

**Volume 31: Issue 5** **May 2017**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

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

TIME: Different times for each group

DATE: **May 14, 2017.**

**Children's Session** The Sunday School session will start at **10.30 am to 11.30 am**

**Middle Group:** The Sunday School session will start at **11.00 am.**

**Youth Group:** Sarosh Collector and Kaemerz Dotiwalla conduct this session. Age group - High School age

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Friday, May 12, 2017 Library Event - “An Uncensored Life”,**  
a biography of Zerbanoo Gifford – See attached flyer

**Sunday – June 4, 2017 Maidhiyarem Gahambar (Dae Mahino) See attached flyer**

**Fri to Sun – June 23-25, 2017 ZAH Z-Camp 2017**

**Mon – Wed – Aug 7 – 16, 2017 Mukta Prayers**

**Thursday – August 17, 2017 Navroze Humbandagi and Maachi – 6:30 to 7:00 p.m.**

**Saturday – August 19, 2017 Navroze Function**

**SPECIAL REQUEST -**

**Shop Using AmazonSmile To Support ZAH !**

**MEETINGS**

<b>GOLDEN GROUP</b>	Fourth Sunday of each month. Interested? Please call Zarine Balsara at (832) 288-2436
<b>LIBRARY COMMITTEE</b>	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>

**REPORTS**

**EC REPORT**

by Aderbad Tamboli

**The New and Improved ZHCC 3.0 is finally here....**

We want to welcome all our members to come and visit and see the newly renovated center. It looks beautiful. This phase of the renovation included the following:

Atrium: New floor tile  
New ceiling grid and tile  
New LED lights and fans  
Walls repainted

Main Hall: New ceiling grid and tile  
New LED Lights and fans  
Soffits around the stage  
Retractable stage lighting  
Walls and baseboards repainted

Bathrooms: Totally renovated starting with completely gutting the bathroom and replacing with new floor tiles, new fixtures, sinks, granite countertop, hand dryer, new automatic flushing toilets etc. The ladies room was also redesigned to remove dead space and optimize usage, creating a new dressing area around the shower and an additional stall. All three bathrooms also have new decorative wall tiles with a glass tile edge treatment

Library: New floor tiles and paint

The main drain line from the kitchen to the bathroom was also replaced as that was the cause of the kitchen sink overflowing.

In addition, to make the outside of the ZHCC more appealing for the FEZANA AGM, we had the exterior power washed and the repainted the exterior as well. In addition, the damages to the parking lot caused by the construction traffic was also repaired.

The next phase of the renovation will be the kitchen and the front entrance. Stay tuned, we will be starting on those soon.

#### **Phase 3 A update:**

The newly completed Purvez S. Rustomji room and the middle group classroom were inaugurated by a ribbon cutting by the Rustomji family on Thursday April 27, 2017. This was followed by a benediction and then a short program by the Sunday school children. The new Purvez S. Rustomji room hosted the FIRES evening program with a talk by Aban Marker-Kabraji as its first event.

#### **Atash Kadeh update:**

We have finally received all the necessary permits for the Atash Kadeh from the City of Houston. The next step is to go thru a construction bid process and select a contractor. We will keep you updated on events as they occur.

#### **FEZANA AGM:**

The ZAH hosted the FEZANA AGM, along with the WZCC regional meeting and a FIRES evening at the ZHCC from 4/27-4/31. The meeting went very smoothly, and the out of town attendees were very impressed with ZAH and our volunteers. The best comment heard was, "ZAH has set the bar higher than ever".

**Commit for 5:** We are very grateful to all the members who have signed up for the Commit for 5 program. For the ones who are a little behind in their payments, we urge you to please catch up. We would like to request all our members to join this program at whatever amount they feel comfortable with, or make a one-time donation.

I want to thank our wonderfully dedicated, hard working renovations team, as none of this could be possible without their work. The team members are: Zia Anklesaria, Rohintan Deputy, Aspi Colah, Yezdi Engineer, Farokh Firozgary, Kamalrukh Gandhi, Arzin Italia, Yasmin Medhora, Pervin Sagar, Arnava Sethna, Farzana Sidhwa.

With a special thanks to Rohintan Deputy, who was onsite 6-8 hours a day, every day for the past 6 weeks. Rohintan was always there making sure the contractors were on target, and moving them along making sure that we would be ready for the FEZANA AGM.

The EC would like to thank our primary donor Sam Bhadha for the new renovations. In addition, we also want to thank our Vision 2020 donors as well. It is only with the support of our donors and volunteers that we can make these incredible changes.

Best Always,

## LIBRARY REPORT

*By Jangoo Mistry*

### ***An Evening with FIRES***

An evening with FIRES was an evening to remember. It was filled with so many emotional and interesting items that each one by itself could have carried the whole evening.

Held on Thursday April 27, the day before FEZANA's 3-day Annual General Meeting (AGM), the evening started with the ribbon-cutting of the new Purvez S. Rustomji Room so graciously donated by Aban Rustomji. Our Center is growing and with all the other renovations is looking much nicer. Our Library has a new look with new tiles and more cabinets. All who came were excited and happy to mark this important milestone in our community's growth. After the joyous opening, we filed into the new room for the formal program. Vehishta's kids looked really cute all dressed up in their traditional garb, as they paraded down the aisle, each carrying a memento from our past. They recited the Ashem Vohu in Farsi, and the crowd was encouraged to join in.

The Library was looking beautiful, set up to display a lot of interesting exhibits, and one heard a lot of ooh's and aah's in admiration. A lot of meeting and planning went into the collection of garas, rare books, and cultural artifacts, so attractively displayed across the room. There were too many people involved in this effort to mention everyone by name, but we are very grateful to all of you for your help and support.

Aban Rustomji welcomed the attendees and thanked everyone who worked hard over the last several months to complete the renovations and construction on time. She then showed a short FIRES presentation highlighting the history, mission and future plans for FIRES. She then introduced Aban Marker Kabraji, the main speaker of the evening. A biologist and a scientist, Ms. Kabraji is the Regional Director of the Asia Regional Office of IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

In a fascinating presentation, "Memory and Identity", Ms. Kabraji touched on many aspects of our lives that resonated strongly. Starting with her roots in Quetta, she observed that for Zoroastrians in the diaspora the ethos of their homelands, be it India, Pakistan, or Iran, permeate their lives and work, even though outwardly Western. Aban Kabraji maintained that the 9/11 effect and the resurgent Islam movement has made a great number of religions and communities around the world question their place in the social fabric.

So how do Zoroastrians in the diaspora define identity? Drawing interesting distinctions between "home" and sense of "belonging", Aban proposed that communities are more important to convey a sense of belonging. Communities are more important in understanding who you are, rather than the place from which you come. Home is associated with territory; belonging is what you feel your identity is. Unlike the Jews, Armenians or Filipinos, Zoroastrians are not tied to a physical land or country to define their identity. This may be because we pride ourselves more on assimilation into a foreign environment by adapting to host countries (a la the milk-and-sugar story). I live in the U.S. ("home") but I "belong" to India. What distinguish a diaspora are ties to their homeland. Wherever they may be, Zoroastrians seek out and form bonds with other Zoroastrians. Zoroastrian Centers (like ZAH) have become a substitute for the baghs they grew up in.

Aban Kabraji concluded by asserting that FIRES captures and preserves memories through historical resources. Oral History, in particular, put things in perspective for the second and subsequent generations by recording the experience and lessons learned. Ms. Kabraji was uniquely qualified to shed light into this complex and interesting topic with her background and work experience. Her talk was very well received and left the listeners in a pensive mood.

The evening concluded with a sumptuous dinner catered by our very own Naushad. Lagan nu custard by Mahrukh Deputy, Arnaz Mistry and Tehmi Dastoor was a delectable end to the typical Parsi dinner.

### ***Another Dignitary comes to the ZAH Library***

On Friday, May 12, we are fortunate to have yet another internationally-acclaimed dignitary, Zerbanoo Gifford coming to Houston. Ms. Gifford, the first non-white woman to stand for the British parliament, is a forthright human rights campaigner. She was at the heart of the women's movement relentlessly fighting for social and economic empowerment of women. She has also fought passionately for neglected children and those subjected to bonded labor and abuse. Zerbanoo went through baptism by fire, literally, when the xenophobes threatened to burn down her home and kidnap her children.

Accompanying Ms. Gifford will be Farida Master, a New Zealand-based senior journalist and author, who has written *"An Uncensored Life"*, a biography of Zerbanoo Gifford. *"An Uncensored Life"* is a motivational memoir/biography that is spirited, thought provoking and fun to read. The book has been launched in India, England, Singapore and New Zealand and is now being launched in the U.S., with Houston as one of the venues. Readers of her biography will be charged up by Zerbanoo's electric energy, inner grace, and her passion for life.

The Friday evening event (on May 12) at 6:30pm will be accompanied by light refreshments. The program will start at 7pm. Look for Arnavaz Sethna's email announcement and the attached flyer for more details. The event is free for all, but for planning purposes, we request that you RSVP Arnavaz ([asethna@comcast.net](mailto:asethna@comcast.net)) with the number of people in your family attending.

### **Youth Report** By Katie Master

April and May have been very accomplishing months for ZAH as a whole. For starters, Houston hosted the FEZANA AGM where four of our talented youth members and one graduate member were awarded with scholarships. Tanaya Behramsha (treasurer), Alyssa Tamboli (vice president), and Farzad Sarkari (member) all won the Legacy Award. Katie Master (president) won the Cyrus R. Desai Award and Michelle Bulsara (graduated member) received the Mike Engineer Award. Additionally, the Desai Family was presented with a Lifetime Award for their diligent generosity as well as our amazing Sunday School teacher Sarosh Collector for his undying commitment to our organization. Congratulations to all, as we are so proud of each and everyone one of you! If you did not attend the FEZANA AGM, you really missed out as the youth group put on a hilarious skit about the importance of kusti making and Rhythm India performed with great energy, as always. As May approaches, school exams have taken over, so the youth group is holding off on our usual volunteering. However, we will not stop working at trying to better our organization by reorganizing our youth room. Be on the lookout for information regarding our last clothing drive and other fun events like Tirgan!

### **THANK YOU NOTE FROM ABAN RUSTOMJI**

To: ZAH

When we immigrated to Houston in 1979, we knew that the Zoroastrian community would be an important part of our lives. But we did not know that the community would become family. Over the years, we have thrived because of your care.

This past week was a pinnacle of how much the community means to us. During the ribbon cutting of the Purvez S. Rustomji Room, we looked out to see so much love, many smiling faces and a few wistful tears. And we would like to thank all of you for your support for our family and for Purvez's memory. We feel so fortunate to live in a community that feels so purely and deeply.

We would like to especially thank the building committee who worked tirelessly to make sure the room was a reality. Aderbad Tamboli guided the project from the blueprint to the finishing touches. Rohintan Deputy was the closer who made sure that all the big things and the small things were all in place, and when they were, he graced the room with a beautiful flower arrangement. Darayus Kolah brought his genius for envisioning a striking addition. Kersi Engineer brought his skills to work with the contractor, Farhad Mistri went above and beyond to get the air conditioning done right and on time.

The evening events that followed, Vehishta Kaikobad's Sunday school performance, Aban Marker Kabraji's talk on Memory & Identity and the Zarathushti Heritage exhibit were testimonial that our faith is alive and will continue to do well.

From all of us, to all of you – thank you.

Aban, Arish & Nerina.

### **OUR GRADUATES**

#### **High School**

**Tanaya Behramsha** will graduate Summa Cum Laude from Langham Creek High School and will be attending The University of Texas, Austin in the Fall of 2017 to study Corporate Communication. While at Langham Creek, her academic achievements included AP scholar with distinction, membership to the National Honor Society, the Sigma Nu Sigma Science Honor Society, Rho Kappa Honor Society & Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society. Tanaya was a varsity swimmer in high school and a Regionals qualifier for three years and was awarded the UIL Academic- All State Award . She earned the Gold Award, the highest achievement in Girl Scouts. Tanaya is a recipient of the Emerald

Circle 2017 Gold Award Scholarship, Teagle Scholarship, Cy-Fair Women's Scholarship & the Congress 2000 Legacy Scholarship. She has held various leadership positions at both her school and in the community. Good luck Tanaya! Hook 'em! Our Family congratulates all the new graduates and their families.

**Shane Daroowala**, son of Zubin and Suzanne Daroowala and Grandson of Nano & Roshen Daroowala, will be graduating from Cypress Ranch High School on May 27. He is a member of National Honor Society and will be graduating Summa Cum Laude. Shane won 4th Place in Entrepreneurship in the 2016 Future Business Leaders of America Area 5 Competition and has served as the Vice President of the Cypress Ranch chapter of Junior Statesmen of America. He will attend Texas A&M University in the fall and will be studying Finance and Business Management.

**Katie Dickerson**, daughter of Navaz and Jeff Dickerson and Granddaughter of Nano & Roshen Daroowala, graduates from Spring Woods High School on May 27<sup>th</sup>. She is the President of Student Council as also Vice President of the Student Body. Katie is a valedictorian graduating with many honors. Currently, she has received the Phi Beta Kappa academic scholarship, Texas PTA scholarship, Highest GPA athlete Scholarship, and Ronald McDonald Scholarship and the Spring Branch Education Foundation's Scholarship. She will attend Texas A&M University and will be studying engineering.

**Noshir Eduljee** will be graduating from Tomkins High School in Katy. He will be attending Texas A&M Corpus Christi this fall and plans to pursue Business Management

**Katie Percy Master** will be graduating from Ridge Point High School. She will be attending the University of Texas at Austin to pursue Biochemistry major. Katie is the recipient of Cyrus R Desai Scholarship.

**Farzad Sarkari** will be graduating from Dulles High School Math & Science Academy. He will be attending Oberlin College of Arts & Science in Oberlin, Ohio pursuing major in Mathematics/ Neuroscience and a minor in Chemistry/Biology. While obtaining a degree in one of these fields, he will also be swimming for their swim team. Farzad is the proud **recipient of 2017 ZAH congress2000legacy scholarship.**

**Alyssa Tamboli** graduates from Clements high school. She will be going to UT Austin to pursue a major in kinesiology. She is also a proud **recipient of the ZAH legacy award.**

***Congratulations to all the grads in our community!***

#### **BACHELOR'S**

**Michelle Balsara**, graduates from UT Austin with Bachelors and then go to Professional school. Michelle is the **recipient of Mike Engineer Scholarship.**

**Joel Balsara** graduates from UT Austin with Bachelors and then go to a Professional school.

**Perendi Birdie** is graduating with a **BS in Biochemistry** from University of Kansas. She will be receiving the university's most **Distinguished Honors** for her excellent academic record.

**Naasha Kaemerz Dotiwala** is graduating from Loyola University, New Orleans with a Bachelors degree in Political Science. Naasha has won many accolades in Graphic Designing, including a national award from the city of New Orleans.

**Rayomand Katrak** will be graduating from Baylor University with a Bachelor's Degree in Health Science Studies and a Minor in Biology. He is the recipient of President's Gold Scholarship, has been on the Dean's List multiple times, was awarded the Outstanding Service Coordinator by Baylor for the 2014-2015 school year, and served as President of the Indian Subcontinent Student Association in his senior year.

**Darius Tamboli** graduates from UT Austin, McCombs school of business, with a bachelor's degree, majoring in science and technology management. He will be joining Capco energy solutions in Houston.

#### **SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS**

congress2000legacyScholarship – Tanaya Behramsha, Farzad Sarkari and Alyssa Tamboli.- See attached flyer  
Cyrus R Desai Scholarship – Katie Master  
MNE Scholarship sponsored by Mike Engineer – Michelle Balsara

### **MORE ACCOLADES**

**Mahtab B. Dastur** placed 1st in Mathematics and Number Sense at the PSIA district level competitions on 1st April. After which, she represented her school at the State level in the PSIA competition for Mathematics and Number Sense on 29th April at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. She placed 5th in Mathematics and 1st in Number Sense at the State level. PSIA - Private School Interscholastic Association is one of the most comprehensive academic extra-curricular program in the nation for students in grades 1 through 8. ***Congratulations Mahtab! We are very proud of you!***

### **GAHAMBAR**

Shahenshahi Dae Mas (maidhyarem) Gahambar will be celebrated on Sunday, June 4, 2017. Jashan starts promptly at 11:00 a.m. Please register online at [zah.org](http://zah.org) – for questions please call Nozer Dungor at 832-758-8331 or [nozerd@hotmail.com](mailto:nozerd@hotmail.com) Donations are very much needed for this Gahambar. **SEE ATTACHED FLYER**

### **OUR NEW ADDRESS**

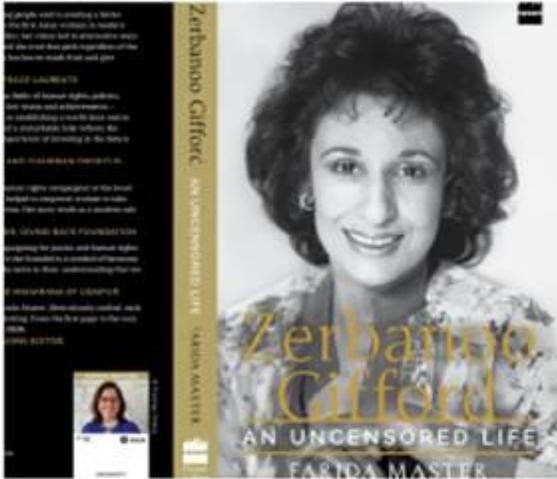
Please note the new address of **Khursheed & Yezdi Hormuzdi**:

5810 Sydney Park Lane  
Sugar Land, TX 77479  
Tel: 281-969-5489

### **BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT**

Baby boy ***Cyrus Shayan Thakore***, born February 27, 2017 at 11:02 a.m. 6 lb 9 oz to Ashish and Shirin Thakore. Cyrus is blessed by Late Grandmother Shireen Thakore and Grandfather Suhrid Thakore and his wife Anita welcome the new baby with great joy.  
Congratulations to Thakore family.

Baby boy ***Ethan***, born on November 1st, 2016, to Michelle & Robert Heider. Grandparents Sherry & Eddie Berana and Linda & Ben Heider are overjoyed with the new arrival in their family.  
Congratulations to Berana and Heider family.



Meet them in  
Houston

Wednesday, May  
10th @ 2.30pm  
Venue: Ismaili  
Jamatkhana and  
Center  
1700 First Colony  
Blvd  
Sugar Land  
TX 77479

Thursday, May  
11th @ 11am  
Venue: Raindrop  
Turkish House  
9301 W Bellfort  
Blvd  
Houston 77031

Friday, May 12th  
@ 6.30pm  
Venue:  
Zarathushti  
Heritage and  
Cultural Center  
8787 West Airport  
Blvd  
Houston TX 77071

# Zerbanoo Gifford

*An Uncensored Life*

BY FARIDA MASTER

*Overcoming racial attacks, political disenchantment, legal battles against the Government and a near-death experience, 'Zerbanoo Gifford – An Uncensored Life' is a gripping story of a fearless woman who has held fast to the causes of equality and global justice.*

*The biography, authored by accomplished journalist Farida Master and published by HarperCollins was received with great fanfare in India, Singapore, England and New Zealand.*

*Now the author and her muse are on a whirlwind US book tour starting with LA, followed by Houston, Chicago, Washington DC, Philadelphia and New York.*

For more information contact Arnavaz Sethna at  
ahsethna@yahoo.com or call her on 281-499-1832



**congress2000legacy**

**OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR**

***THE WINNERS OF THE LEGACY AWARDS FOR 2017 ARE***

**congress2000legacy - award # 1**

**TANAYA BEHRAMSHA**

**congress2000legacy - award # 2**

**FARZAD SARKARI & ALYSSA TAMBOLI**

**THE CYRUS R DESAI AWARD -**

**KATIE MASTER**



**SHAHENSHAHI DAE MAS (MAIDHYAREM) GAHAMBAR**

**WILL BE CELEBRATED ON  
SUNDAY JUNE 4, 2017**

**JASHAN STARTS PROMPTLY AT  
11:00 A.M.**

**If registered by May 28, 2017 charges: \$15**

**Ages 4-10: \$7**

**Children up to 3 years gratis**

**Starting 5/29 thru 6/3 charges for all \$20**

**[CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)**



**We request you RSVP and pay online for this event**

**For questions please  
contact Nozer Dungor at  
(832) 758-8331 or  
nozerd@hotmail.com**

**DONATIONS ARE VERY  
MUCH NEEDED FOR THIS  
GAHAMBHAR. THANK YOU!!**

**ZAH COMMUNITY GRATEFULLY THANKS OUR ERVADS  
FOR PERFORMING THE GAHAMBAR JASHAN**

Our goal remains to keep these functions as affordable as possible so you as a ZAH member can attend and enjoy. However if you feel that you are unable to attend solely due to the cost please let us know. We have donations in place to subsidize your cost and we will guarantee confidentiality. Financial ups and downs are a part of most families life cycles. In a way, they are a blessing because they allow innovation, dedication and hard work to take root in oneself. Please use this facility and in better economic times, there will be plenty of opportunities to remember and help your own community members and your own association a thousand times over. Please note this is only available to current ZAH Members in good standing.

**Organized By:** ZAH Entertainment Committee