

manashni

Volume 37 Issue 2 – February 2023

MANASHNI SPONSORED BY

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

PLACE: ZHCC

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

TIME: Different timings for each group

DATE: February 12, 2023

<u>Children's Session</u>: The Sunday School session starts at 11:00 a.m. inperson and by Zoom

<u>Middle Group</u>: The Sunday School session at 11:00 a.m. – in-person & by Zoom



Youth Group: The Sunday School session at 10:00 a.m. In person



UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, February 4, 2023 – Jashn-e-Sadeh
Friday, March 17, 2023 – 5.30 pm – Nowruz Celebration at Asia
Society – ZAH is the lead Sponsor for the event. Please attend and show your support for ZAH – See details below
Sunday, March 19, 2023 – ZAH AGM – See details below
Tuesday, March 21, 2023 – AK Anniversary Jashan & Hambandagi
Friday, March 24, 2023 – Library Event – See Flyer
Saturday, March 25, 2023 – Nowruz & ZHCC 25th Anniversary Gala
Sunday, April 9, 2023 – Carnival after Sunday School

REPORT

LIBRARY REPORT

By: Jangoo Mistry

What is Your Story?

Each one of us has a life story. And each life story is unique and different from anyone else's. What is your story?

With the aim of collecting and preserving these stories, the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) launched the ambitious Oral History Project back in 2014 that recorded and preserved the rich backgrounds and experiences of our fellow Zoroastrians in Houston. A little over 50 seniors from our community have already been interviewed. They have shared the memorable events of their life experiences – including their daily lives dating back to the early years in their homeland, and as immigrants to the U.S.

This ambitious project has been conducted through a partnership with Rice University which has created a new digital Zoroastrian Archive as part of the life stories of Houston's Asian American immigrants.

As we launch the second phase of this important project, the ZAH Library is planning to continue interviewing many more community members. We would very much like to include your story in this treasure house of valuable information. At your convenience, and in the comfort of your home, two student interns from Rice's Chao Center

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Katrak, Percy - Chairman Gagrat, Nikita Hormuzdi, Khursheed Khumbatta, Kershaw Mistry, Jasmine Dastur, Khursheed - Secretary Billimoria, Farokh - Treasurer Sarkari, Nazanin - FEZANA Rep

OUR ERVADS (PRIESTS)

Boomla, Noozar Buchia, Kyrus Dastur, Barior M Dastur, Darius B Desai. Farrokh Firozgary, Bahrom Gonda, Pervez Kanga, Neville Katrak, Rayomand Katrak, Vispi Khumbatta, Noshir Kotwal, Zubin Masani, Dara Nariman, Khushrav Pavri. Shapur Sanjana, Bahmanshah Saniana, Kurush Sidhwa, Kayomarz Sidhwa, Maneck Sidhwa, Yazad Unwalla, Peshotan Vimadalal, Freyaan Vimadalal, Khushroo

SHARMEEN MEHRI



ORAL HISTORY IN PROGRESS



for Asian Studies will conduct the interview on Zoom. You should note that each oral history is accessible worldwide through the Internet from Rice University's archive. As such, you will be required to sign a simple consent form before you do your recording.

Why is this important for you and the Community? Your grandchildren and great-grandchildren will someday learn about you, your real-life struggles, your sacrifices, and achievements, and feel grateful and proud. This is what the power of Oral Histories is. It is not a pretentious egotistical exercise. Each one of us has changed the course of history. By uprooting ourselves and having the courage to start a new life halfway around the world, we have changed the course of the future for our children and grandchildren. As such, we should be proud to document our lives for posterity.

We already have over 20 new people from our Houston community who are eager to record their life stories. If you haven't vet, please consent to have your life history recorded and preserved before memories fade and your life story is lost forever. Feel free to contact Aban Rustomii (aban@coatingindustries.com), Jangoo Mistry (jbmistry@gmail.com), or Rustom Engineer (rustom47@hotmail.com) to put your name on the growing list of people whose life stories are preserved.

This effort on your part will be invaluable to your descendants and to the Zoroastrian community. It will be an easy, enjoyable, and richly rewarding experience.

A Timely Event: "Memories We Carry"

Coinciding with the launch of the second phase of our Oral History project, we have an event that will be of interest to each one of us.

On Friday evening, March 24, Sharmeen Mehri, a Zoroastrian from Karachi, Pakistan, will be giving us an exciting presentation. She is currently working on her Ph.D. dissertation in the English department at the University at Buffalo, NY. Her research focuses on Parsi writing with an interdisciplinary focus on archival studies.

She will talk about "Memories We Carry," her oral history project that is part of the South Asian American Digital Archive Fellows project. In this talk, she will share some interesting insights from the project and the value of preserving the migration experiences of Zoroastrian South Asians to the United States. With a specific focus on the narrative of assimilation or dissimilation, these oral history interviews document how Zoroastrians preserve or adapt their cultural identity within the context of the broader American immigrant experience.

Our evening program will start at 7 pm – with light refreshments before, and a potluck dinner after. Do plan to come and spend an interesting and pleasant evening with us, while, at the same time, supporting this important project led by a young Zoroastrian scholar. Please see the attached flyer for more details.

ATASH KADEH NEWS

By: Persis Behramsha

After a festive beginning to our New Year in January, with the awesome gathering of the first Behram Roj, we rolled on, with a pretty busy first month.

INTERFAITH GROUP Visit by School Children

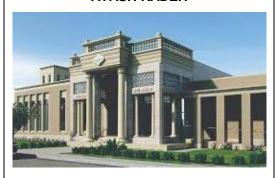




THANK YOU FOR THE SUKHAD



ATASH KADEH





If anyone would like to sponsor any Behram Roj or Parab, please check the Calendar on the Atash Kadeh tab on ZAH.org, to see what is available. We are currently open for the following Behram Roj for the year:

Tuesday May 2, 2023 Saturday July 1, 2023 Monday July 31, 2023 Monday September 4, 2023 Wednesday October 4, 2023 Friday November 3, 2023

After an extensive Iull during the pandemic, we had a pretty large group of School Youth once again visit the Atash Kadeh, to witness the Boye Ceremony and then on to the ZAH Center to learn more about the Zarathushti religion. This was initiated by the Interfaith Group, and coordinated wonderfully by our Kaemerz Dotiwala.

February Behram Roj Jashan sponsors included families of Meher & Gayve Anklesaria, Diana & Adil Balsara, Lyla & Raymie Daroga, Farzana & Kayomarz Sidhwa and Farzana & Darius Wania. Our Sponsors are blessings for our Atash Kadeh - we thank everyone for your participation and generosity.

As usual, Sukhar has poured in from all the visits to India for which we are always very thankful. We also have a handful of Silver Muktad Vases purchased in India, that are available for sale at \$50 apiece, if anyone is interested.

As you know, our beautiful Atash Kadeh has constant ongoing maintenance expenses to keep it in optimal condition. We work on various projects throughout the year, like cleaning of vent hoods, carpet cleaning, painting, etc., and would appreciate any contributions toward the daily maintenance and upkeep.

We are now in the third year of the Five-Year Commitment and are very grateful to all our Sponsors, Donors and Friends for contributing promptly every year since 2021.

Please know that whenever we have any sponsored Jashans, they are open to everyone in our community, so feel free to join, whenever you can. It is very heartening to see attendance on Zoom from a good handful of out-of-towners who are grateful that the Atash Kadeh is accessible remotely. For those that do not have this within their midst, it is an incredible experience.

May Peace & Happiness Be Unto All of Us

MISCELLANEOUS

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

As advised earlier, all current memberships have expired December 31, 2022. Please recognize the need for your support and contribution and pay your membership dues for the year 2023 by March 5, 2023 to be able to vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Here is the link for Renewing Membership http://zah.org/renew-membership

PICTURES FROM THE PAST AT ZAH Basket Ball Evening



Kids Volunteering at AK



ZAH Library



Golden Group one afternoon



If you wish to pay by check, please renew membership using above link, then select the Pay by Check option on the Checkout page and click Place Order. Then make your check payable to ZAH, write type of membership in memo and mail to the address below:

ZAH

8787 W. Airport Blvd. Attn: Treasurer Houston, TX 77071

Please Note: You MUST renew using the Membership link above regardless of whether you are paying by paypal, credit card or check.

If you have difficulty renewing your membership on the webpage, please reach out to the ZAH Secretary at kbdastur@yahoo.com or to the ZAH Web team at zahwebmaster@gmail.com.

ZAH-MEMBERSHIP - WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ME & YOU? By: Homi Davier

Dear Fellow Zarathushtis:

I read this statement from WZO and wish to share their line of thinking with you.

'The World Zoroastrian Organization is an international body created to support Zoroastrians all over the world with aid, education, community, and advocacy. All Zoroastrians of any background are welcome to join, and we also welcome membership from non-Zoroastrian supporters and friends.'

Are we at ZAH not following this same philosophy? Are we not the envy of all the other North American associations? Families move to Houston. Not just because it is warmer down south but because the ZAH community is vibrant and progressive and allows everyone equal rights and benefits.

And yet we at ZAH we have a predicament wherein even increases in our community do not equate to its membership. My question has always been, WHY?

Do we have an extensive ZHCC facility for our use? A Sunday School? Our monthly Manashni, an Atash Kadeh right in our backyard? Almost everything a Zarathushti would want is available for you. For God's sake, just imagine we have the only North American Library rich with Zarathushti books and artifacts.

Look around and see the selfless volunteers from a 5 year to 70 plus year old who are there for every need or occasion who help bring in funds to sustain the expenses of our ZAH's valuable assets.

Then why are memberships not increasing? The typical reply I get is, what do we get in return? My response is what are we not getting? However, the issue goes deeper; some just don't like ZAH, some don't want to pay, and others don't care. However, we must realize that giving back is a universal Zarathushti trait.

Sports Day - Tug of War



JASHN-E-SADEH Bon fire



BABY BOY



Mehelli Behrana



As a community grows, there should be the desire to provide an impetus for everyone that wants to get connected. In an increasingly fragmented society, such support groups like our ZAH can provide a family atmosphere where no one must stand alone.

These are my views as a proud ZAH member, so think some. If you feel optimistic about our ZAH after reading this, please sign up become a proud contributing member!

JASHN-E-SADEH

By: Banafsheh Mondegarian

After two years, we celebrated Jashn-e-Sadeh on February 4th. We started with the regular Boye Ceremony in the Atash Kadeh, followed by Atash Niyaesh prayers in rear grassy area of our Center around the bonfire.

Our dear Farrokh Firozgary played music and the crowd around the bonfire danced and sang Persian songs. After the fire got extinguished we all gathered inside the Center and enjoyed the tasty potluck meals that every attending family brought.

After dinner everyone danced and enjoyed themselves with Persian music. We had approximately 120 people attending. The festivities ended around 8:30 p.m.

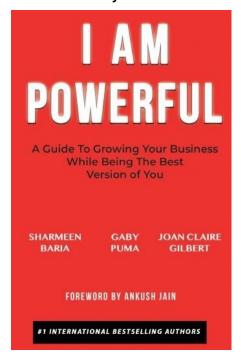
BIRTH

Baby boy, **Amari Brandon Abbaspour**, was born on November 17, 2022, to Nikita & Brandon Abbaspour in Tampa, Florida. Big sister Aliyeh (5) and big brother Aryan (4) are happy and proud to have a new little brother to play with, and grandparents, Ken & Villi Bhappu are delighted to welcome the new baby.

OBITUARY

Mehelli Behrana, husband of Zenobia Behrana, father of Fiona Rustom Setna, Vanessa David Jensen, Sonia Ron Rash; grandfather of Kevin and Serena Setna, Kyle and Hailey Jensen, Reagan and Mackenzi Rash passed away on Thursday, January 19, 2023.

I AM POWERFUL Co-Authored by Sharmeen Baria



DR. DASTUR M. N. DHALLA



NEW BOOK Co-Authored by Sharmeen Baria

I AM POWERFUL is a motivational book authored by three ladies, one of whom is Sharmeen Baria. This is about how women, despite all the challenges of the life can get their life back together and make something of themselves. One of the book reviews is reproduced below:

"Wonderful inspiring stories of three amazing women who show that the real power lies within ourselves and when we're committed to take responsibility and action through sincere inner work we're not only serving ourselves but also everyone else. These stories moved me to the core and gave me hope!"

Copies of the book can be ordered at: bit.ly/sbaria-iampowerful

SRAOSHA IN LIFE, SRAOSHA IN DEATH

Homage Unto Ahura Mazda By: Dr. Dastur M. N. Dhalla

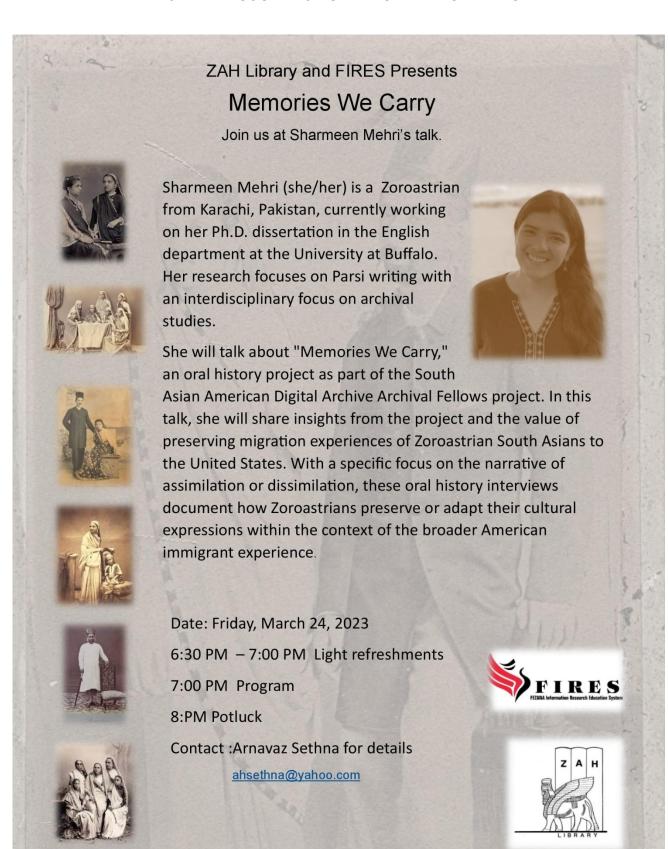
Death upon earth is birth in heaven, first said he who is Zarathushtra, O giver of both life and death, Ahura Mazda. The disembodied soul is born anew in heaven.

As childbirth is attended by travail and pang and the loving mother goes through suffering at delivery of the child she brings forth into the world, so is the severance of the soul from the body fraught with painful labor and agony. As a midwife lightens the suffering of the mother by her skill, so does thy Sraosha help when earthly life's work is done, the end is nearing, life begins to wane like the passing winter and death leads the dead to the deathless life of heaven.

May kindly Sraosha, then, be near me when I sleep my last sleep upon earth, and may he gently and tenderly wake me in thy resplendent heaven. Dreary and dreadful is the way of death I have to go, and fear and anxiety fill my soul, when I embark upon my journey and know not whither to go. May Sraosha hold my hand and guide my footsteps to the unknown world.

Sraosha in life and Sraosha at death, Sraosha in this world and Sraosha in the next world, Sraosha a judge at the Bridge of Judgment and Sraosha, they say, a collaborator with thee, O Ahura Mazda, at thy final Renovation-Sraosha, thus is everywhere and everywhen. Then make me worthy through constant and conscientious observance of thy religious ordinances, of the help and guidance and protection of Sraosha, thy celestial teacher and preacher of religion, the Zaota, the sacrificing priest on high, O Gracious God.

ALTHOUGH THIS EVENT IS AT NO CHARGE Please Register at http://zah.org/events/zah-library-function/ FOR HEAD COUNT FOR SEATING ARRANGEMENTS



NOWRUZ CELEBRATION AT ASIA SOCIETY (ZAH IS LEAD SPONSOR)



ZAH is the main sponsor for the citywide Nowruz celebration hosted by Asia Society during Spring Break week from 14th to 17th March 2023 at:

Asia Society Texas Center 1370 Southmore Blvd., Houston, TX 77004

Each day there will be Daytime Activities from 11 am to 2 pm which are open to all Houstonians, with ZAH leading the activities.

Additionally, the Grand Finale Event will take place on 17th March, 2023 from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Asia Society Texas Center (address above):

The lavish and extravagant Grand Finale activities will include music, dancing, food and cultural exposure revolving around Nowruz. Other communities will also be participating with the main sponsor being ZAH.

The attendance of our entire ZAH community is requested and eagerly anticipated at the <u>Grand Finale event on 17th March at 5.30 pm</u>.

Let's showcase our ZAH presence and Nowruz spirit for our Houston Community at-large.

Free transportation bus is being arranged (from the ZAH-Center to Asia Society and back) for those who are 50+ years for the Grand Finale event. Please contact Anita Kavina at ak1@sigmaco.com for details if you are interested in the free transport.

Admission is free for all and there will be plenty of parking available near Asia Society

For questions about the event, or if you are interested in volunteering, kindly contact Vehishta Kaikobad at 281-610-2703 or send her an email at salveh@comcast.net. Visit this link to learn more.

GRAND FINALE EVENT (17th March 5.30 pm to 8.30 pm)



DAYTIME ACTIVITIES (14th to 17th March 11 am to 2 pm)



Notice of the Annual General Body Meeting of the Members and Election of Officers to the ZAH Executive Committee – 2023

The Annual General Body Meeting ("AGM") of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston ("ZAH") will be held on **Sunday, March 19, 2023 at 1 pm** at the The Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center, 8787 W. Airport Boulevard, Houston, TX 77071 ("ZHCC").

Please note:

TO VOTE, SUBMIT NOMINATIONS, AGENDA ITEMS AND/OR TO ATTEND THE AGM, ZAH MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2023 SHOULD BE PAID IN FULL BY <u>SUNDAY</u>, <u>MARCH 5, 2023</u>. <u>NO MEMBERSHIP CHECKS WILL BE</u> COLLECTED AT THE AGM

Lunch will be served prior to AGM.

The schedule of events for 19th March 2023 is as follows: 12 pm – Lunch – Biryani 1 pm – ZAH AGM 2023

If you plan to attend the AGM, please RSVP at this link by 5th March 2022 for headcount for Lunch.

AGENDA ITEMS: Members For 2023 (as defined below) wishing to include any items for discussion may forward the subject matter to the ZAH Secretary, by e-mail at kbdastur@yahoo.com by **Sunday, March 5, 2023** so that they can be included in the agenda. If you do not have access to email, submissions can be made to the ZAH Secretary by post marking your mail to ZHCC before the deadline and follow up with a text message to (281) 948-5319. **Please note that no new agenda items will be accepted after the due date or entertained from the floor at the AGM.**

NOMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OPEN POSITIONS: The following positions on the Executive Committee are up for election in 2023:

Committee are up for c	COUOTI III 2020.		
Percy Katrak	Chairperson	Completed two 2-year terms	Term limited and not eligible for
			re-election
Khursheed Hormuzdi	Member	Completed two 2-year term	Term limited and not eligible for
			re-election
Jasmine Mistry	liviemper	Completed 1-year of 2-year term	Elected to resign from EC
			member position, in order to run
			for Chairperson position
Khursheed B. Dastur	Secretary	Completed two 2-year term	Term limited and not eligible for
			re-election
Nazanin Sarkari	FEZANA Rep	Completed one 2-year term	Eligible for re-election and would
			like to run for 2nd term

NOMINATIONS FOR ATASH KADEH OPEN POSITIONS: The following positions on the Atash Kadeh Committee are up for election in 2023:

ap for closical in 2020.					
Khushrav Nariman	IIVIAMBAL — IIVIABAN		Term limited and not eligible for re-election		
Persis Behramsha			Term limited and not eligible for re-election		
Rustom Engineer	liviember		Elected to resign from AK Committee member position.		

PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATION OF MEMBERS: A Nomination Form is included with this notice. Only Members For 2023 may send any completed and signed Nomination Forms by Sunday, March 5, 2023 by e-mail, to kbdastur@yahoo.com. If you do not have access to email, please post mark your nomination by the deadline and mail to the ZAH Secretary at ZHCC and follow up with a text message to (281) 948-5319. No nominations will be accepted after the deadline and no nominations will be accepted from the floor during the AGM. The nominating Member For 2023, nominee and a seconder must all sign the Nomination Form for it to be valid.

While making your nomination, please be guided by the following:

All nominees for the ZAH Executive Committee must be regular members for a period of at least six (6) months prior to the election and must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. This means that they should have paid their 2022 membership dues already and would need to pay their 2023 dues by 5th March 2023

- All "Member (Mobed)" position nominees for the Atash Kadeh Committee must be a North American Mobed Council (NAMC)* member and must be residing in Houston or its surrounding areas for at least 5 years prior to the election and a ZAH member and would need to have paid their 2023 dues by 5th March 2023
- *Note In the event an NAMC member is not available for election, then an ordained Zoroastrian priest, recognized by the NAMC, shall qualify for election with all other requirements remaining unchanged. In the event an NAMC member or an ordained Zoroastrian priest is not available for election, a Zoroastrian member shall qualify for election with all other requirements remaining unchanged.
- All "Member" position nominees for the Atash Kadeh Committee must be regular members for a continuous period of no less than ten (10) years prior to the election and must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. This means that they should have paid their membership dues (continuously from year 2013 to year 2022) and would need to pay their 2023 dues by 5th March 2023
- No two members of an immediate family shall serve on the Executive Committee at any one time.
- No member of the Atash Kadeh Committee shall simultaneously serve on the Executive Committee.

Voting will be by secret ballot. Proxy votes will not be accepted.

ONLY MEMBERS FOR 2023 ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE, SUBMIT NOMINATIONS, AGENDA ITEMS AND/OR TO ATTEND THE AGM. TO BE A "MEMBER FOR 2023" ZAH MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2023 SHOULD BE PAID IN FULL BY SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2022.

Lunch will be served at the AGM. Please RSVP at this link by 5th March 2022 for headcount for lunch. Lunch will be ordered only per RSVP received.

Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) Executive Committee Nomination Form for 2023

PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATION OF MEMBERS: Completed, signed and scanned Nomination Forms must be emailed by **Sunday, March 5, 2023** to ZAH Secretary at kbdastur@yahoo.com. If you do not have access to email, please post mark your nomination form by the deadline and mail to the ZAH Secretary at The Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center, 8787 W. Airport Boulevard, Houston, TX 77071 and follow up with a text message to (281) 948-5319.

No nominations will be accepted after the deadline and no nominations will be accepted from the floor during the Annual General Meeting.

The nominating Member For 2023 (as defined below), the nominee and a seconder must all sign the Nomination Form for it to be valid.

Following positions are open for Nomination:

- ZAH Executive Committee 1 Chairperson, 2 Members, 1 Secretary and 1 FEZANA Representative
- Atash Kadeh Committee 2 Members; 1 Member (Mobed)

While making your nomination, please be guided by the following:

- All nominees for the ZAH Executive Committee must be regular members for a period of at least six (6) months
 prior to the election and must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. This means that they should have paid
 their 2022 membership dues already and would need to pay their 2023 dues by 5th March 2023
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*Note - In the event an NAMC member is not available for election, then an ordained Zoroastrian priest, recognized by the NAMC, shall qualify for election with all other requirements remaining unchanged. In the event an NAMC member or an ordained Zoroastrian priest is not available for election, a Zoroastrian member shall qualify for election with all other requirements remaining unchanged.

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means that they should have paid their membership dues (continuously from year 2013 to year 2022) and would need to pay their 2023 dues by $5^{\rm th}$ March 2023

- No two members of an immediate family shall serve on the Executive Committee at any one time.
- No member of the Atash Kadeh Committee shall simultaneously serve on the Executive Committee.

ONLY MEMBERS FOR 2023 ARE ELIGIBLE TO SUBMIT NOMINATIONS, AGENDA ITEMS AND/OR TO ATTEND THE AGM. TO BE A "MEMBER FOR 2023" ZAH MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2023 MUST BE PAID IN FULL BY SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023.

Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) Executive Committee Nomination Form for 2023

I hereby nominate one):		for the position of (select only			
☐ Chairperson	☐ FEZANA Representative	☐ Member	☐ Secretary		
for the Zoroastrian Associat	ion of Houston Executive Committ	<u>ee</u> .			
I hereby nominate		for the	position of (select only	one):	
☐ Mem	ber	ber - (Mobed)			
for the Zoroastrian Associat	ion of Houston Atash Kadeh Comn	nittee.			
I understand that the nomin procedures.	ee must be eligible for election, and	satisfy the requirement	nts of ZAH's by-laws, polic	cies and	
NOMINATING MEMBER:	SECONDED BY:	NOMINE	NOMINEE:		
Signature:	Signature:	Signature: _			
Name:	Name:	Name:			
Date:	Date:	Date:			

ZAH NOROUZ & ZHCC 25TH SALGREH - MARCH 25, 2023

LADIES - WEAR AND SHOW OFF YOUR BEAUTIFUL ANCESTRAL GARAS

REGISTER HERE



RAFFLE BEAUTIFUL RED AND GREEN BEADED AND EMBROIDERED SAREE

As a part of the ZHCC's 25th Salgirah & Norouz celebration, there will be a Saree Raffle drive for a **beautiful** Red and Green Beaded and Embroidered Saree, donated by one of our very own members. (See Pictures below) Raffle tickets can be bought online when you register for the event.

This is a great opportunity for all to add this gorgeous Saree (blouse piece not included) to your collection. The Raffle Winner drawing will be during the Norouz function on March 25th 2023, and you do not need to be present at the event to win. The Saree will be shipped to the winner free of cost within the United States. Once you buy your Raffle tickets online, they will be handed over to you.

Thank you all for your generosity and support in advance and hope to have a very successful Raffle drive.

If you have any questions, kindly contact Dilnaz Mory (Cell #: 1 305 934 0847).





