



MANASHNI SPONSORED BY

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OFFICE 713-963-4229

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

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

**TIME:** Different timings for each group

**DATE:** December 13, 2020

**Children's Session:** The Sunday School session starts at **11.00 a.m.** Join in by Zoom

**Middle Group:** The Sunday School session at **10.30 a.m.** by Zoom



**Youth Group:**



**MESSAGE FROM THE  
CHAIR, ZAH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Reflections On A "Unique" Year**



Can you have an eventful year without any events? Yes, of course! That, in a way, sums up 2020.

The New Year started with gusto until news of an outbreak in distant China came knocking on the door. Then, in early March, news of cruises stranded at sea to surging deaths in Italy, Spain, and later New York City made daily headlines. The public health and political systems seemed as confused and stunned as deer in the headlights of a car.

Our schools closed and our hospitals and medical staff struggled to try to make sense of the situation. Ventilators, social distancing, masks, and sanitizer became part of our daily vocabulary and lives. Hand and foot bumps replaced hugs and handshakes. Businesses were caught in the catch 22 of economic survival v/s public health.

It is correctly said that necessity is the mother of invention. New applications like Zoom and Curbside Pickup came into our lives. The kids who were previously asked to cut down on screen time and play outside were now being asked to stay home and in many cases assist the seniors with technology. We started Zoom calls for our Sunday school, Atash Kadeh Boi's, and summer camps, or just to stay in touch and socialize or play a game of Bingo with friends. We learned to adapt to this new lifestyle and made the best of what we had.

Our seniors were very concerned. Having heard stories of earlier plagues and epidemics and being told they were "High Risk"; they were particularly worried. Those who were away from friends and family were the most vulnerable. But every cloud has a silver lining. There were many in our community who were ready and willing to assist and each did their part in their own unassuming way whether individually or as part of the "Golden Group". From bringing groceries to sewing masks to doing a food drive, each played their part in practicing Kunashni.

## ZAH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Dungor, Nozer – Chairman  
Gandhi, Kamalrukh  
Hormuzdi, Khursheed  
Katrak, Percy  
Khumbatta, Kershaw  
Dastur, Khursheed – Secretary  
Billimoria, Farokh – Treasurer

## OUR ERVADS (PRIESTS)

Boomla, Noozar  
Buchia, Kyrus  
Dastur, Barjor  
Dastur, Darius  
Desai, Adi  
Desai, Farrokh  
Firozgari, Bahrom  
Gonda, Pervez  
Kanga, Neville  
Katrak, Rayomand  
Katrak, Vispi  
Khumbatta, Noshir  
Kotwal, Zubin  
Masani, Dara  
Nariman, Khushrav  
Pavri, Shapur  
Sanjana, Bahmanshah  
Sanjana, Kurush  
Sidhwa, Kayomarz  
Sidhwa, Maneck  
Sidhwa, Yazad  
Unwalla, Peshotan  
Vimadallal, Freyaan  
Vimadallal, Khurshroo

## ORAL HISTORY ZOOM INTERVIEW



## WOODSON RESEARCH CENTER READING ROOM



The pandemic brought many truths to the forefront. It reinforced the fact that health was of utmost importance. So was financial independence and making sure you had enough for a rainy day. The utter vanity of having fashionable clothing when you have nowhere to go or a luxury vehicle when the streets are empty became apparent. We learned to appreciate the value of friends and family who were there to provide support and solace and to cheer.

We learned to live in the new reality. We adapted and started thriving in the new environment. We started reminiscing about things we couldn't do – places we couldn't go and appreciating what we had while making plans for what we would do in the future. People started learning new hobbies and skills like gardening, cooking, or even catching up on that Novel they never had time to read earlier. Calling and checking up on friends and family became in-vogue again.

With the winds of change of a new political dispensation and promising news of a vaccine on an anvil, we hope that 2021 brings with it Positivity and Hope where we can socialize, travel, meet our loved ones and come together in our march forward. We have lived the adage that "When the going gets tough, the tough get going".

Wishing everyone a Healthy, Wealthy, and Prosperous 2021.  
Nozer N. Dungor  
On behalf of the ZAH EC

## REPORTS

### Library Report - Recap of the activities of the year 2020

By: Arnava Sethna

2020 began with a bang for the Library Committee. We met in January, February and March, and talked about matters such as having a Summer Intern Program, gifts of books, building shelves and organizing duplicate books and basically organizing the library. And then the Covid-19 pandemic struck, and everything was put on hold. But then, as people moved into digital arena, so did we.

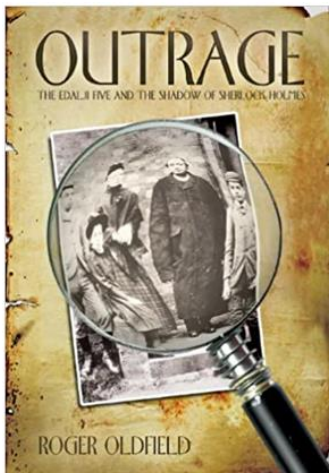
We started meeting on Zoom and commenced our discussion from where we left off.

**Oral History Project:** Our Oral History project enthusiast revived discussion on this project. Jangoo, very eloquently stated the value of this project. Oral History interviews are now being conducted via Zoom, and for this we sincerely thank Amanda Focke, head of Woodson Research Center at Rice University and Debra Kolah, Fondren Library, Rice University. Every interview has been recorded and cataloged into the new digital Zoroastrian Archive at Rice University in Houston. This means that anyone, anywhere in the world, can now access these Zoroastrian oral histories either as an audio recording or as a written transcript. Please contact Jangoo Mistry ([jbmistry@gmail.com](mailto:jbmistry@gmail.com)) or Arnava Sethna ([ahsethna@yahoo.com](mailto:ahsethna@yahoo.com)) if you are ready to record your story in the coming months.

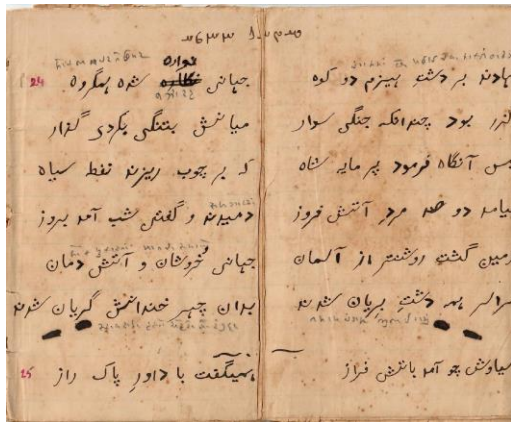
### Library Records

All library records from 2003 – pictures, videos, events – have now been uploaded to a computer hard drive that will serve as a back-up for easy access.

## OUTRAGE By Roger Oldfield



## FARSI SCRIPT NOTES OF DASTURJI DHALLA



## ATTENDEES AT SEMINAR



## Books:

During the year we received the following books:

- J.R.B. Jeejeebhoy's **Bombay Vignettes**, a selection of JRB Jeejeebhoy's writings on Bombay,
- BAWAJI** by Berjis Desai, the story of a community and its constituent.
- Outrage**: by Roger Oldfield and **Arthur and George** by Julian Barnes – both about George Edalji's case by Arthur Conan Doyle in early 1900 in the U.K.

We have books on our history, religion, and culture; and we have fiction from acclaimed writers like Rohinton Mistry and Thrity Umrigar and Nawaz Merchant. The FIRES catalog will have a sizable collection of books written in or translated to Farsi. The Farsi books are in a separate section of the catalog so that interested readers can locate them easily.

On October 10, over a hundred people joined the tenth FEZANA Talk presented virtually in collaboration with FIRES (FEZANA Information, Research and Education System). The event was hosted by Aban Rustomji, Co-Chair of FIRES (ZAH is the home of FIRES). Acclaimed Parsi authors Thrity Umrigar and Nawaz Merchant were interviewed, with a discussion of their latest novels: *Sugar in Milk* and *Murder in Old Bombay*, respectively.

## Dhalla Collection

To add to our Dhalla memorabilia, Ervad Soli Dastur of Florida has sent us a treasure trove of letters, lecture notes, newspaper clippings and photographs of Dastur Dhalla. They were gifted to him by Shahrukh and Karen Marker, great grandson of Dastur Dhalla. The items were meticulously collected and preserved by Shahrukh's mother Shirin Marker.

## Youth Group Report

By: Neville Kanga

On Sunday November 15, 2020, the ZAH Youth Group successfully hosted a very informative College Bound Seminar for our Youth Group and Middle Group kids.

The seminar was brilliantly moderated by Farzad Sunavala. It started with our three-student panelist of Rayomand Hormuzdi, Katie Master and Friyana Sidhwa who did an outstanding job in giving us an insight of their experiences and addressed several questions from the participants.

We then had our very special and passionate presentation by Dr. Janet Allen and Dr. Farrokh Mistree who gave us a comprehensive understanding of the process and practices for planning and preparing for college. They gave us pointers on what to do, what not to do, when to start, and where to look for resources. A total of 31 kids and parents participated in this seminar. Thank you to our Youth Group mentors and officers and the ZAH Legacy Team for organizing this seminar.



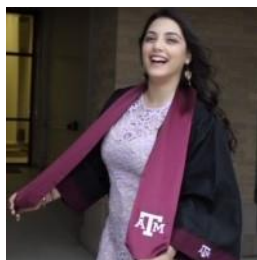
## MISCELLANEOUS

**FARZAD SUNAVALA**



### PANELISTS

**FRIYANA SIDHWA**



**KATIE MASTER**



**RAYOMAND HORMZADI**



### Getting ready for college

By: Farzad Sunavala

Transitioning from high school to college is often one of the most stressful times for kids and their parents. The ZAH Legacy Team hosted a seminar for ZAH/ZANT kids and parents with both established university students and professors to get both anecdotal and academic lessons learned and best practices for preparing for college.

This year I had been assigned with the task of hosting a Zoom session for our annual ZAH Legacy College Seminar by our guest speakers Farrokh & Janet Mistree. Along with this, I had been assigned with the task of putting together another session where three of our past Legacy winners Katie Master, Rayomand Hormazdi & Friyana Sidhwa were invited as guest speakers, to come on in and talk about their experiences at college and they fielded questions from the attendees like pros. We thank them for spending their valuable time with us.

As always, Farrokh Mistree and Janet Allen gave their annual Seminar on how to prepare for college as well. Lastly, the ZAH Legacy Alumni Recipients have all offered to personally mentor and even give prospective students tours of the most popular Texas universities: University of Houston, University of Texas - Austin, and Texas A&M. As always, this was an informative session. Their dedication and support for our youth is appreciated and valued.

Please reach out to Nozer Dungor, [nozerd@hotmail.com](mailto:nozerd@hotmail.com) to view the recording of this session.

On behalf of the ZAH Legacy Team, we thank all the speakers for their time and knowledge and look forward to repeating the session in Fall 2021

### *The 2020 Legacy Scholarship Awards Time Is Here!*

This has been an extraordinary year and we have seen changes in our lives that will be remembered for years to come. You will probably say, 'I was there when this horrible pandemic changed our lives forever'. Crisis or not, at ZAH, we forge ahead with our plans, rituals, and bonding. The time has come for the 2020 legacy applications to be prepared and submitted with all required supporting documents **latest by Jan 15, 2021.**

For the year 2020 there are THREE awards up for grabs:

**\$3000 ZAH LEGACY AWARD**

**\$3000 ZAH LEGACY AWARD**

**\$3000 CYRUS R. DESAI AWARD –Donated By Rohinton Desai Family**

For criteria & application details click on our link at <http://zah.org/congress2000legacy-2/> Note that the Legacy awards are for those going off for the first time to college and all the way to post grad students.

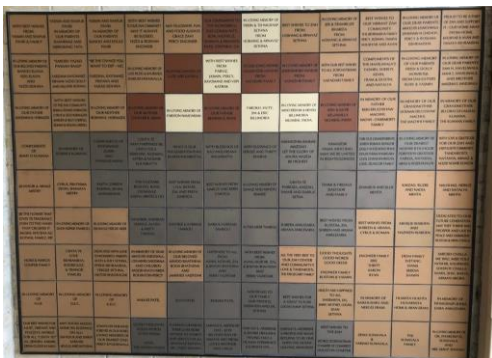
## SHIREEN ANKLESARIA



### PAVERS Pavers – Left Wall



### Pavers – Right Wall



## Online School Band Practice

By: Shireen Anklesaria – 7th Grade

In our last Manashni, we discussed the joys and pain of online learning. This month I am going to tell you all about online band. I am in 7th grade and play the clarinet in the Honors band. Learning and playing online band is very hard! We have to teach ourselves all the music the band director gives us. We have to piece the music together in each of our sections and be able to play it by the end of the week. Competition is also challenging; we have to learn the music ourselves, and we only have ten minutes of help each week from the band directors to get it right.

We do get to have fun in band. We create fun ways to play together. For example, right now we are working on some songs to perform for the elementary school kids as a Christmas concert. We put together our part in a Wevideo (a type of video), and together it sounds like a full band. Even though I can't play my instrument in a full band I am glad it is not canceled. I can't wait to go back to a full band.

## The Parking Lot Fundraising Project

After a very stressful and difficult year, the ZAH Parking Lot Committee is extremely pleased to inform the community that the much-awaited final phase of the parking lot repair fundraising project, which started in Sept 2018; has now been completed with the installation of the *PAVERS* on the walls leading to the kitchen side entrance. Please have a look at the attached pictures.

We would like to wholeheartedly thank all our donors for their generous contributions which allowed ZAH to revamp and completely transform the parking lot in time, from the dilapidated state it was in. We are very lucky to have such a caring community as this effort went a very long way in assisting ZAH to showcase the Atash Kadeh to the entire Global Zarathushti and Non-Zarathushti communities and earn several plaudits during and after the inauguration festivities.

We would also like to take this opportunity and thank all our "Adopt a Parking Spot" donors for their invaluable contribution towards this project as well.

Thank you all again, we truly appreciate it!

Your ZAH Parking Lot Committee:

Jasmin Katrak,  
Lyla Daroga,  
Kayomarz Sidhwa,  
Sheroy Haveliwala

## Quote from Alfred Lord Tennyson Bidding goodbye to year 2020

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true

## ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN/ OF HOUSTON ASIA

Dr. Ka-Kin Cheuk



### Houston Asian American Archive (HAAA)



### Connection via Art Between Zarathushti Culture and China Gara Embroidery



## Report from Outreach/Library Committees

By: Yasmin Pavri

We have a special relationship with the Chao Center for Asian Studies at Rice University since we started our ZAH Oral History program with them. So it is logical that *Ethnographic Research in/of Houston Asia*, a course at the Chao Center taught by Dr. Ka-Kin Cheuk, would include the Zarathushtis. They reached out to Kaemerz Dotiwalla who has been working with them on this project for several months.

The findings of the students ended with a Symposium on Zoom. There were three panels: Chinese Communities, Sikh Communities, and Zoroastrian Communities and Beyond. Each panel was composed of three students and a “discussant” – a professional who summarized and commented on the presentations by the students. All presentations were made via Zoom.

The students who chose to speak on Zoroastrianism were Anene “Daniel” Uwanamodo, Mai Ton, and Flora Naylor. The discussant for the panel was Kaemerz Dotiwalla. Mai Ton interviewed Aban Rustomji and Vehishta Kaikobad. Flora spoke to Kaemerz Dotiwalla.

Daniel focused his presentation on the relationship between Black and Asian Americans – he picked up on the “beyond” in the topic *Zoroastrianism and Beyond*. He expressed regret that he was unable to interview any Zoroastrians.

Mai is an Asian Studies, Anthropology, and Visual Arts student. When she interviewed Aban on Zoom, Aban took her through the FIRES website which has pictures of several of the artifacts in the ZAH library and also showed her the 7 minute film of the exhibit Down Memory Lane. She spoke about Vehishta’s involvement with Sunday School and how she approaches learning through art.

Flora’s topic was on the response of the Zarathushtis of Texas to Covid -19. She talked about how services are now on Zoom with limited in-person attendance. The advantage of services on Zoom is that people all over the world can participate in them. The down side is that you miss the connection and spirituality of an in-person ceremony. She discussed how America had not fared well because of the notion of individualism vs. collectivism and wondered if Asian cultures viewed these mandates differently.

Kaemerz thanked everyone who participated. He gave a special thank you to Flora for using the term Zarathushti instead of Zoroastrian! He talked about how several Zarathushtis were involved with the COVID-19 vaccine. He mentioned Dr. Cyrus Poonawalla of the Indian Serum Institute who will provide vaccines at a very low cost. He talked about Mai’s presentation that showed the connection via art between the Zarathushti culture and China, especially in the unique Zarathushti embroidery art form, the gara. He hoped to soon invite everyone to the Center to taste our food as another step to understanding Zarathushti culture.



**AT ATASH KADEH  
BEHRAM ROJ JASHAN**



**AshaLynnea & Natasha  
Attendees at Atash Kadeh**



Atash Kadeh Prayers Zoom Link  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4192191997?pwd=JASHAN>  
Zoom meeting ID: 4192191997  
Password: JASHAN

Contact Persis Behramsha 713-294-7747 for any Machis, Jashans, Volunteering requests or any questions. All Atash Kadeh Committee members are always happy to help.

**Prayers are also led by  
Peshotan Unwalla  
Every weekend on Zoom**

Prayer Session link:  
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72166471218?pwd=dWhFamZZVml0QnVnZUZrY2ILOG1Xdz09>

Meeting ID: 721 6647 1218  
Password: NIRANG  
(Password is case sensitive)

**Atash Kadeh News**

By: Persis Behramsha

As a reminder, following are the Boye Timings until further notice. **The Weekend Boye Timings for Boye and Humbandagi remain the same at 5:00 p.m.**

**Havan Geh Boye - 11:00 a.m.**

**Rapithwan Geh Boye - 1:30 p.m.**

**Ujiren Geh Boye - 4:00 p.m.**

**Aiwishuthrem Geh Boye - 5:45 p.m.**

Please note that the above timings may need to be adjusted based on changes in sunset times, and/or requests for Machis/Jashans.

We are grateful to our community for their support towards our Atash Kadeh. Your dedication shows in various ways - visiting on an ongoing basis, sponsoring Community Jashans, requesting Machis, etc., donating Sukhar & Candles, monetary donations, and making a special trip to clean up the facility. We are so very grateful to all of you.

The October Behram Roj Jashan was sponsored by Farida Desai, Zenobia & Jal Guzdar, Cyra Kanga, Yasmin Medhora, Sillie & Jehanbux Mehta, and Thrity Spencer. We thank you all for your continued patronage.

As always, if anyone would like to sponsor the Behram Roj Jashans whether it be a family or a group, please us know, so we can reserve your choice of preferred month, for the Jashan. The Atash Kadeh can accommodate about 35 to 40 attendees at a given time, while maintaining the required Social Distancing guidelines, so please continue to adhere to that policy, while making sure that everyone wears Masks as they are still mandatory, until further notice.

We encourage our young Mobeds to participate whenever they can, and we were delighted to have Mobed Zubin Kotwal as well as Mobed Bahrom Firozgary perform the Boye Ceremony over some of the weekends.

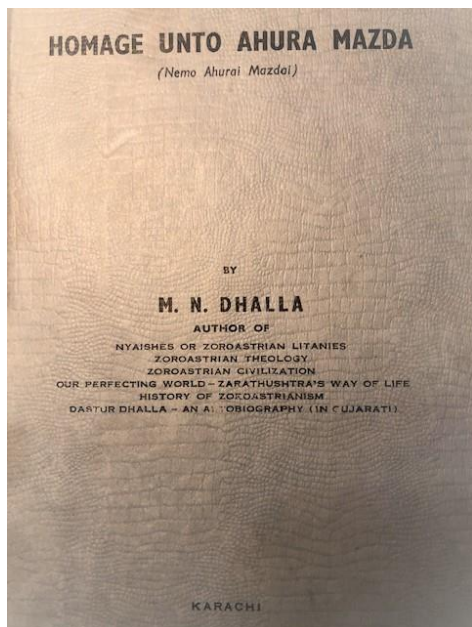
Mobed Soli Dastur of Florida has been our special guest Mobed, educating us about the Atash Niyayesh prayers over the last few weeks.

Mobed Zarrir Bhandara of California was also special guest over one weekend explaining the impact of right pronunciations, as well as the application and impact of our prayers.

Our Weekend Hambandagi prayers chime in beautifully with the translation recitations from our wonderful youth. We thank Darius Aga of Austin, Roshni Chikhlwala and Natash Dungor for your enthusiasm in reciting the translations.

All community Prayers are Live Streamed including the weekend Boyes at 5:00 p.m. CST, on Saturday and Sunday to allow everyone to join in remotely and feel connected.

## HOMAGE UNTO AHURA MAZDA



## DASTURJI M N DHALLA



The following is from the Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract (WZSE) #395 by Ervad Soli Dastur from Florida. It is a prayer from Dr Dhalla's Homage unto Ahura Mazda and contributed by Sarosh Collector.

### Let me run to the relief of those sinking in the mire of misfortune

When trouble seizes man and he is filled with dismay, his mind sinks in sorrow and heart bends with grief. When he smarts under poignant sorrow, he dives deep in gloom. Melancholy preys on his health. The sorrows under which he groans and the misfortunes he suffers, dig hollow in his countenance. Adversity ploughs his face with furrows, bends his back and dims the luster of his eyes. Worry makes him old before his time. He seems to grow a year older every day. Misfortune withers to an early grave.

Sorrow is lessened, when it is shared by others. Suffering is sweetened, when others weep with the sufferer.

Deeply does my heart ache for the sufferings of my neighbors. Let me gently and soothingly enter into the sorrows and griefs of others. I will not be callous to the misery that surrounds me. I will not veil from my eyes the sight of the sufferings of others. I will look into them with the feeling heart and strive and struggle to soften them. I will share them. Sympathizing with the sorrow of others and bearing of their griefs dull the edge of my sorrow.

When adversity confronts me, I will face it and fight it and conquer it. I will not indulge in melancholy forebodings. I will maintain equanimity in the midst of my misfortune. As the violent tempests and gales agitate but the surface of the sea and reach not the depth, so when I find myself in the midst of sorrow and suffering, will I try to maintain unperturbed calm in the depth of my heart.

Joy is vociferous; sorrow is silent. I will hide my sorrow deep in my heart. I will bury my misery in my soul. I will try not to give way to despair and dive deep in the abyss of despondency.

Yet weak and frail is man. When a great weight is on my spirits, when my heart is sore distressed, when sorrows and sufferings surge around me and I see no way out from my gloom and I have no strength to endure, I will wail and weep under my breath to thee, my Comforter. Thou, I know, art at hand to soothe my sorrow. Thou dost dwell in my heart. Thither will I betake myself and unburden my breast to thee. Deliver me from my distress. Help me to retrieve my position, when misfortune befalls me. Let bright, happy days dawn on me again, Ahura Mazda.

**EDITORIAL NOTE:** If readers are interested, another book by Dastur M N Dhalla worth reading is *OUR PERFECTING WORLD*.

Atcha toi vaem xyama yoi im ferasem kerenaun ahum  
"May we be the perfectors of the world, O Ormazd – Zarathushtra





## Can you get paid to provide care to family

By Persis Behramsha

A common question we get is whether an individual can get paid to provide care to family members. The answer is that in many cases, YES YOU CAN.

While recently researching for someone who was seeking Caregiving Help, I came across this article that I thought would be helpful. This information is excerpted from the following website: [www.patientsrising.org](http://www.patientsrising.org).

### CAN YOU GET PAID TO PROVIDE CARE TO FAMILY?

A common question we get is whether an individual can get paid to provide care to family members. The answer is that in many cases, yes you can.

Family caregivers are taking up increasing responsibilities for their loved ones. Often, a caregiver juggles their career and caregiving, or they give up paid work for full-time caregiving duties, which can be both a financial and emotional strain. Resources are available that can ease the financial stress on patients and their family caregivers—it's simply about knowing where to look.

#### **Indirect Compensation**

- **Long-term care insurance:** Paying out-of-pocket, especially for a home-health aide, can be very expensive. If planned in advance, older adults can buy a long-term care insurance plan or a life insurance policy that covers long-term care (hybrid policy). Those younger than 60 years are less likely to be approved for long-term care policies.
- **Government assistance:** This comes in various forms.

**MEDICARE:** <https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/home-health-services>

Original Medicare can completely cover necessary home health care, including nursing care; home health aide services and occupational, physical and speech therapy. It also covers intermittent or part-time routine home care. Medicare Advantage plans (Medicare provided by private health plans) offer broader benefits.

**MEDICAID:** <https://www.medicaidplanningassistance.org/in-home-care/>

It pays for in-home care, some residential and assisted living care and nursing home care. Eligibility for home health services may vary by state.

**VETERANS PROGRAMS:** Veterans can qualify for 4 plans:

Veteran-Directed Care: <https://acl.gov/programs/veteran-directed-home-and-community-based-services/veteran-directed-home-community-based>

Aid and Attendance benefits: <https://www.va.gov/pension/aid-attendance-housebound/>

Housebound benefits: <https://www.va.gov/pension/aid-attendance-housebound/>

Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers: <https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers/>

**PACE:** <https://www.medicare.gov/your-medicare-costs/get-help-paying-costs/pace> Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly provides community-based care for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, instead of in a nursing home or care facility.

**Tax Breaks For Caregivers:** Medical home care can qualify for a federal tax deduction. The IRS has a tool to help you determine if you qualify. <https://www.irs.gov/help/ita/does-my-childdependent-qualify-for-the-child-tax-credit-or-the-credit-for-other-dependents>

#### **Direct Compensation**

There are programs where you can get paid to provide care to family who are elderly, but these vary by state. You can find specific programs in your State <https://www.payingforseniorcare.com/paid-caregiver/program-locator>

Several non-profit organizations also provide financial assistance in the form of grants for specific disease conditions. A list of such disease-specific organizations is available on the website of the Family Caregivers Alliance here. [https://www.caregiver.org/state-list-views?field\\_state\\_tid=152](https://www.caregiver.org/state-list-views?field_state_tid=152)

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**Additional Resource**

1. Medicare's tips for family caregivers: <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/Partnerships/Downloads/AskMedicareCaregiverSupport.pdf>.
2. HHS resources for caregivers: <https://www.hhs.gov/programs/providers-and-facilities/resources-for-caregivers/index.html>.

**Additional caregiver resources:**

<https://www.caregiver.org/>  
<https://www.medicareplanfinder.com/caregivers/>