



Volume 27: Issue 09

September 2014

SUNDAY SCHOOL

PLACE: ZHCC, 8787 W. Airport Blvd., Houston, TX 77071 Tel: 713-270-9339

TIME: 11.30 a.m. – Different times for different groups.

DATE: September 14, 2014

Children's Session: Sunday School starts at 10.30 am. Topics for this month -

- Gujarati objects, songs, letters
- Lesson on Nyaishes

Middle Group: This group is for the children in the middle school. If your child falls in this age group, do please bring him/her to the Sunday School.

Senior Group: Sarosh Collector conducts this session.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 14, 2014, 11 am to Noon at ZHCC main hall - First ever ZAH Fitness Program Open House. Events: Aerobics, Choreographed Cardio work out, Abdominals, Concentrated Core Work outs. Floor exercises

Sunday, September 21, 2014, 11 am – ZAH Picnic (Galveston Island State Park) – See attached flyer

Sunday, September 28, 2014, 3 pm - Meeting to discuss the Proposed Zoroastrian Senior Housing in Houston (ZSHH) Project.

In response to the interest expressed by several members of our community, a meeting has been scheduled to provide new and detailed information about this exciting project. The intent of this meeting is to present to our ZAH members an opportunity to review and reserve a unit before they are offered to Zarathushtis residing in other states.

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Presentation by Committee

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

Q & A

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Committee members available on one on one discussion

Saturday, October 4, 2014, 10 am – ZAH Annual Table Tennis Tournament. Member \$10, Non Member: \$15 (Includes lunch and chai), Spectators welcome to sign-up, come and play mahjong, carrom, etc. RSVP [online](#) on or before Oct 1st, 2014. See attached flyer.

Sunday, October 5, 2014, 11 am - MAEDIOZAREM GAHAMBAR and Fasli Mehragan Gahambar – RSVP Online.. Jashan starts at 11 am; \$10 per person if registered by 9/28/14. Children under 3 yrs gratis. [RSVP Online](#) . See attached flyer

Saturday, Sunday, November 1, 2, 2014 – Library Event – ZAH Library proudly presents Sarah Stewart, a lecturer in Zoroastrianism in the Department of the Study of Religions at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies).

Lunch will be served. Evening entertainment by Kamalrukh Gandhi and her *troupe*, followed by dinner. See attached flyer. RSVP to Yasmin Pavri at yspavri@yahoo.com.

MEETINGS

GOLDEN GROUP	Fourth Sunday of each month. Interested? Please call Zarine Balsara at 281-304-6611
LIBRARY COMMITTEE	First Sunday of each month at 11:00 AM. Interested in helping? Or would like more information, please call Aban Rustomji at 281-493-1275 or e-mail her at aban@coatingindustries.com

REPORTS

EC REPORT

By Aderbad Tamboli

ATASHKADEH UPDATE

The Atashkadeh at Houston is starting to pick up steam, and we are very pleased to update the community on its status.

On Saturday, August 16th, at an informal session, the donors of the Atashkadeh were finally announced. They are none other than long time ZAH members Shernaz and Feroze Bhandara of Sugar Land. Shernaz and Feroze have a long history of supporting the ZAH and they were major contributors to the building of the ZHCC Phase I as well.

At this session, we also showed a proposed concept design created by Mr. Dadi Surti, who was invited by the Bhandaras to visit Houston. Mr. Surti is a prominent architect from Karachi. In addition to designing a number of Agiaris/ Atashkadehs all over the world, he also designed the ZHCC.

The Atashkadeh will be capable of accommodating approximately 150 persons. The focal point is the inner sanctum that holds the fire and Afarganyu. The Atashkadeh will also include an Urvishgah for use in Paav Mahel ceremonies such as the Yazashne, Visparad, Vendidad, Nirangdin and Baj. In addition, there will be areas for the Navars to reside in during training. This will allow Houston to become one of the first places in North America for Navar training, allowing more young people to become Navars, especially those who cannot travel to India.

The next step in the Atashkadeh is to host a public meeting to discuss the modifications to the ZAH bylaws to add for the governing and operating rules of the Atashkadeh. These rules will be voted on during the November AGM.

The proposed concept design of the Atashkadeh is shown below, and we encourage everyone to take a look and let us know your comments, ideas etc. Please email the ideas and suggestions to Aderbad Tamboli at axtamboli@windstream.net.

Stay tuned for further updates
From the ZAH Executive Committee

EC TREASURER'S REPORT

By Kayomarz Sidhwa - Treasurer



From the Treasur^{\$}er's Desk

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that our utilities amount for approximately 22-24% of our annual operating expenses?

We would like to request you to please use the lights, A/C, water, etc. very sparingly, sensibly and with utmost care to assist us in our endeavor to keep the costs down.

"ADOPT A UTILITY A MONTH" PROGRAM

As you all know by now, we have launched **"Adopt a Utility a Month" program** this year where you can adopt a utility or utilities for one or more months and defray the utility costs, or even for general maintenance and support our "Center". We are so pleased to inform you that we have been getting a very favorable response and we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the donors for their tremendous gesture. All the donations/pledges received so far are:

- **General Maintenance**
 - \$100 per month from Mar 2014 to Feb 2015 by **Roshan & Zarir Sethna**
- **Gas - \$60 per month**
 - Mar to Dec 2014 by **Parvin & Mehraban Dinyarian**
- **Water - \$300 per month**
 - **Need a Sponsor**
- **Telephone - \$230 per month**
 - **Need a Sponsor**
- **Security - \$80 per month**
 - Mar to Dec 2014 by **Parvin & Mehraban Dinyarian**
- **Electricity - \$1,200 per month**
 - **Need a Sponsor**

Thank you very much again to all the donors so far and to all others who are thinking to adopt, please keep them coming!!!

LIBRARY REPORT

By Jango Mistry

Upcoming Library Annual Gala Event – It's Happening Soon!

The ZAH Library Committee has, by now, achieved a reputation for presenting to our community informative and interesting events that have been much appreciated. And sometimes we have been fortunate to feature world-class scholars in our sessions that are the envy of other Zoroastrian Associations. Such a landmark event is happening on November 1 and 2 when Dr. Sarah Stewart will come to Houston for our annual gala event.

Dr. Stewart is lecturer in Zoroastrianism at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), which is the world's leading institution for the study of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. More recently, Sarah was the project director and curatorial advisor for the much-acclaimed exhibition: *"The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination"* running in the Brunei Gallery of the University of London. Sarah Stewart is the author of numerous books and papers, and a consultant specializing in India and Iran.

We are truly honored that Sarah Stewart has agreed to cross the Atlantic to be with us. We are planning a memorable event spread over two days – all day on Saturday, November 1, with presentations, lunch, dinner and entertainment, and an informal get-together for a couple of hours on Sunday morning at the Center. Please refer to the details in the attached flyer.

We are expecting a great deal of interest and a large turnout. So please RSVP to Yasmin Pavri (yaspavri@yahoo.com) as soon as possible.

Kabraji Presentation

On Friday, August 29, we had a distinguished speaker, Kersee Kabraji, from Pune, India who gave us a talk on our religion as interpreted in the Gathas. An engineer by profession, and an avid student of religious scriptures, Kabraji presented over 80 slides that condensed the message of the Gathas in plain simple English. Separating the "mere following of rituals and ceremonies" from the actual knowledge of the religion's philosophy and tenets, Kabraji researched and published a book on his interpretation of the Gathas.

Zoroastrianism is a way of life, not bound by any commandments or restrictions. The principles of Zoroastrianism, as specified in the Gathas, are so rational that even today, thousands of years later, they are just as relevant as when they were first espoused. Kabraji concluded his talk by presenting some very interesting quotes by Tagore, Buddha, and other luminaries on Zarathushtra and Zoroastrianism.

The great deal of interest and numerous questions and discussions by the 50 or more attendees took the event past the scheduled end time.

Sincere Thanks

As any non-profit organization, the ZAH Library is always looking for funds and always trying to stretch its dollars to cover the events, and purchases of books and equipment. We are fortunate to have strong supporters of the ZAH Library who help us with their unsolicited donations. We wish to thank Pilo and Arni Ilavia for consistently supporting us, and their recent generous donation to the ZAH Library. We will all benefit.

YOUTH GROUP REPORT

By Vispi Katrak (ZAH Youth Group President)

Our Youth Group has many extravagant ideas this year as we plan to accomplish our goals and have a successful year. This month, our Youth will be having a Lock-In from the 19th-21st, which will be filled with many interesting sessions not only from Sarosh uncle, but also Nozer Buchia, Farokh Mistree and Dr. Janet. Farokh uncle and Dr. Janet will be teaching us how to prepare ourselves for college and tips that will help our careers as students become more successful.

We will also be attending the Houston Food Bank on Saturday as volunteering around the Houston community is one of our main goals this year.

Also, a special thank you to our ZAH community for the nonstop support towards our Youth Group, much appreciated!

MISCELLANEOUS

BOLLYWOOD BLAST (A Review by Jehanbux R. Mehta)

"I don't wanna go", a refrain, this time from adults and not from children being forced to attend a function not to their liking. But when we mentioned that our presence would be an encouragement to the several Zoroastrian youngsters who were to perform, most readily changed their minds to accompany us to the show. Just as well, for those who did not attend, really missed something.

"The Miller" is Houston's outdoor theatre that accommodates over two thousand in seats under a roof and encourages others to bring their own folding chairs or mats for a far but very good view of the huge stage from the grassy hill just beyond the seats. All for free. During the summer season, the repertoire is a mélange of Broadway musicals, Shakespearian plays, dance and song troupes from China, Japan, Korea, Argentina, Mexico and Europe, performances by the famed Houston Symphony, the Houston Opera and the prestigious Houston Ballet. It is a feast. On August 31, it was a blast! Bollywood Blast.

Having attended a few Bollywood productions in the past, truthfully, I was skeptical of the offering, but because several of our Zoroastrian kids were to be on stage, we felt that it should not be missed. So, twelve of us jury members agreed to view, review and pass unsolicited judgment. The red heavy curtain rose revealing no one on the stage. Instead, on a large screen came to life actors, including our own creative Kamalrukh Gandhi, who took us, not on a roller coaster ride, but flying around Bombay in an overcrowded rickshaw on a hilarious journey to Bollywood past and present. Thanks to the ingenuity of Yaksha Bhatt and A.K. Lodi, the entwining of their film with the outrageously superb dances on stage, a continuous and smooth flow was maintained throughout.

The audience came to life immediately with a rendition of dances to film songs of the 40's, 50's and 60's. So many popular tunes and how well they were danced to! Short and sweet: no long stretches but enjoyable truncated versions that made the whole show so delightful to watch. The next two scenes depicted classical and folk dances. Rapturous! The thundering applause said it all. Beautiful hand, foot and body movements sent us in ecstatic delight. Rounding off Act I was how *diwana* has been the influence of disco music on Bollywood pics – and us too. From where we were seated, we could clearly see our young friends Freya Daroga, Alyssa Tamboli, Tanaya Behramsha, Serena Setna, Friyana Sidhwa and Anushka Oak: their sparkling eyes, dazzling smiles and graceful movements made our day. Flitting in and out among the scores of dancers at any one time on the stage, you could see that in giving us a great treat, they too were enjoying themselves.

All the dancers were graceful, but I must mention one, our very own Arzan Gonda, who was grace personified. Arzan, the founder of Rhythm India, a group that has been teaching dancing to youngsters since long, is well known to us for putting on the mini shows at our Zoroastrian Center at various functions when she is not doing something at India House. Her dedication to and love of this art form has been contagious, prompting those who know her to put on a show for a much larger audience. So there we were four thousand plus spectators,, entranced by all that was going on the stage. There must have been over 150 dancers altogether and more than a hundred gorgeous costumes, one more beautiful than the other. The stage lighting and props brought out the glamour in them all. It was incomprehensible how perfect was the change in scenes and costumes at such short notice. It must have been bedlam backstage to manage this feat, but the unseen managers, including Lyla Daroga, Farzana Sidhwa, Sanobar Tamboli, Persis Behramshah, Tenaz Sunavala, Roshan Behramsha, Rashna Oak and a spattering of the other

gender, namely, Ruzbeh Gonda and Niraj Oak along with a company of many other volunteers did it to perfection. And to retain these unseen backstage scenes, there was Percy Behramsha clicking away furiously.

Act II took us through seven scenes, all delightful. Through the 1990's, the 2000's, with contemporary influence on dancing, cabaret of sorts, Tapori and a finale that brought the whole crowd roaring their approval. And, how could they not? The choreography was very commendable and, as said earlier, the flow between and within the scenes was uninterrupted. Some *goriest* around us remarked "never have we been so mesmerized".

Now to the jury: what verdict did they have for us? In all fairness, let me say that the twelve members were not at all influenced by the wine and/or beer that they guzzled during the intermission as the effect was dulled by the hearty consumption of kauri sandwiches, burgers, nuts, chips and what not. The scoring was: one for dismal and ten for outstanding. Okay, here's the count: 10, 10, 10 What? Everybody ten? But, of course, what other decision could they have arrived at! My only complaint: no bhel or pain puri at the food stalls.

Arzan, you say that you had several people to make the show possible. Indeed, you had, but in the final analysis, it was you. Hats off to you.

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FOR NAZC LOS ANGELES

The discounted prices for Early Bird Registration are now available until September 20, 2014. [Register at this link](#)
For more information, please visit [website](#) or engage with on [Facebook](#).

KUSTI MAKING VIDEO : FAROHAR FILMS

Courtesy: Parsis, Iranis, Zarathushtis - ALL Under One Roof

This is a video in 2 segments describing the intricate and very specialized art of weaving a Kusti, the sacred thread worn by Parsi/Irani Zoroastrians. The process involves gathering wool from sheep, cleaning it, drawing fine thread from it, winding it on a Chaatardi (spindle) by hand, combining two such fine threads into one, and making 72 threads for the final sacred thread on a specialized instrument, Jantar. These 72 threads are then woven into a hollow tube, which is then cut by a Zoroastrian Mobed (priest) by praying a special prayer.

The cut Kusti is then finished by creating 3 braids at each end, washed in soap and water, and then bleached by placing it under a clay pot with embers and sulphur, washed again, wound tightly around a Saraiyu (a smooth wooden round pole wrapped with a Sudreh) and dried to flatten it out. It is then tightly wound around itself in a neat circle. It is then pressed between two wooden blocks to flatten it out in a neat circular form. This completes the intricate weaving process of a Zoroastrian Kusti (sacred cincture).

This video was sponsored by Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) and created by the creative artists of the Frohar Foundation Films, Mumbai.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXr8m4voDfk&feature=player_em-bedded

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1enzWvB8m8&feature=player_em-bedded

First ever ZAH Fitness program Open House

FITNESS, FUN AND FRIENDS



Get Up and Get Moving

Sunday, September 14, 2014
At ZAH Main Hall
11 a.m. to Noon

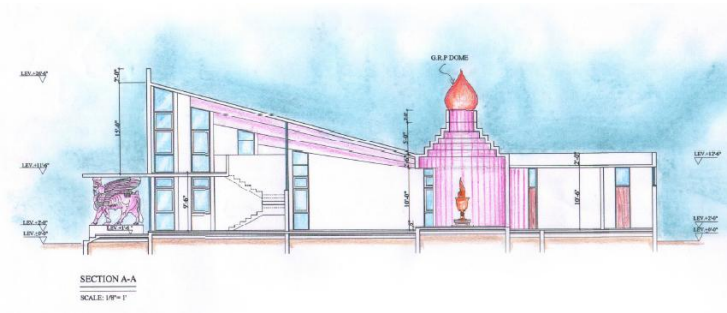


EVENTS: Aerobics, Choreographed Cardio work out, Abdominals, Concentrated Core Work outs. Floor exercises

- * Bring Water bottles and healthy snacks
- * Bring Floor mats
- * Bring a Towel
- * Wear comfortable gym clothes with proper workout shoes
- * Bring a friend
- * No one under 12 permitted to participate

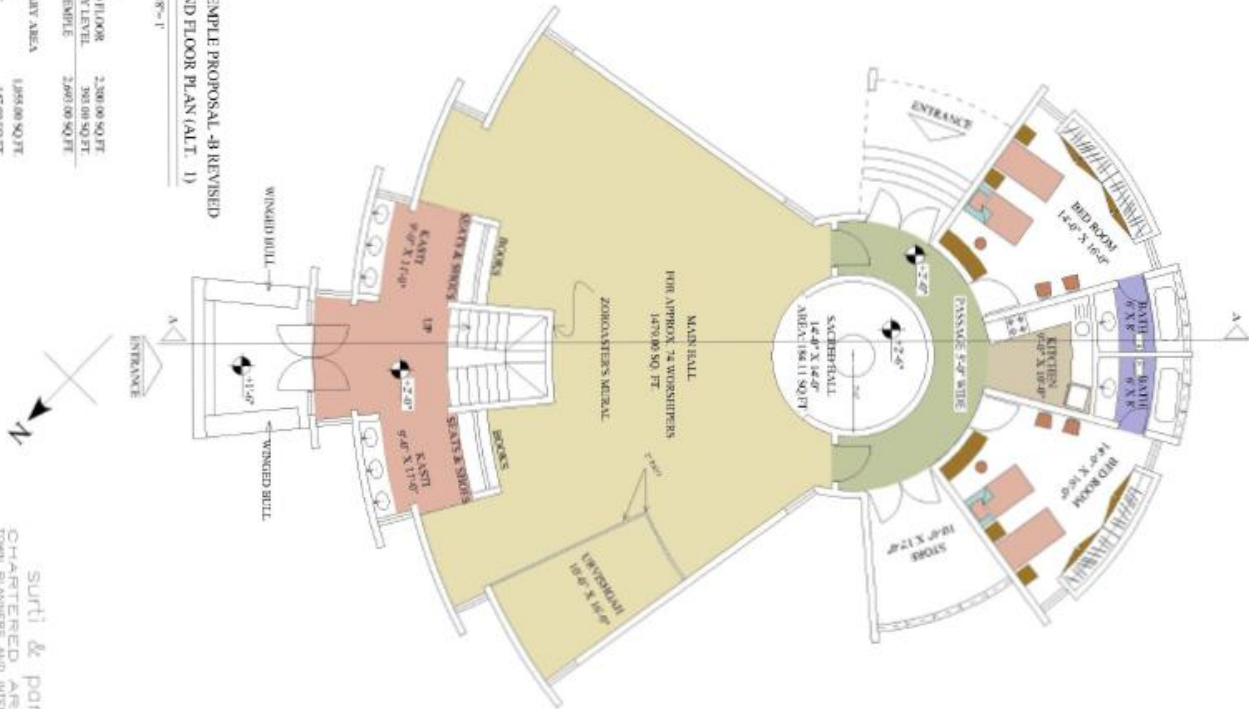
Instructor(s) ZAH Entertainment Committee Fitness Crew
All participants must sign ZAH Fitness Waiver Forms (available day of class)

Atash Kadeh:



FIRE TEMPLE PROPOSAL -B- REVISED
GROUND FLOOR PLAN (A.L.T. 1)
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'

AREA	
TEMPLE	2,380.00 SQ FT
WINDING FLOOR	28.00 SQ FT
WALKWAY/STAIR	2,693.00 SQ FT
TOTAL TEMPLE	5,101.00 SQ FT
ANEXILARY AREA	
ROOMS	1,955.00 SQ FT
PASSAGE	547.00 SQ FT
TOTAL A.AREA	7,053.00 SQ FT
C.TOTAL	3,892.00 SQ FT



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ZAH ANNUAL TABLE-TENNIS TOURNAMENT 2014

Event Details:

Date: Saturday October 4th, 2014 at 10:00 AM

Rates: Member: \$10, Non Member: \$15 (Includes lunch and chai)

Venue: ZHCC, 8787 W Airport Blvd, Houston, Tx 77071.

Spectators welcome to sign-up, come and play mahjong, carrom, etc.

Sign Up [HERE](#) on or before Oct 1st , 2014

Additional Details:

Please sign-up and pay online for this event
Free Drinks provided by Sports Committee

Prizes to be won

COME JOIN IN THE FUN: 'Mind & Body'
SIGN-UP NOW!!

ORGANIZED BY: [ZAH SPORTS COMMITTEE](#)



MAEDIOZAREM GAHAMBAR

**WILL BE CELEBRATED ON
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2014**



JASHAN STARTS PROMPTLY AT 11:00 A.M.

If registered by 9/28/14 **CHARGES: \$10 per person**
Children upto 3 yrs. - **Gratis**
Ages 4-10: Please Specify: Pizza \$7 or Regular Food \$10
Starting 9/28 thru 10/2 charges for all categories: \$15

[Click here to RSVP on the ZAH website](#)

**ZAH COMMUNITY GRATEFULLY THANKS ALL DONORS
FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS A PORTION OF THE
COST OF THE GAHAMBAR**

For questions please call Nozer Dungor at
281-350-1002 (up to 9 p.m. only)

ZAH Community gratefully thanks our **Ervads
for performing the Gahambar Jashan**

Organized by: [ZAH Entertainment Committee](#)





ZAH Library Proudly Presents

Sarah Stewart

Pictures at an exhibition—Voices of the people

November 1 and 2, 2014

PROGRAM

Saturday, Nov 1

10:00-10:30 Meet & Greet

10:30 -11:30 *The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in history and imagination*

The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in history and imagination, was an exhibition held at the Brunei Gallery at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, in 2013. It explored the history of Zoroastrianism, its culture and religion, as well as its influence on major religions of the world. It examined three traditions: the Iranian tradition that gave birth to the religion; the Parsi tradition established in India; and the tradition that emerged when Western scholars started examining Zoroastrian religious texts. This talk will focus on these three traditions within the different historical contexts presented in the exhibition.

12:00 Lunch

1:00 – 2:00

Themes of Self Definition among Zoroastrians in Contemporary Iran

What does it mean to be Zoroastrian in Iran today? How have Zoroastrians negotiated their minority status in order to practice their religion and survive as a community? These and other themes of self-definition will be discussed through the personal testimony of Zoroastrians living in towns and villages across Iran as well as in Tehran.

7:30 Dinner reception to honor Sarah Stewart

Sunday, November 2,

TBA

LECTURE IS FREE

LUNCH \$7.00

DINNER RECEPTION \$15.00

Zarathushti Heritage & Cultural Center

*Sarah Stewart is a lecturer in Zoroastrianism in the Department of the Study of Religions at SOAS. She is co-convenor with Edmund Herzog of the Idea of Iran series and has co-edited five volumes in the series. She recently curated an exhibition and edited a richly illustrated book, *The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in history and imagination*.*

