gave an overview of Zoroastrian literature available in libraries and on the internet. He started by warning the audience about the reliability of the material available on the internet. Dinyar Patel has identified the websites he deems reliable.



Mr. Shroff spoke about ten publications. Among them, of particular interest was the one by Yuhan Vevaina on the insider-outsider divide in the study of Zoroastrianism. The problem can be briefly stated this way: "To what degree, if any, are practices and beliefs accessible to the researcher who may not necessarily share these beliefs and who does not necessarily participate in these practices." This topic was also touched upon in Professor Irani's interview where a question was raised as to whether linguists who do not necessarily share Zoroastrian beliefs can insightfully translate the Gathas.

Further references about various publications presented may be obtained from Mr. Kersi Shroff., or from Lovji Cama.

Dr. Lovji Cama is best known to the ZAGNY community as a person who has devoted a good part of his life to providing religious education to our children. He spoke about the meaning of Fire in Zoroastrian scriptures and rituals. Fire is the essential symbol of purity in the Zoroastrian tradition. Zoroastrian temples have a Fire as a center of worship, and prayers are recited in the presence of Fire. Dr. Cama examined two texts to develop the significance of Fire in Zoroastrianism: the Gathas, and the Atash Nyaish. He used two translations of the Gathas, one by Dr. Irach Taraporewala, and the other by Dr. Stanley Insler, to properly capture the nuances of the quoted verses.

In a nutshell, the Gathas treat Fire as an agency of Ahura Mazda (Thy Fire) which gives the just rewards to the good and the wicked, thus it metes out justice. This is an abstract concept and does not refer to a physical fire. Later texts often imposed anthropomorphic representations of these abstract concepts.

The Atash Nyaish treats Fire as a physical entity, to be used in various rituals.



Atash is a purifying agent. At a physical level it removes impurities from what is placed in it. At a spiritual level it inspires a devotee to remove impurities from the internal world. However, when we stand in front of the Fire, we should regard it as a physical representation of Ahura Mazda's Fire, only then we can justify the respect that Zoroastrians give to Fire.

Keki Dadachanji was the moderator for the event. After each presentation he raised some questions for the audience to reflect on. He also tried to encourage the audience to think about how to apply some of the concepts presented to their daily living. Some of the questions Keki raised are:

1. Gathas tell us that every one of us has an innate intuition, a Good Mind, to know what is right in any situation. Is it possible then for two people reflecting on a situation, without any selfish motives or ego, to reach different conclusions as to what is right? (Consider the issue of abortion. Two people may reach different conclusions as to what is right.) The Gathas also ask us to try to correct the wrong when we see it. How should two people with different interpretation of what is right act?

2. Which options are permissible in opposing evil? Is violence permissible?

There was good interaction between each speaker and members of the audience as speakers addressed questions from the audience.

Future events should be designed to engage the audience in discussions on key questions or issues. This was the feedback from the audience in closing.

We expect to organize similar seminars or workshops twice a year. Further suggestions on making these events even more interesting and inclusive are welcome.

JAMVA CHALOJI GALA NIGHT

PRIYA (NAVAZ) LOPINTO

NOV 12, 2016

The preparations start early as we want to be the first ones there and secure prime seats. I put on my frilly dress, my long white socks and white patent leather "buckle shoes". My brother looks smart in his new corduroy pants and button down shirt. The ladies are decked in their finest lace sarees with ornate broaches and freshly ironed embroidered handkerchiefs. The men won't be outdone in their stately Daglis (suit) and Fetas (hat). The baag



of an Adi Marazban natak (play). Songs packed with double entendres, mixed in with songs of sombre and religious nature, enthralled kids and grown ups alike.

Zagny's yearly Jamva Chaloji banquets started as a way to raise funds for the New York Dar-E-Mehr. A place for the Zarathustis in the vicinity to meet and grow as a community. A place for giving, sharing and celebrating life. This year's banquet too was a way for our community to get together and celebrate life and culture. This amazing evening could not have been possible without the efforts of numerous volunteers and ~220 guests that brought in a net profit of over \$21,000!!

THANK YOU!!

(reception hall) is a short taxi ride away and when we get there my eyes instantly locate the swarm of kids engrossed in play, oblivious of their surroundings. Some of us barely know each other but that does not seem to matter. We make teams and play games while Parsi songs blare on the loud speaker and the grown ups mingle amongst themselves. Suddenly over the loud speaker booms the announcement "JAMVA CHALOJI" and prim and proper gets left behind as we make a mad dash, to the rows of white clad tables, to secure seats in the pehli paanth (first seating).

Zagny's Jamva Chaloji 2016, refreshed this memory of lagans (weddings) from my childhood. True to the Zarathusti tenant of preserving the basic elements of existence, the food was served in biodegradable patras (banana leaves). Volunteer servers kept the flow of food going while greeting us with the polite "Jamjoji" (Bon appetite). Rotlis (flat bread), lagan nu achar (wedding pickles), Sarya (rice chips), Sali marghi (chicken and potato straws), Palav daar (Lamb rice and lentil soup), Patra ni machi (steamed fish in chutney) and Kaju (cashew) chicken were just some of the delicacies that we partook of.

The pre-dinner entertainment had the undertones and fanfare

We are happy to share that Jamva Chaloji 2016, was a tremendously successful event. A display of the finest traditional attire, Garas and Daglis enhanced the elegant evening as guests relished Persian culinary delights and a traditional sit-down Parsi wedding banquet dinner on banana leaves prepared by our community's top chefs, and served with warmth by our volunteers. Door prizes, Raffles and exclusive silent auction items added to the entertainment, making it an exciting and memorable event for all 200+ guests.

The ZAGNY Board and Fundraising team would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the success of Jamva Chaloji 2016 with their contributions. From our generous sponsors, to the entertainment group, to the donors of raffle items and all who donated the food items and manpower, and made the Jamva Chaloji 2016 an event to remember – we could not have done it without you – THANK YOU! This event was our final fundraiser for the new Dar-e-Mehr Capital Campaign ending on December 31, 2016, and we are thrilled to have met our fundraising goals for the event.





SUNDAY MARCH 26, 2017

1ST SAALGREH

**COME CELEBRATE THE
FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF
THE ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DAR-E-MEHR
A "KHUSHALI NU JASHAN" AT 11:00 AM
FOLLOWED BY A CONTRIBUTORY LUNCH**

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MAYA MISTRY – SECOND DEGREE BLACK BELT IN TAE KWON DO

On January 28, 2017, 13-year old Maya was one of three in her class to earn her Second-Degree Black Belt in the Korean martial art form of Tae Kwon Do.

After completing her first-degree black belt in December 2013, Maya continued her intense training towards the next level. At the end of a written test and grueling three-hour physical test, Maya was awarded her hard earned second-degree black belt by the World Tae Kwon Do Federation.

Maya began her Tae Kwon Do training at Cosmo's Martial Arts Center (CMAC) in October 2010 under the guidance and instruction of Master Cosmo and his team of instructors. In spite of a couple broken bones and several injuries over the years, Maya's commitment to the training and resolve to persevere has culminated in this commendable achievement.

Maya participates on the CMAC Demo Team and also helps as an assistant instructor at CMAC.

Seen here is Maya with Master Cosmo at the Black Belt Awards Ceremony.

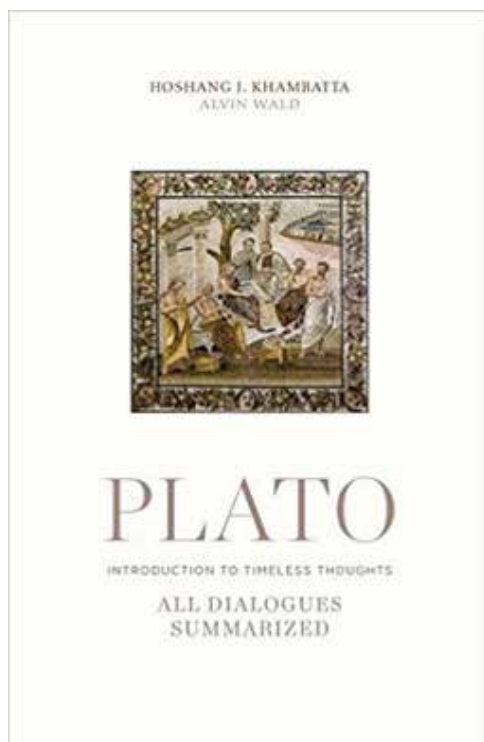


DR. HOSHANG J. KHAMBATTA PUBLISHES SUMMARY OF PLATO'S DIALOGUES

Our own ZAGNY member, Hoshang Khambatta, after a 33 year career in the practice of medicine at Columbia University and Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City, retired some years ago, then went on to serve in medical missions in Central America, India and China. He then rejoined Columbia University to read Philosophy.

This journey led him to publish in 2016, together with Alvin Wald, his book titled: Plato – Introduction to Timeless Thoughts. The book, which summarizes Plato's Dialogues, is directed at a novice, a teenager who has reached an age of understanding or an adult.

Plato is one of the pillars of humanity. His dialogues are an important part of our cultural heritage, yet to read all of them not only require ample time but also the stamina to digest their wisdom. Hence this summary offers everyone an access to understanding Plato and his contributions to western philosophy. It is certainly "a must read" as it is written in modern colloquial English in one volume - an impressive feat by all accounts. Certainly it was no small accomplishment to condense the equivalent of 1,500 pages of Plato's Dialogues into some 250 summarized ones. As of now it is the only summary of all of Plato's Dialogues available in English in one volume. Bravo Hoshang. ZAGNY celebrates your contribution.



ZAGNY WELCOMES ERVAD PORUS

PAVRI

Ervad Porus Cyrus Pavri going to Brookside Middle School, Allendale, New Jersey, USA completed his Navar ceremony on December 18th 2016 Roj Sherevar, Mah Amardad, YZ 1386 at Bai Motlibai Wadia Adaran, Jogeshwari (West) Mumbai, INDIA under the guidance of Ervad Kekobad D. Panthaki, Ervad Eric J. Dastur & Ervad Khushroo D. Kanga.

He was felicitated on his accomplishment at an acknowledgement



ceremony held at the new Dar-e-Mehr on February 4, 2017 where he performed the Boi ceremony. Lovji Cama, Dean of Religious Studies at ZAGNY, gifted a copy of the book “The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra - Translation of the Gathas into English”, by Irach J. S. Taraporevala, to Erv Porus, as a token of appreciation from the community to the young man, for his commitment in preparing himself in perpetuating our faith in the Western Zarathushti Diaspora. Erv. Porus is looking forward to participating on future Jashans and to carry the torch forward.

May God Ahura Mazda grant Erv. Porus happiness, health, and success and make him walk the path of Asha.

ZAGNY NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA

BY NATASHA DUSAJ

DECEMBER 31, 2017

Coming back from my first semester at college, I will admit that spending New Year's eve at the Dar-E-Mehr was not my idea of fun. However with mom serving on the Board for majority of my 18 years, spending New Year's Eve at the Dare Mehr is definitely a tradition for the Dusaj family. While the new building was under construction we had taken a 2 year hiatus and I will admit that I went very grudgingly to this one.

However once we got there it did look like it was going to be fun. Our Dar-E-Mehr was beautifully illuminated and looked very festive with LED laser lights (done by Sam Shroff). As guests

arrived, they had their family portrait taken professionally by none other than my Kerman mama (Dukandar). With props like hats and masks families took some fun and goofy pictures. The food set up was also different--Instead of the usual appetizers followed by dinner, this year my mom (Khursheed Navder) had worked with the caterer to try out something new. With four stations—Indian, Indo-Chinese, Chaat, and Italian—there was something for everyone to enjoy (my personal favorite was the yummy chaat and the lassi!) throughout the evening. My dad (Shailendra Dusaj) had the Time Square countdown projected on the wall. There was a new DJ and the Emcee (Atresh and Payal from Urban Events) who seemed to know our bawajis music pulse and started getting the crowd involved with games. The first game had couples dancing around to music (men clockwise in an inner circle, and women anticlockwise on the outside). When the music stopped they had to find their partners hugging each other the tightest to avoid elimination. There was another game where teams were given some songs and our fun loving groups had no fear of being silly acting out those weird songs. The fun and games continued with a great mix of Hindi and English music. The dessert station opened up around 11 pm and there was quite a nice spread from flan to some halwa, gulab jamuns and ras malai.

As we approached midnight, hats, noisemakers and glow sticks along with champagne glasses were passed around and before I knew it, we were all counting down with live TV broadcast and rang in the New Year. This was one of the best parties yet and even after midnight no one seemed to be in a rush to get home and the dancing continued for a while. I could tell that all present had a wonderful time and will sheepishly admit that so did I





JAMSHEDI NAVROZE CELEBRATIONS

**JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT AND FUN TO CELEBRATE
JAMSHEDI NAVROZE AT THE DAR-E-MEHR**

DATE: SATURDAY MARCH 25TH, 2017

TIME: 6:30 PM ONWARDS

VENUE: ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DAR-E-MEHR, NEW YORK

ADULT MEMBERS: \$ 40

NON-MEMBER GUESTS: \$ 60

CHILDREN 5-12: \$ 25

CHILDREN UNDER 5: FREE

REGISTER ONLINE AT

www.zagny.org

JOINTLY HOSTED WITH IRANIAN ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION

WORLD ZARATHUSHTI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (WZCC) HONORS ARZAN SAM WADIA IN HONG KONG

ZAGNY is proud to announce that our own Arzan Sam Wadia, ZAGNY Board Member was honored in December 2016 at the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) Global Meet in Hong Kong. He was co-recipient of the 2016 Outstanding Zarathushti Professional of the Year Award for his professional qualities in collaborative Designs and Architecture and also in the field of Digital Media and Information Technology.



[PHOTO COURTESY PARSIANA – JASMINE D DRIVER]

Read a full account of the Hong Kong WZCC Global Meet at: <https://parsikhabar.net/events/wzcc-charms-hong-kong/14791/>

ERVAD DR. JEHAN BAGLI BESTOWED WITH FEZANA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



FEZANA's highest award is The Lifetime Achievement Award which recognizes a highly-respected North American Zarathushti, who through his/her personal achievements and meritorious service has brought recognition to the Zarathushti community worldwide. On the occasion of the 30th Anniversary Celebration, FEZANA is honored to announce that Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli has been awarded this Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award is given to Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli, a highly respected North American Zarathusti and a scientific scholar, who through his professional excellence, personal achievements and meritorious community service has brought recognition to the Zarathushti community in North America and the world over. The award will be presented to Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli at the FEZANA 30th Anniversary and ZAH Legacy Scholarship 10th Anniversary Gala on Saturday, April 29, 2017 in Houston, Texas. The Gala will take place as part of the FEZANA Annual General Meeting 2017 weekend.

Read more : <https://fezana.org/ervad-dr-jehan-bagli-bestowed-fezana-lifetime-achievement-award/>

FEZANA TO CELEBRATE 30TH ANNIVERSARY AT GALA EVENT IN HOUSTON

Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) the parent organization representing Zoroastrians in North America is celebrating its 30th Anniversary in 2017.

A series of events at the national and regional levels have been planned for the whole year.

The kickoff to the celebrations commenced in Chicago in November 2016.

There is a 30th Anniversary Gala Banquet planned on Saturday April 29th 2017 as part of FEZANA's 30th Annual General Meeting, hosted by FEZANA member association Zoroastrian Association of Houston, in Houston, TX.

On this occasion the FEZANA JOURNAL will come out with a commemorative 30th Anniversary collectors issue.

Read more here: <https://fezana.org/annual-general-meeting-2017/>

OBITUARY: KIOMARS SOROOSHYARI

AGE: 74 • Basking Ridge

Kiomars Sorooshyari passed away on December 23, 2016. Kiomars was a dear friend to ZAGNY and an IZA member.

Kiomars is survived by his beloved wife Parvin, daughter Nahid, son Siamak and one sister. He was predeceased by his parents and two brothers.

Kiomars was born in Yazd and after completing his Electrical and Electronic Engineering degree in Leicester Polytechnic in Leicester, England, Kiomars worked as a facility engineer for ten years in the hospital of Bank Melli, Iran, before he moved his family to the U.S. in the late 80's.

He was a true practitioner of increasing Kherad, i.e. wisdom, Daad, i.e. advocating for justice, and Abadani, i.e. building community.

Kiomars was an integral part of the Tri-State Zarathushti community and worked closely with ZAGNY on various projects including, most recently, the inauguration of our new Dar-E-Mehr.

Kiomars served on the IZA board multiple times, was an IZA contributor since IZA's inception and was also on the DMZT Board for two terms.

We will all miss our dear friend, Kiomars. His warmth and kindness made everyone around him happy. May His Soul Rest In Peace.



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COMMUNITY NEWS .

FRESHLY BREWED COFFEE

The call from many for a great cup of freshly brewed coffee was heard and thanks to the generous contribution of Darius and Linda Jamshidian we have a shiny new 100 cup Coffee Brewing Machine. Thanks to Astad and Behroze Clubwala for completing the purchase and making it happen.....The smell of the freshly brewed coffee got much applause at the last religious class and will be enjoyed by all ZAGNY and IZA members.

Looking to Donate Your Unused Piano??

ZAGNY is looking for someone to donate a 'used but usable' piano in good condition. We are happy to come and check it out and will arrange to have it removed free of charge.

Since we are a duly registered 501(c)(3) organization, you will receive documentation of your donation for your tax records, and you will also have the satisfaction of knowing that your donation will help ZAGNY promote our budding pianists.

Please contact Khursheed Navder at

vicepresident@zagny.org. Thanks!



ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK, INC.

106 Pomona Rd, Suffern, NY 10901 Tel. 845.362.2104 www.zagny.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014–2017

President: Astad J. Clubwala
Vice President: Khursheed Navder
Treasurer: Cyrus Pavri
Secretary: Zubin Dumasia
Joint Secretary: Meherzeen Daruwala

Members-at-Large: Kerman Dukandar
Kayomarz Khambatta
Mayyar Noushi
Sam Shroff
Khushroo Vimadalal
Arzan Sam Wadia

ZAGNY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS, APRIL 2, 2017

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Election of the Board of Directors of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York, Inc. (ZAGNY), will be held at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, New York 10901, on Sunday, APRIL 2, 2017.

The term of the new Board of Directors will be for a period of three years from April 2017 to March 2020. The following nominations have been received for the positions of

President	Astad Clubwala
Vice-President	Khursheed Navder
Treasurer	Cyrus Pavri
Secretary	Kayomarz Khambatta
Joint Secretary	Meherzeen Daruwala
Members at Large:	Kerman Dukandar, Mayyar Noushi, Sam Shroff, Natalie Gandhi, Wadia, Nawaz LoPinto, Arzan Sam Wadia

To continue to support the various activities at ZAGNY, a proposal to maintain the six Member at Large positions shall be put forth at the AGM. We hope to have your support to enable the enthusiastic volunteers to serve our community.

An absentee mail-in ballot is included in this newsletter along with voting instructions for members who are unable to attend the AGM in person or who would like to vote by mail. All mail-in ballots should be postmarked no later than **March 24th, 2017.**

ABSENTEE BALLOT FORM

FOR ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ZAGNY FOR THE TERM APRIL 2017 – MARCH 2020

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS:

- Only ZAGNY-2017 dues paid members are eligible to vote.
- Each adult member has one vote, with up to two votes per family membership. Please make additional copies of the ballot as required.
- This mail-in ballot is for members who are unable to attend ZAGNY Annual General Meeting on April 2, 2017, or who would like to vote by mail.
- The mail-in ballot should be postmarked no later than March 24th, 2017, and mailed to,
- ZAGNY Secretary, Meherzeen Daruwala, 248 Park Ave, West Harrison, NY 10604.
- Mail-in ballots must include the name and address of the voting member marked clearly on the upper left hand corner of the mailing envelope.
- If there is more than one mail-in ballot included in the envelope, the names of all voting members must be legibly written on the lower left hand corner of the mailing envelope. Please do not put your name on the ballot. Unnamed envelopes will be disqualified.
- Members who have voted by mail may attend the meeting but will not be allowed to vote again unless they revoke their mail-in ballot before voting in person

ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ZAGNY FOR THE TERM APRIL 2017 – MARCH 2020

PRESIDENT	ASTAD CLUBWALA	_____
VICE PRESIDENT	KHURSHEED NAVDER	_____
TREASURER	CYRUS PAVRI	_____
SECRETARY	KAYOMARZ KHAMBATTA	_____
JOINT SECRETARY	MEHERZEEN DARUWALA	_____
MEMBERS AT LARGE:	KERMAN DUKANDAR	_____
	NATALIE GANDHI	_____
	MAYYAR NOUSHI	_____
	SAM SHROFF	_____
	NAWAZ LoPINTO	_____
	ARZAN SAM WADIA	_____

To continue to support the various activities at ZAGNY, a proposal to maintain the six Member at Large positions shall be put forth at the AGM. We hope to have your support to enable the enthusiastic volunteers to serve our community.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Signature: _____

ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK

2017 MEMBERSHIP FORM



WEB: WWW.ZAGNY.ORG | FACEBOOK: FACEBOOK.COM/ZAGNYUSA | TWITTER: TWITTER.COM/_ZAGNY

NAME: _____
Last Name First Name Middle Name Name of Spouse

NAME OF CHILDREN: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____
Street City State Zip Country

CONTACT _____
Home Tel Cell Phone Spouse Cell Phone

Email Address Spouse's Email Address

	MEMBER	SPOUSE
ORIGINALLY FROM:	_____	_____
PROFESSION / TITLE / BUSINESS:	_____	_____
COMPANY NAME:	_____	_____
ADDRESS:	_____	_____
EMAIL:	_____	_____
TELEPHONE:	_____	_____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP: REGULAR ☐ ASSOCIATE ☐
REGULAR MEMBER: AT LEAST ONE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY IS ZOROASTRIAN
 ASSOCIATE MEMBER: NO MEMBER OF THE FAMILY IS ZOROASTRIAN

CATEGORY OF MEMBERSHIP:	**ALLOCATE DONATION TO THE FOLLOWING FUND(S)	MEMBERSHIP:
FAMILY @ \$ 150 <input type="checkbox"/>	NEW BUILDING \$ _____	MEMBERSHIP: _____
INDIVIDUAL @ \$ 75 <input type="checkbox"/>	GENERAL FUND \$ _____	DONATION **: _____
SENIOR INDIVIDUAL @ \$ 40 <input type="checkbox"/>	SCHOLARSHIP \$ _____	TOTAL VIA CHECK: \$ _____
SENIOR COUPLE @ \$ 75 <input type="checkbox"/>	CRITICAL ASSISTANCE \$ _____	CHECK # _____
STUDENT @ \$ 30 <input type="checkbox"/>	LIBRARY \$ _____	
NON-RESIDENT FAMILY @ \$ 45 <input type="checkbox"/>		

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY BY ☐ EMAIL ☐ US POST

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY:
FAMILY: PARENT(S) AND CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS
INDIVIDUAL ADULT: NON-STUDENT 18 YEARS TO 65 YEARS
SENIOR CITIZEN: 65 YEARS AND OLDER
STUDENT: 18-25 YEAR ENROLLED FULL-TIME
NON-RESIDENT FAMILY: RESIDING OUTSIDE THE TRI-STATE AREA OF NY, NJ AND CT.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO **ZAGNY** AND MAIL ALONG WITH THIS FORM TO:
CYRUS PAVRI
ZAGNY TREASURER
961 FRANKLIN TURNPIKE,
ALLENDALE NJ 07401-1315



Meherzeen Daruwala

ZAGNY SECRETARY

248 Park Avenue

West Harrison, NY 10604

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH:

Sun 5th	Religious class and Board Meeting Event: Lecture by Professor K. Irani
Sat 25th	Navroze function
Sun 26th	DM 1st Anniversary Jashan

APRIL:

Sun 2nd	Religious class ZAGNY A G M
Sun 9th	Z Goldies Event
Wed-Sun 27-30	FEZANA A G M in Houston TX

MAY:

Sun 7th	Religious class and Board Meeting DMZT A G M
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