



MANASHNI SPONSORED BY
SETHNA FINANCIAL GROUP LLC, ZARIR J. SETHNA, CLU®, ChFC®, LUTCF®
WWW.SETHNAFINANCIALGROUP.COM
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 8, 2024

Children's Session: The Sunday School session starts at **11:00 a.m. in-person and by Zoom**

Middle Group: 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

Dec 29, 2024 – Jan 1, 2025
NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS
CHECK OUT THE PROGRAM ETC AT <https://nazc2024houston.com/>

- Saturday, January 11, 2025 – Golden Group**
- Friday, January 24, 2025 – WZCC Event**
- Saturday, February 1, 2025 – Jashn-e-Sadeh**
- Friday, March 21, 2025 – Norouz Hambandagi**
- Saturday, March 22, 2025 – Norouz dinner event**
- Sunday, April 13, 2025 – Annual Carnival**

REPORTS

LIBRARY REPORT

By: Jango Mistry

A Trip Down Memory Lane

The Purvez Rustomji Room has a special treat for all Zoroastrians—especially Houstonians. The walls are plastered with a unique display of historical documents, photographs, and chronicles of significant events that eventually led to the establishment and building of the ZAH Center and the Atash Kadeh.

The “Founding Fathers” of this country are often remembered for the Constitution they gave us in 1787. This effort by the ZAH Library helps us to remember the “founding members” who had the vision to start and shepherd the Association and the buildings that we enjoy to this day. Putting this together required going through countless notes and documents needed to draw a timeline of the last 40+ years that records steps that have brought us to this day. Photographs tell the story – photographs that recall the pioneers and their efforts through the years. You will chuckle at how much people have changed through the years and make you say, “I didn’t know that!”

ZAH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Aderbad Tamboli – Chairman
- Percy Master – Secretary
- Lyla Daroga – Treasurer
- Zia Anklesaria – Member
- Nikita Gagrat – Member
- Zubin Mistry – Member
- Fiona Setna – Member
- Nazanin Sarkari – FEZANA Rep

OUR ERVADS (PRIESTS)

- Boomla, Noozar
- Buchia, Kyrus
- Dastur, Barjor 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
- Sanjana, Kurush
- Sidhwa, Kayomarz
- Sidhwa, Maneck
- Sidhwa, Yazad
- Unwalla, Peshotan
- Vimadalal, Freyaan
- Vimadalal, Khushroo

=====

**ZAH AT
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS HOUSTON**



For any Association to grow and thrive the members must have a good knowledge and appreciation of the past actions that let us enjoy today's facilities. We owe a deep gratitude to Arnavaz Sethna who kept meticulous records for so many years. Others who have contributed to this challenging effort also need to be thanked: Aban Rustomji (who spearheaded the whole project), Darayus Kolah (who helped curate the attractive displays), Nauzer Billimoria, Rustom Engineer, Yezdi Engineer, Zubeen Mehta, Jangoo Mistry, Yasmin Pavri, Meheryar Rivetna, Nazanin Sarkari, and all the way from Buffalo, NY Sharmeen Mehri, basically the entire Library Committee worked hard to put all this together.

This display is done in time for the North American Zoroastrian Congress later this month and will be available for viewing till January 31, 2025. Do see it now; you have the advantage of seeing the 40+ years of ZAH history before the rush of the Congress attendees. You will find it most interesting.



Darayus, Rustom & Yezdi – hard at work.



Four decades of ZAH history

ZAH AT MFAH

By: Arnavaz Sethna

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), has added another jewel to its crown with the historic gallery opening in the Department of Asian Art, dedicated to showcasing Zoroastrian and Parsi works of art. This groundbreaking exhibition, *At Home in Houston: A Zoroastrian Story of Faith, Culture, and Belonging in the Heart of Texas*, debuted on December 5, 2024, and is a proud testament to the rich heritage and contributions of the Zoroastrian community in Houston.

The exhibit features significant loans from our ZAH library, and the MFAH Collection, Parpia Collection of Indian Textile, offers a glimpse into a vibrant faith tradition and cultural legacy. Among the items showcased from our library are:



- 14 portraits from the Wall of Ancestors
- Two silver caskets from the esteemed Dastur Dhalla collection
- A red feta and a silver dish from the K.D. Irani collection
- A handwritten Vendidad, donated by Bomanshaw Sanjana
- Miniature Avesta prayer books, contributed by Nargesh Sethna and Kati Tamboli
- A silver ses and a prayer book (private loan)

This exhibition celebrates art and tells a narrative of belonging, resilience, and preserving traditions. It marks a milestone in ZAH's 40+ years of history and highlights its members' steadfast efforts to keep the community's legacy alive.

FROM PARPIA COLLECTION



Special recognition is due to Aban Rustomji, whose tireless dedication has driven the ZAH Library's mission forward, and Vehishta Kaikobad, a longtime MFAH docent whose expertise and passion have helped bridge the museum and community. Their contributions underscore the collective pride and commitment of the Zoroastrian diaspora in Houston.

This exhibit is a must-visit for anyone eager to explore the intersection of faith, art, and identity. It reflects a unique cultural tapestry that has found a cherished home in Houston.

BEHRAM ROJ JASHAN



ATASH KADEH NEWS – NOVEMBER 2024

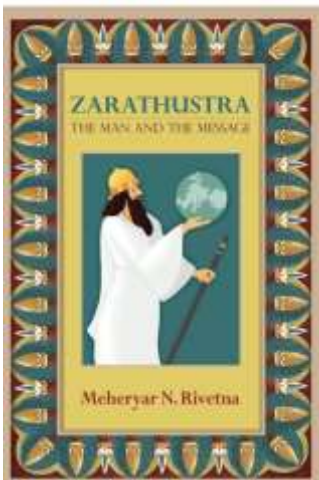
By: Persis Behramsha

We have one more month before winter sets in and we appreciate how good the fall weather was while it lasted.

As we move along into November, we realize how close we are getting to Houston hosted NAZC Congress and its finalizing touches. The Grand Jashan will be a day to cherish as we will have several Mobeds praying in unison to bring in the New Year.

The November Behram Roj Jashan sponsors were Percy & Roshan Behramsha, Kamalrukh Gandhi, Sheroy and Yasmin Haveliwala, Percy & Jasmin Katak and Khushrav & Manek Nariman. It is so heartening to see friends, families and groups hosting these monthly sponsored Jashans and even more heartening to see so many attendees participating and enjoying. Thank you, dear sponsors for your generosity.

GATHA



During the November Gatha class, Meheryar Rivetna discussed how Zarathushtra succeeds in his Divine Mission to put forward his religious ideas. He presented that a religion is a system of beliefs and practices dedicated to the worship of a divine power to seek its blessings in life. The Indo-Iranians, before Zarathustra's arrival, had a religious system in place, but the practices were laden with beliefs in multiple deities, superstitions and mythical concepts passing off as religion. Zarathustra disavows this religious ideology asking the masses to accept the religious ideas he puts forward; ideas based on wisdom, intelligence and rationality (Vohu Manah). In Yasna 46, Zarathustra talks about the priests of his time, unwilling to change their practices, driving him out of their territories until he reaches the court of King Vishtaspa who sees the wisdom in Zarathustra's teachings. Vishtaspa recants the Indo-Iranian religion he practices and converts to the faith Zarathustra offers. Zarathustra, through perseverance, succeeds in his divine mission



DALLAS LOCK-IN



FOOD DRIVE



Machi requests continue to be a part of every month. We have generated the 2025 Calendar for prayer requests, so be sure to contact us and register your choice of dates for the Machis, Jashans or any other prayer requests. It is important to let one of our committee members know of your requests to make sure the dates don't clash with any other requests.

Remember to stop by the Atash Kadeh booth at the Congress.

As we get close to the end of 2024, we hope everyone continues to stay healthy and happy, and shower each other with good wishes for the coming year.

Ushta Te
The Atash Kadeh Committee

YOUTH GROUP REPORT

By: Natasha Dungor

Over the November 23-24 weekend, 10 Youth and Middle Group members traveled to Dallas with their families to attend the annual ZANT Lock-in.

On behalf of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston Middle & Youth Groups, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to you and the entire ZANT community for your warm hospitality and generosity in hosting us for the ZANT Camp this year. We are deeply grateful for the continued partnership between the Zoroastrian Associations of Houston and Dallas. This bond of love and friendship is truly special, and we are excited to see it grow stronger with each passing year. We hope this relationship between our communities — including our kids and younger generations — will continue to flourish and strengthen for many years and generations to come. Thank you to Delnaaz (Irani) Aunty and all the camp volunteers (Nina Aunty (Kalyaniwalla), Mamaiji (Arnavaz Vakharia), Ruttu Aunty (an out of town guest at Arnavaz Vakharia's house and pitched in to help), Benaifer Aunty (Kekobad), and Spenta Uncle (Irani), and the entire ZANT community for your kindness and hospitality. We look forward to future opportunities to come together, share, and celebrate our shared faith and heritage.

We also hosted our Annual Kids Christmas Party on December 8, 2024, after Sunday School. A detailed report will be available in the January Manashni.

Additionally, the ZAH Youth Group is excited to announce that it will be hosting and participating in the Zoroastrian Youth of North America's (ZYNA's) Attitude of Gratitude drive this winter, a national drive hosted by many FEZANA associations! This is a wonderful way to give back during the giving season, and we encourage everyone to get involved.

We will be collecting non-perishable food items (canned foods, boxed foods, etc). These donations will go to those in need, spreading warmth and nourishment throughout our community. The drive will run from December 1 through December 20.

DALLAS LOCK-IN LIMBO ROCK



Donation boxes will be available outside the Youth Room so you can drop off your items at any time during this period. We truly appreciate your generosity and support in making this drive a success!

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Natasha Dungor at natashadungor@gmail.com.

Let's come together this holiday season to make a positive impact. Thank you for your kindness and willingness to give

Dallas Lock-In 2024

By: Darius B. Dastur

Ranging from the early morning to a buzzing, jolly day and night, the Dallas Lock-In indeed had unforgettable moments. From the moment we got in, the air had expectations arising; before one could even count five, the fun got in.

The morning started with an icebreaking activity designed to make strangers turn into friends. Most interesting was "The Inspection Challenge," where we were paired to study each other closely, noting everything down in as much detail as possible before our partner made a small, surreptitious change. Guessing what was different led to bursts of laughter and a shared sense of connection. Once the ice was truly broken, we were divided into teams to come up with a unique name and to design a poster. Soon, the room was abuzz with creativity and collaboration: "Hot Cheetos", "Limes of Liberty", "The Sullies", and "The Flaming Ducklings" were written across colorful posters expressing the persona of each team. By lunchtime, everyone developed an appetite, and the inviting smell of tacos filled the air. It was a feast of warm tortillas, sizzling meats, and fresh toppings that somehow tasted better while sharing stories and laughs with our teammates. Lunch was a great refuel for what was going to be an afternoon full of outdoor activities.

We then busied ourselves with various activities under the scorching heat of the afternoon sun.

Tug-of-war became a great war of strength and will, where teams dug their heels into the ground and cheered at the top of their lungs, while relays brought out both the competitive and hilarious sides as we sprinted across fields. In no time, the courts of Pickleball became a hotbed of energy and laughter when the beginners and old players started trying their hand in this fast-paced game. Later in the day, after all the events that were organized took place, we finally had free time to relax and explore. A number of us started to toss a football around and lounge in the shade while others preferred to hang out indoors to deepen their newfound friendships. It was time for dinner in the evening, and a special dinner joined our parents with us. The aroma of comforting curry chawal wafted through the dining hall, humming with conversations at the tables.

But the crowning glory of the evening was still to come: the team performances! Each group had prepared a dance, and the ingenuity at the show was nothing short of brilliant. Parents clapped, cheered, and even acted as judges, laughing along with us as we celebrated everyone's effort. Competition was light, and the room was full of shared pride and pleasure.



DALLAS LOCK-IN A TEAM



DANCE PERFORMANCE



YELLOW TEAM



ZYNA

ZYNA Presents

California Retreat

FEB 14-17 2025
LONG WEEKEND - USA & CANADA

LOCATION:
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

PRICE:

4/ROOM	\$250
2/ROOM	\$350
1/ROOM	\$500

WE SUGGEST FLYING INTO SNA (JOHN WAYNE AIRPORT)

Service. Engagement. Community Building.

AGES 18-35
Register Today!
Limited Spots Available

THANKSGIVING Watching a Movie



When the parents were gone, the fun went inside: "Dog in the Bone" games got us running and thinking for victory. The laughter was contagious, and time flew away while we got closer through games, jokes, and sharing stories. Later in the night, we made our sleeping bags comfortable enough to sleep in and whispered until we all dozed off. When morning finally struck on Sunday, it carried the soothing smells of bagels and cereal. After breakfast, we gathered together to give back by making holiday cards for kids and putting together goodie bags. This sense of purpose and teamwork created a silent pride in the room, reminding us of what we could pull off together. As lunchtime approached, so did the bittersweet realization that the Dallas Lock-In was to come to an end. We sat down to our last meal together, reminiscing about the memories made and bonds formed. Saying our goodbyes with hugs, smiles, and promises to stay in touch, we left with hearts full of joy and gratitude.

The Dallas Lock-In wasn't just a series of activities; it was a journey of connection and growth. Every moment—from the icebreakers to the performances and everything in between—brought us closer and created memories we'll cherish forever.

ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH OF NORTH AMERICA (ZYNA).

Join us from February 14-17 for a 4-day retreat designed to bring young Zoroastrians from across North America together (18 – 35 years). Deepen your connections with the Zoroastrian religion and culture while creating lifelong friendships and memories.

The first 50 tickets are just \$200 and include:

- 3 nights at Marriott Hotel
- Transportation for the duration of the retreat
- Delicious meals
- Exciting activities throughout the weekend

Reserve your spot now! <https://fezana.org/zyna/retreat25/>

THANKSGIVING – THE PARSI WAY

By Jehanbux Mehta

A thanksgiving lunch nearly three weeks before the holiday? Why not? Our Zoroastrian community, and particularly the Golden Group, has so much to be thankful for. So, why not celebrate twice? The smoked turkey on the carving board, sliced honey glazed ham, cranberry sauce and other trimmings on November 28, the traditional way with family and close ones and a mite earlier the Golden Group observing it the Parsi Way.

It was, therefore, on Saturday, November 09 that the Group returned to their home base at the ZAH Centre to recount the many blessings showered upon us with raised glasses of wine and acclamations of *tandarusti* by the 74 – the largest ever at our events - who had gathered for the occasion. But first, a few words, a silent prayer and a few minutes of silence in remembrance of our dear Nina Sethna, a member since the founding of the Group and Zarine Boyce, a very recent member who had yet to attend a function of ours.

GOLDEN GROUP PLANNING TEAM



HAPPY PARTICIPANTS



**THE CLAY POT SPEAKETH
KEVIN NARRATING THE STORY**



It was time for lighter matters. Aban Rustomji was welcomed as a member of the Group and Dilshad and Bomi Hormazdi greeted for their first appearance. A roar of applause broke out when it was announced that total membership had risen to 111. JR (Jehanbux) spoke of how thankful we are for everything after which Helping Hand Jamshed Dudha spoke of Rohinton Mistry and the movie “Such a Long Journey” based on his novel that was to be screened that day. For the readers’ information, the book can be borrowed from the ZAH library. The wafting aroma of Naushad’s prawn curry beckoned the members to the lunch table where Helping Hands dished out heaped plates of the dish with chawal, turkey cutlets and katchumber. How much more Parsi can one get? But wait. Tradition had to be observed. So for dessert, pecan pie and vanilla ice-cream. And all this, plus the movie, for a charge of only \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. A sum of \$110 was donated to ZAH from sale of food left over augmented by a donation of \$50 by Diana Balsara.

On entering, the guests were treated to a colorful sight of beautifully decorated tables befitting the occasion. Several round tables were placed in the center of the hall for the viewers to see the movie on the large screen above the stage. A quiz on thanksgiving, pumpkin spice and the lot, compiled by Anita Kavina, was solved by several members who went home happy with bags of useful prizes. After a filling lunch, the Parsi way called for a nap, but that was not to be as many were kept absorbed by the movie. Departure time was extended to around 4:30.

For the wine, we must thank Jamshed Dudha, Diana Balsara and Shirin & Bahadur Sarkari, who could not make it at the last minute due to unavoidable reason, but who, nevertheless, sent us several bottles. I would be remiss if I were not to thank Aban Challa for the chocolate cookies, the Building Managing Sub-committee for, as always, allowing us use of the premises, Khushrav Nariman for his help in screening the movie, our Helping Hands who worked hard to arrange the function and the many members who helped in setting up the hall and clearing up the premises at the end of the function. A very Parsi Way, all that, would you not agree?

**My Sunday Afternoon:
And the Clay Pot Speaketh**
By: Aban Rustomji

Sunday afternoons often carry a tranquil charm, but this one was uniquely magical. As I settled into the theater, the stage—adorned with *charpais* and earthen pots—whispered promises of an evocative journey. The hybrid musical pantomime *And the Clay Pot Speaketh* unfolded, and soon, I was swept away into the timeless love story of Sohni and Mahiwal, presented with an innovative twist.

Kevin Haveliwalla’s narration was more than storytelling; it was an invitation. His wit and emotional resonance made every turn in the narrative feel personal, as though he was sharing a cherished memory. What truly set this production apart was its bold choice to tell the tale from the perspective of the clay pot, “Gharya.” This humble object’s voice transformed the familiar story into something unexpectedly profound and often humorous.

The actors breathed life into their roles with compelling performances, and I felt the weight of Sohni’s longing and Mahiwal’s devotion.

GROUP



Complementing this drama were the live classical musicians, whose melodies swirled around us like a river's current—gentle at times, turbulent at others. Their music was not merely an accompaniment but a vital character, pulling the audience deeper into the unfolding emotions. Every element of the production spoke to authenticity. The meticulous staging, the earthy tones of the set, and the tactile textures of South Asia made me feel like I was not merely watching but inhabiting the story. Once relegated to the background, the clay pot's perspective emerged as a poignant metaphor for resilience and sacrifice—a reminder that even the most minor players in history have tales to tell.

As I walked out, the melodies and the story's themes of love, sacrifice, and humor lingered. It was a Sunday well spent—immersed in culture, captivated by artistry, and reminded of the power of storytelling to connect us all.

TEHEMTAN HORMAZD ARESH



(August 29, 1936 – November 27, 2024)

OBITUARY – TAHAMTAN HORMAZD ARESH

On 27th November, 2024, the Zoroastrian community worldwide lost a true friend, well-wisher and philanthropist. Tahamtan is survived by his wife, Gordafriid, his sons Rohinton and Zaal, and his daughter Scheherazade, a long time ZAH Member.

He served as President of ZAC (Zoroastrian Association of California) from 1982 to 1985. In 1988 he founded the Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman (TMZA). Tahamtan was known for his philanthropic work and was a strong supporter of ZAH.

Tahamtan's sudden passing on 27th November, 2024, has left a profound void in the hearts of his loved ones and the community he cherished.



OBITUARY – ALOO PILLOO DARUWALLA

It is with a very heavy heart we announce the passing away of our dear Aloo Pilloo Daruwalla, wife of Pilloo Daruwalla on December 16, 2024. She is survived by her daughter Shernaz Boomla, son-in-law Affraz Boomla, son Noshir Daruwalla (Pune), grandsons Noozar and Ashtad Boomla, and great grandson Zarvan Boomla.

SANJAN STUMBH (PILLAR)



PARSIS DISPERSING FROM SANJAN

(From Kiss-e-Gulistanbanoo)

As the Parsis started getting more successful in trade etc., they started moving and relocating to nearby towns such as Navsari, Surat, Vankanair, Variav, Bharuch, Khambhat, Ankleshvar, etc. In 1142 AD the first relocation of Zoroastrians took place in Navsari. (Parsi Prakash, Volume 1, page 2).

In 1184 AD it seems as if there was a Parsi settlement by the Indus River, because from a town called Uchah in that area, Ervad Mahiyar went to Sistan to get training in Zoroastrianism, where he trained under the tutelage of knowledgeable dasturs-mobeds for six years and returned to India. He brought with him the handwritten copy of the Vendidad with translation written by Ardesher Behman. This is considered the first Pahlavi Vendidad with translation in India. (Parsi Prakash Vol. 1 Page 3)