Zoroastrian Association of Houston
8787 W. Airport Blvd.
Houston, TX 77071
SUNDAY SCHOOL

PLACE: ZHCC, 8787 W. Airport Blvd., Houston, TX 77071   Tel: 713-270-9339
TIME: 11:00 AM
DATE: February 13, 2011

Children’s Session: This month the “Let’s Learn Gujarati Together” session will start at 11 am and will include a recap of prior year, Navjote items in Gujarati, intro to the “Gujarati Alphabet”.

Sunday school will begin promptly at 11.30 am. We will have a mock Navjote ceremony. Children are encouraged to wear their Navjote clothes: dugli for boys and Navjote dress or sari for girls. Each child is encouraged to bring a flower so that we can make a bouquet. Volunteer parents are reminded to bring Ravo, patlo, ses and chalk, and camera for videotaping. Please let Vehishta (salveh@comcast.net) know who will volunteer to take the video.

Middle Group: This group is for the children in the middle school. Last year they learnt about the ceremonies, this year they will be learning the Kusti prayers and their meanings. If you child falls in this age group, do please bring him/her to the Sunday School.

Senior Group: Sarosh Collector conducts this session. See a write up by the Youth Chair.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, February 10th – WZCC Seminar on new updates in income tax and estate tax laws. RSVP soon. See attached flyer for details
Saturday, February 27th – Library Event. Armaiti May's presentation on “Vegetarianism in Zoroastrianism”. See Library report and attached flyer for details
Sunday, March 13th – Picnic Tirgan – Organized by our youth. More details coming soon
Saturday, March 19th – Dar-ni-Pori Bake-a-Thon, See details below
Monday, March 21st – NoRouz Humbandagi
Saturday, March 26th – NoRouz Function. Details coming soon
Sunday, April 10th – Carnival.
If you would like a booth, please let Yasmin Medhora know at 713 466 3908.
Rashna Oak will be getting children to make arts and crafts. Parents interested in having their children participate please contact Rashna Oak by email (rashna_oak@hotmail.com). Any age children welcome.
Saturday, May 7th – Hollywood Meets Bollywood Night – Youth group extravaganza

MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOLDEN GROUP</th>
<th>Fourth Sunday of each month. Interested? Please call Zarine Balsara at (281) 304-6611</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIBRARY COMMITTEE</td>
<td>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 <a href="mailto:aban@coatingindustries.com">aban@coatingindustries.com</a></td>
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REPORTS

LIBRARY REPORT
by Jangoo Mistry

As announced in the last Manashni, the ZAH Library is bringing Dr. Armaiti May for a presentation on “Vegetarianism in Zoroastrianism”, on Sunday, February 27. In addition to the health and environmental advantages of a plant-based diet, and animal issues that support vegetarianism, Armaiti will bring together passages in our Zoroastrian scriptures and heritage that support a vegetarian diet. Please refer to the attached flyer for details about the event. Your RSVP to Arnavaz Sethna will help us in planning for accommodation and snacks.

Another exciting Library event is coming your way. The ZAH Library is planning a one-day bus trip to the George W. Bush Presidential Library in College Station in April. Details are now being finalized and will be announced in next month’s Manashni.

ZAH YOUTH GROUP REPORTS
By Cyrus Byramji – Youth Treasurer

To continue with the New Year, the youth group has been learning about the various types of Ghambars. The facts associated with them such as the date and month of the Ghambars, why they are celebrated, and how they are celebrated.

Along with these teachings, the youth group has scheduled a lock-in on the first week of February that will consist of in-depth debates of topics chosen by the youth. To serve the Houston Community by helping out with a project, we will also be volunteering at the Habitat for Humanity warehouse for the second time.

Let’s not forget about our on-going efforts with fundraisers! There is large group of youth that will be representing the ZAH at the Vancouver Youth Congress this summer. We are working hard and coming up with innovate ideas to help raise funds in order to reduce the cost of the trip.

***In the last Manashni, we put Bollywood Night for February 5th. That date has been rescheduled. The Youth will now be having their ‘Hollywood Meets Bollywood Night’ on Saturday, May 7th. We needed a bit more time to plan out this youth fundraiser to make it extra special for our community. So please mark your calendars! A detailed flyer will soon be followed.

MISCELLANEOUS

ZAH MEMBERSHIP DUES
Thank you to all those who have promptly paid their ZAH membership dues. For those that haven’t yet paid, please do pay promptly. The funds from our memberships help keep our Center running. See the attached form for membership rates.

5th ANNUAL DAR-NI-PORI BAKE-A-THON
Please mark your calendars for the 5th Annual Dar-ni-Pori Bake-a-thon and help make some dough for our Center! We will start at 10:00 a.m. and make and bake our poris till we’re done... and have fun while we work at this community project together... and, of course, enjoy our lunch and tea breaks, as well! We welcome your pori orders in advance, and do let us know how you’d like to pitch in: with ingredients, lunch/tea items or help with the making and baking; and donations towards our project are welcome. Please call: Nagu Cooper @ 713-937-4441 or Roshan Engineer @ 281-545-3467 or Jasmin Katrak @ 281-858-7857 or Yasmin Medhora @ 713-466-3908.

JASHN-E-SADEH (by Jehanbux Mehta)
The Jashn-e-Sadeh held at our Center yesterday was a big success. On this occasion traditional dinner of oush, sirough and lourk was served, followed by cake and tea. The food and the revelry was thoroughly enjoyed by the 150 guests who graced the occasion. The rendition of passages from Firdousi’s Shahnameh by Dr. Sadeghi, scholar from Iran was a very welcome feature.

Our sincere thanks to Darioush Vafadari and his team who went all out in preparing the food, serving it and decorating the tables. They worked hard and best of all were really enjoying what they were doing. They contributed not only for the entire cost of the food but also for all the supplies, fire permit etc. In addition, courtesy of Darioush, ZAH collected donations totaling $1092.

EC on behalf of the ZAH thanks all the donors and volunteers who contributed so willingly and generously towards our Jashn-e-Sadeh.

**Article from the Society page of the “Indo American News” newspaper on Jashn-e-Sadeh celebrations**

Zoroastrians in Houston gathered at the Zoroastrian Association of Houston community center on Saturday, January 29 to celebrate and observe the Jashn-e Sadeh, a mid-winter festival celebrated with grandeur and magnificence by Zoroastrians since ancient times.

The evening commenced with a short prayer by 4 Zoroastrian priests followed by the lighting of the bonfire which symbolizes the human yearning for the higher life. Zoroastrians believe that Jashn-e-Sadeh recalls the importance of fire, energy and light -- the light that comes from God and is found in the hearts of all creatures.

Jashn-e (Festival of) Sadeh (hundred), considered as one of the biggest Persian festivities since ancient times, actually refers to one hundred days and nights to the coming New Year. The festival is celebrated 50 days before Nowruz (New Year), which falls on 20th or 21st of March depending on the vernal equinox. The highlight of the evening was a recitation by Dr. Sadeghi, a scholar from Iran from the epic, Shahnameh (The Book of Kings), written by the Persian poet Firdausi, a work of prime importance in Persian culture and regarded as a literary masterpiece.

**APPEAL – DONATION FOR MEALS ON WHEELS (by Nazneen Khumbatta)**

Dear friends:

I wanted to bring a really sad situation to your notice that occurs in our prosperous city every day for some folks. There are a lot of retired and older individuals who do not even have food to eat and go to bed hungry. Many of these individuals live alone and have no family or neighborly contacts. It is very sad to be alone and hungry at any time in one’s life but specially so towards the end of one’s life. I am sure the current economic climate has exacerbated the situation even further for some individuals.

There is a program in Houston through Interfaith Ministries called Meals on Wheels for Seniors where a contribution of $1200 will feed 1 senior in Houston with hot meals delivered to their home FOR 1 WHOLE YEAR.

Since the last two years, ZAH has sponsored two seniors for one year thru the generous contributions of its members. Last year the ZAH membership collected $2400 that allowed us to sponsor two seniors for one year for daily hot meals. By a stroke of good fortune, there was a matching donor program in place when ZAH sent in its contribution and 4 seniors could be part of the Meals on Wheels program.

I would urge you to please donate whatever you are able to so that we may meet our target of raising $2400 from our members. My target is to reach this amount in time to send the donation to Interfaith Ministries by March 21, 2011 to celebrate Jamshed Navroze.

You may mail your check to Zoroastrian Association of Houston, Attn: Nazanin Sarkari, 8787 West Airport Boulevard, Houston, Texas 77071. Please make the check out to Zoroastrian Association of Houston and please write Senior Meals on Wheels in the Memo section.

If you wish you may hand me your donation as well. I am sure the current economic climate has exacerbated the situation even further for some individuals. This donation to Meals on Wheels also serves the purpose of creating awareness about Zoroastrians and Zoroastrianism within the broader Houston communities and hence I would strongly urge you all to please help out in any amount that you are comfortable with.

Many thanks in advance.

**EQUALITY BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN (GENDES) IN THE EYES OF AHURA MAZDA**

(Article in the NAMC Newsletter by Mobed Bahmanshah Minocher Sanjana)

Friends, Let us do our Basics today. Ahura Mazda first created Farohars, millions of them, for the entire Universe!! For the Material World as well as the Spiritual World!!!

If we consider Ahura Mazda to be a Big Fireball, then all its sparks are HIS Farohars, which means there is a Farohar in each and every /9one/ of His Creations. Khorshed (Sun), Meher (Sun’s rays), Mahbokhtar (Moon), Teshtar (Stars). Men women, animals, waters, mountains, plants, trees, Fires, everything has
its Own farohar. Keep this fundamental thing in your mind always. That is why peers and saints of all Religions and Deens say that God is in everyone and everything. Think like this for a moment!! If you consider this fact that God (Ahura Mazda) resides in everything and all human beings, then nobody is big or small, superior or inferior than any body in this world!!! With the same token, we can say that if I insult somebody, or curse at someone, it means that I am Insulting Ahura Mazda!!

If this simple but very important religious knowledge is imbibed in every one of us from the very childhood, I do not think there ever will be enemosity amongst us Humans!!! There will be peace on earth!! Respect all and Everyone.

We have our Zarathushti concept of Amesha Spentas. Have you ever realized the Religious fact that Bahman, Ardibehehsht and Shehrever are male ones, and Aspandad, Khordad and Amardad are female ones!!! If you ever come to our Houston Zarathushhti Center I will show you in Modern Art Paintings we have on our wall!!! From that we can clearly recognize their forms.

Bahman - Animal kingdom, Good Mind, Divine Wisdom.
Ardibehehsht - Fire, Law, and Order.
Shehrever - Metal kingdom under the Earth, Power, Divine Kingdom.
These three are so called “Male” Amesha Spentas., and
Aspandad – Zameen, Mother Earth (Dharti Mata), humility, mercy, compassion, kindness, piety, devotion.
Khordad - Waters, fertility, ampleness, wholesomeness, prosperity. Rivers and oceans.
Amardad - immortality, evergreenness, plant kingdom, trees, flowers, fruits, grains etc.
These three are so called “Female” Amesha Spentas.

If Ahura Mazda wanted to establish or emphasize or entrust more power to men, then He would have Created /Conceived more Amesha Spentas as Male Amesha Spentas instead of just three!!!
In HIS Divine Wisdom He has given us EQUAL numbers of Amesha Spentas who should be our Hamkars to Run HIS Kingdom on this universe!!!
So in my humble opinion there never was and never should be any distinction between a man and a woman. That is our Zarathushti Culture!! That is why our Forefathers always loved equally both their daughters and sons in every respect be it giving proper higher education, or distribution of their material as well as spiritual heritage, wealth etc..

ACHIEVEMENTS
ZAL SETHNA RAN THE 39th CHEVRON HOUSTON MARATHON
On Sunday morning, January 30 2011, under the threat of inclement weather, over 6700 runners started the 39th Chevron Houston Marathon. This was Zal's first marathon and he finished all 26.2 miles of it !!!!

Congratulations Zal. You make us proud !!

WE HAVE MOVED
Nano & Roshen Daroowala have moved to:
2714 KISMET Lane
Houston, TX-77043

OBITUARY

Manashni and its readers send their heartfelt condolences to the Guzder, Vakil and Cooper families

Deena Mistry, mother of Farhad (Houston) and Afshad (San Jose, CA), and aunt of Tanaz Sunavala passed away on Thursday, January 27, 2010. Deena Mistry was the Principal of Bai Virbaiji Soparivala Boys High School for over 30 years and was affectionately known as Dinoo Aunty to many Karachi-ites.

Manashni and its readers send their heartfelt condolences to the Mistry and the Sunavala families
CATEGORY OF MEMBERS  (PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY)

PATRON MEMBER. – FAMILY .............................. $500.00
PATRON MEMBER – SINGLE .......................... $250.00
FAMILY MEMBER .......................... $275.00
FAMILY ASSOCIATE MEMBER ........................ $275.00
SINGLE MEMBER HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD .................. $150.00
SINGLE MEMBER ........................................ $135.00
FAMILY SENIOR MEMBER ................................ $ 65.00
SINGLE SENIOR MEMBER .......................... $ 40.00
STUDENT MEMBER ..................................... $ 25.00

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DONATION $____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED $____

FAMILY MEMBER: PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18
FAMILY SENIOR MEMBER: WHERE ONE SPOUSE IS OVER THE AGE OF 65
SINGLE SENIOR MEMBER: AN INDIVIDUAL OVER THE AGE OF 65
SINGLE MEMBER: AN UNMARRIED INDIVIDUAL OVER THE AGE OF 18
SINGLE MEMBER HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD: SINGLE PARENT WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18

MEMBERSHIP YEAR: CALENDAR YEAR – JANUARY TO DECEMBER

MAKE THE CHECK PAYABLE TO ZAH AND MAIL TO:

ZAH Treasurer,
8787 W. Airport Blvd.
Houston, TX  77071
World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce – Houston Chapter

Presents

*Update on the changes in the Income Tax and Estate Tax Laws*

Our Distinguished Speakers

Mr. Sarosh Collector, CPA  
Mr. Kershaw Khumbatta, CPA

Tax deductions that are often overlooked  
Foreign bank accounts  
Estate tax update  
Common errors on tax returns  
What’s new with the IRS

VENUE: The Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center  
8787 W. Airport (Between Gessner & Beltway 8)  
Houston, TX 77071

DATE: Thursday, February 10, 2011

COST: $10.00 – Includes a Boxed Dinner & Drinks  
(Cash only please)

MIXER: 6:30 pm

DINNER: 7:00 pm

MEETING: 7:30 pm

Please RSVP at zarirs@abcglobal.net or call (713) 963-4229
Vegetarianism in Zoroastrianism

Presentation by

DR. ARMAILTI MAY

Dr. Armaiti May, a small animal veterinarian, with a house call veterinary practice in the Los Angeles area, is a longtime vegan and animal advocate. Armaiti serves on the Board of Directors for United Animal Nations, a non-profit animal welfare organization dedicated to rescuing animals out of crisis situations including natural disasters. Dr. May has made presentations at various sessions of Zoroastrian Congresses, including the 2000 World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston on the topic of Zoroastrianism and Vegetarianism.

The presentation discusses the consequences of our food choices to human health, and other factors. By choosing a vegetarian diet we show compassion to animals, and ensure that our children inherit a cleaner much healthier than animal-based foods. Based on the most recent information, the presentation will explore the effects of proper diet on disease prevention. Diets that pose the greatest threat to health will be discussed, and ones that provide the greatest protection are highlighted.

Sunday, February 27

2:00 - 4:00 PM

Zarathushtri Heritage & Cultural Center
8787 West Airport Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77071

Contact: Arnavaz Sethna
Phone: 281.499.1832
Email: asethna@comcast.com

Vegetarian snacks and tea will be served.
Donation of $5.00 per person.

Call to reserve your spot.
Please arrive early to facilitate a prompt start.
ZAH MEMBERSHIP 2011

CATEGORY OF MEMBERS (PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY)

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SINGLE MEMBER ........................................................ $135.00
FAMILY SENIOR MEMBER ......................................... $  65.00
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STUDENT MEMBER .................................................... $  25.00

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MEMBERSHIP YEAR: CALENDAR YEAR – JANUARY TO DECEMBER

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Visit the sacred Cities and Shrines of YAZD
Learn about our past-history re-enacted in PERSEPOLIS
Explore All-Sadir caves in HAMADAN
Discover the facts behind the carvings in Taq-e Bostan
Pray: obeisance to the Holy Mount DAMAVAND
Enjoy the different places of interest in TEHRAN
Visit you drop in the market square of ESFAHAN

Rely on our aesthetic sense in SHIRAZ, city of philosophers, poets & roses.
Relive the ancient glory of Shahnameh tales at Ferdowsi's tomb in TOOS
Bask in the lush forests, rivers and streams – the natural beauty of MAZANDARAN
Relax at the Coastline of the Caspian Sea

Whether you are a Nature Lover or interested in Treasures of art, make sure your journey is memorable.

But don’t take our word for it. Feel free to ask others who have.