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UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, November 7, 2025 – WZCC Houston Chapter Event: Travel and Tourism. See flyer on last page.

Wednesday, December 31, 2025 – New Year’s Eve Gala. See flyer on last page

REPORTS

LIBRARY REPORT

By: Jangoo Mistry

A Joyous Celebration

The 25th anniversary of any event is a notable achievement – especially in a world of short attention spans and constant change. That our ZAH Library (home of FIRES) achieved this milestone is a testament to the impressive collection of over 1,600 books and rare artifacts gathered lovingly for decades.

It was only proper that we celebrate this 25th anniversary with a gala event spread over 2 days: the evening of Friday, October 10, and the morning and afternoon of Saturday, October 11.

Friday evening was primarily a social and celebratory event with welcoming speeches by the Chair of the ZAH Executive Committee, Aderbad Tamboli, and the president of FEZANA, Kayomarz Sidhwa. Aban Rustomji, the Chairperson of the ZAH Library and the tireless driving force since its inception, gave welcoming remarks and thanked the supporters who have made today’s library possible. A special recognition and sincere thanks go out to Dr. and Mrs. Yazdi Sidhwa, whose incredibly generous donation made the construction of Phase II (atrium, library, and other rooms) possible. Sharmeen Mehri, co-chair of FIRES and the newest member of our Library, introduced Vehishta Kaikobad, who narrated the history of the scholars around the world who have addressed our events over the years, as our younger community members paraded down the stage with appropriate displays. EduI

SUNDAY SCHOOL

PLACE: ZHCC

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

TIME: Different timings for each group

DATE: October 12, 2025

Children's Session: The Sunday School session starts at **10:30 a.m. in-person and by Zoom**

Middle Group: The Sunday School session at **10:00 a.m. – in-person & by Zoom**



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



ZAH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Aderbad Tamboli – Chairman
Percy Master – Secretary
Lyla Daroga – Treasurer
Zia Anklesaria – Member
Nozer Dungor – Member
Zubin Mistry – Member
Fiona Setna – Member

OUR ERVADS (PRIESTS)

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

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A JOYOUS CELEBRATION 25th Anniversary of the ZAH Library

Library Committee with Speakers



Vehishta and Performers



Chikhliwala, our brilliant and ever-helpful member, prepared the graphics and props.

The evening started and concluded with traditional Iranian music and ended with a scrumptious Thai dinner.

The second day featured two distinguished speakers. Daniel Sheffield, the morning speaker, holds a doctorate from Harvard University and is now on the faculty of Princeton University. A scholar, author, professor, speaker, and linguist, Dr. Sheffield spoke on “Testimonies of Tradition: An Introduction to Zoroastrian Manuscripts”.

Dr. Sheffield pointed out that Zoroastrian manuscripts come in many forms: from ancient scriptures to granny’s recipe books. Manuscripts provide an invaluable window into the histories of Zoroastrian communities around the globe.

In this talk, Professor Sheffield debunked common misconceptions about what Zoroastrian manuscripts are, and why they are so precious for our global cultural heritage. After briefly surveying the history of modern manuscript collections, he talked about cutting-edge digital and AI-based approaches to the tens of thousands of surviving Zoroastrian manuscripts around the globe. The challenge for us is to organize the wealth of material in a way that it can be easily stored and accessed with the help of new developments in technology.

Our second speaker after lunch was Professor Afshin Marashi. On the faculty of the University of Oklahoma, he is the founding director of the University’s Center for Iranian and Persian Gulf Studies.

Among his long list of credentials, he is also the author, most recently, of “*Exile and the Nation: The Parsi Community of India and the Making of Modern Iran*”. His talk was on a topic that would be of broad interest to us. Despite having a shared history that stretches back many centuries, by the nineteenth century, Parsis and Iranians had largely lost contact with one another. He talked about the new efforts that have been made to build bridges between the two communities.

We are most aware of the original migration story of Zoroastrians as they fled from religious persecution in Iran and landed in Sanjan. That was some centuries back. But we have never addressed in our Library’s speaker series the efforts made by Indian and Pakistani Parsis to rekindle contact with our brethren in Iran. Most interestingly, Professor Marashi covered the efforts made in the last century to rekindle relations with their ancient homeland.

A hundred years ago in colonial Bombay, in 1922, a group of Parsis established an organization called the Iran League. Meant to strengthen ties with their Iranian Zoroastrian brethren inside Iran, the Iran League also endeavored to recast wider economic and cultural relations between India and Iran. That ancient homeland, after all, was undergoing seismic change. In the years following Reza Khan’s 1921 coup and the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1925, Parsis watched with growing anticipation and excitement as Iran’s new leader increasingly promoted a new national culture rooted in Iran’s ancient past. Prominent Parsis, many of them leaders in the Iran League, fervently believed that Pahlavi Iran would herald all sorts of progressive change: improved conditions for the Iranian Zoroastrians, deeper appreciation of Zoroastrianism among Iran’s Muslim majority, conditions for significant Parsi investment in Iran, and even the possibility of a mass Parsi “return” to the Shah’s domain, reversing the direction of

The Speakers

Top L to R: Dr. Sheffield, Prof. Marashi, Aban Rustomji, Kayo Sidhwa
Bottom L to R: Aderbad Tamboli, Shermeen Mehri, Jangoo Mistry, Yasmin Pavri



Captivated Audience



JASHAN SPONSORS

Farvardin Mah, Farvardin Roj Feroze and Shernaz Bhandara



Behram Roj Nargis and Homi Cooper



Neville and Farida Divecha



centuries of Zoroastrian migration. The advent of easier travel and Parsi philanthropy made possible for many illustrious Parsis in India (primarily Bombay) to reconnect with Iranians in Iran. In turn, this provided Iranians the opportunity to reconnect with their fellow Zoroastrians in distant lands. It also facilitated a second wave of Zoroastrian migration from Iran to India, who settled as "Iranis" with a sister culture but common heritage.

A common question and answer session at the end of both talks was a testament to the enthusiastic response from the audience. It provided a fitting end to yet another informative and socially rewarding experience that ZAH members have had over the years.

Your library is Houston's pride and joy; a veritable treasure house full of fascinating books. It is the envy of every other Zoroastrian Association across North America. Take the time to come to your library and browse. You will plan a visit for half an hour, but end up staying for much longer. And you will end up wishing that it continues for another 25 years!

ATASH KADEH NEWS

By: Atash Kadeh Committee

September started off with Jashans for Farvardegan and Behram Roj.

Farvardin Mahino Farvardin Roj was sponsored by the family of **Shernaz and Feroze Bhandara** on September 2, 2025. The Farvardegan Jashan is essentially to reverentially remember and dedicate to the Fravashis of our dear departed, who are the 'Guardian Spirits' not only of mankind, but of the whole nature.

The monthly Behram Roj Jashan on September 3, 2025, was sponsored by families of **Bakhtawar & Kershaw Byramji, Nargis & Homi Cooper, Farida & Neville Divecha, Roshan & Yezdi Engineer and Yasmin Medhora**. This Jashan is an observance dedicated to Behram Yazad, the angel of victory, often performed to welcome better times and invoke blessings for health, strength, and happiness, for the community and all human beings.

We also celebrated the Ardibehesht Mahino Ardibehesht Roj Jashan, sponsored by the family of **Anahita Kanga** on September 16, 2025. Ardibehesht Mahino, Ardibehesht Roj is a significant day in the Zoroastrian calendar, marking the day of Asha Vahishta, a divine concept of Truth, Order, and Righteousness.

The Faslî Mehrgan and Shehenshahi Maidyozairem Gambhar was celebrated on September 28, 2025, sponsored by the **Dadarji, Dhansaak & Dhamaal group**.

We thank all the sponsors for their commitment to continue with our traditions and also for your generosity and support for the Atash Kadeh.

The Houston Zoroastrian Study Group met on Sunday September 21, 2025 at 12:30 p.m.. In this session, Meheryar Rivetna elucidated the messages of the Zoroastrian tradition in the many parables. *Who was the first human? What is his origin? What is the purpose of creation? What is the significance of the moon in the Zoroastrian tradition? These were some of the questions that were discussed during the presentation.*

September was a somber month for the Atash Kadeh and our community as a whole. We had to bid farewell to our beloved Mobed, Ervad Maneck Sidhwa, whose deep commitment and devotion will always be

Yezdi & Roshan Engineer, Kershaw & Bakhtawar Byramji, Yasmin Medhora



Ardibehesht Mah, Ardibehesht Roj Anahita Kanga and Family



FASLI MEHRGAN & MAEDYOZAREM GAHAMBAR

Our Gahambar Sponsors serving food to the community



remembered. He was a strong support for our Atash Kadeh since its inauguration, and we will miss his smiling face, and his utmost dedication. We pray that he is at peace and his soul attains Garothman Behesht.

As most of you are aware, we started a campaign on January 1 2025, to raise 2 Million Dollars for the Atash Kadeh to support full time Mobeds and to continue the full range of traditional Zoroastrian practices. It was very heartwarming to see our community unite for this important cause. While we have raised a good amount, we still need to raise considerably more funds. We appreciate the kindness and thoughtfulness from all those that have already donated. We hope to be able to reach our ultimate goal soon.

Your Atash Kadeh Committee

Fasli Mehrgan & Maedyozarem Gahambar - Sunday, September 28, 2025

By: Entertainment Committee

The Fasli Mehrgan & Maedyozarem Gahambar was very special this year, as we had an awesome turnout of 26 families sponsoring the event with approx. 206 attendees. We made a sizeable net profit of approximately \$7,200 for our ZAH center.

As always, people gathered together for a beautiful Jashan at our Atash Kadeh followed by a delicious lunch at the ZAH center, catered by our very own Naushad Mehta, who puts his heart & soul in his cooking.

The families that sponsored the gahambar were Zia & Rustom Anklesaria, Diana & Adil Balsara, Serena & Kaiwan Bharucha, Rubina & Feroze Byramji, Tanaz & Chesley Choudhury, Nali & Danesh Desai, Jessica & Jamshed Dubash, Thrity & Kersi Engineer, Parinaz & Khodi Irani, Cyra Kanga, Nilufar & Tirandaz Kasnavia, Farah Khumbatta, Nazneen & Kershaw Khumbatta, Naushad Mehta, Ouvre & Behramji Mehta, Delna Minwalla, Manek & Khushrav Nariman, Elvia & Ronnie Patel, Roshan & Zarir Sethna, Shermeen & Jal Sethna, Fiona Setna, Rustom Setna, Sanober & Aderbad Tamboli, Meher & Zubin Vakil, Parynaz & Khushroo Vimadalal, Farzana & Darius Wania. We are very thankful to all of them for sponsoring the event, as well as to all our members that donated towards it.

The delicious goat dhansak, turkey kheema kababs, veg dhansak & veg potato pattice along with the katchumbar, was a treat and enjoyed by all. This was followed by appetizing gulab jamuns and a variety of ice creams.

The Jashan was performed by our dear mobeds at the Atash Kadeh and the chasni, fruits and delicious malido made by Yasmin Medhora & Manek Nariman served at ZAH were truly relished by all.

Thank you to our Entertainment Committee members that helped organize this, and many such events through the years!

YOUTH GROUP REPORT

By: Shireen Anklesaria

Our Youth Group Officer elections were held in July for the 2025-2026 School Year. Our newly elected officers representing the Youth Group for the new term are:

- President: Shireen Anklesaria

**YOUTH GROUP PRESIDENT
Shireen Anklesaria**



**GOLDEN GROUP
LURE OF HALWA PURI**



- Vice-President: Darius Dastur
- Secretary: Cyrus Desai
- Treasurer: Mahtaab Mondegarian
- Historian: Nadia Bharucha

Congratulations to all the newly elected officers! We thank our previous youth board for their time and service towards the Youth Group and the community and wish our outgoing seniors all the very best as they begin their college journey. We would also like to welcome all the new students who have moved up from the Middle Group; looking forward to an amazing year ahead!

Youth Group Blood Drive:

On Sunday, September 28, 2025, the day of the Fasli Mehrgan & Maediozarem Gahambar, the ZAH Youth Group hosted its annual blood drive at the Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center. The Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center is a non-profit organization accredited, licensed, and recognized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and numerous local and state officials and authorities. We had 13 successful donations, totaling 15 pints of blood donated, which can help save up to 45 patients in need. Thank you to all who donated, helped spread the word, and supported our ZAH Youth Group!

GOLDEN GROUP REPORT

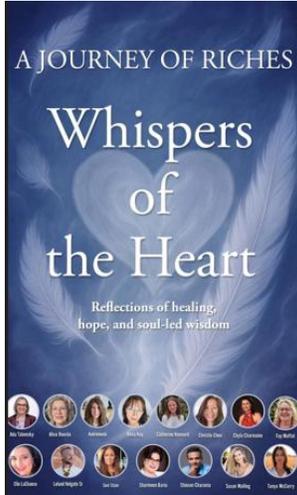
THE LURE OF HALWA PURI

By: Jehanbux Mehta

It was mid-summer but quite pleasant as I stepped out of my house in Parsi Colony, Karachi, on a Wednesday morning around 7:00. "Where are you off to?" questioned Sillie. "For a walk, my dear" I lied, quite certain that she had not fallen for that ruse. Succumbing to my insatiable desire for a plate of the irresistible halwa puri that Fida Ali Mithaiwala serves up every morning from 6:00 to 11:00, I walked gingerly over what was once a cobbled pavement to my destination. Seated among several others at tables that took up the whole lane, I patiently awaited my turn at being served. It was worth the wait as watching the puri making process was simply fantastic. Far inside the cavern lay dozens of sacks of maida with one worker busy slitting them open putting several pounds in a basket to be retrieved eagerly by another who then mixed the contents with water to make a mound of the paste. Another person then kneaded that with his muscular arms into small balls which he threw to a colleague who flattened them before flipping each into a large skillet of bubbling oil. Once done a few seconds later, the 'chef' deftly flies it on to a round tray held by the awaiting server who then dollops a spoonful each of halwa, potatoes and cholay in three *katories* to place before the eager customer. Henry Ford would have been truly proud to see his division of labor concept at work so efficiently in a remote land.

When I described to my friends how puris are made in Karachi, they exclaimed "halwa puri? Sounds great! How about Golden Group arranging an afternoon for that". Our ZAH Centre was suggested as the venue, but that idea was vetoed as puris need to be had freshly fried as otherwise they turn flat and gooey and not crispy. Unlike as in Karachi where this is a breakfast dish served daily from early morning to 11:00, in Houston it is served as a specialty only on weekends till late afternoons and that too with several other dishes to make it a meal. Just as well as it is on Saturdays that Golden Group meets. So, our Helping Hands after a good bit of scouting, with liberal samplings at each place, selected Aga's Restaurant, rated number one in the nation for Indo-Pak cuisine.

Whispers of the Heart: A Journey of Riches



FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Natasha Dungor



Zaal Mory



40 members signed up for the feast on Saturday, October 04. Hands had made arrangement for all to be seated together in one area of the large banquet hall. Two long tables, one behind the other were reserved for our group. Large pitchers of chilled mango lassi arrived with plates of carrot and cucumber with raita. Soon followed baskets of crisp fried puris served with bowls of halwa, aloo channa and cholay. Though some tried desperately to eat the puris with flatware, others unashamedly used their fingers to break open them and scoop mouthfuls of halwa or cholay. While at this delicate task, handis of goat karahi kheema and bowls of beef nihari, palak paneer, naans and tawwa chapatis were placed at each table. Dig in baby, dig in. We surely did that asking for more where needed. Tea had not been thought of and it is thanks to Yasmin Medhora who surreptitiously ordered and paid for the first round. More followed to comfort the satiated members.

It was an afternoon to be remembered. Delicious food, impeccable service, and jovial company made it a memorable event. And, all that for a mere \$25 per member. Thank you Helping Hands for the hard work done in making that possible.

Whispers of the Heart: A Journey of Riches

By: Sharmeen Baria

This book connects readers intimately with their heart. Have you ever felt a quiet nudge within, a soft whisper urging you to trust yourself, heal, and step into your true power?

In Whispers of the Heart, you'll discover the soulful voices of 15 inspiring authors from around the world, each sharing heartfelt stories of resilience, healing, and transformation. These powerful reflections will help you reconnect with the wisdom already living inside you.

Whispers of the Heart is a companion for your soul. Each chapter is a tender reminder that even in silence, you are never alone. If you're ready to: Break free from self-doubt, Heal old wounds with compassion, Awaken to your inner wisdom, Step boldly into the life you're meant to live... Then this book was written for you. Listen closely. Your heart is whispering. Will you answer?

This book is co-authored by one of our ZAH authors, Sharmeen Baria, and is available to order on [Amazon](#)

FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

FEZANA established its Academic Scholarship program in 1999 and has given scholarships to the amount of over \$2 Million till date. This year there were 94 total applications with 65 Undergraduate and 29 Graduate applications. The following ZAH members won FEZANA scholarships:

Natasha N. Dungor has been awarded the FEZANA Undergraduate Academic Scholarship Award of \$2000 and Undergraduate Community Award of \$1000 - towards her continued academic aspirations and community involvement..

Zaal Mory has been awarded the Jerry and Celeste Kheradi 30th Anniversary Endowed Scholarship Award of \$5000, in the Award Category - Undergraduate Academic Scholarship - towards his studies in Osteopathic Medicine at University of Texas, Health Sciences.

Heartiest Congratulations and Best Wishes to Natasha and Zaal for their achievements. You make us proud!

WEDDING

Phiroz and Frannie Engineer are delighted to share the joyous news of the wedding of their daughter **Nikita to Adrian** on October 4, 2025.

Heartiest Congratulations to Nikita, Adrian, and the entire Engineer family!

BIRTH

Proud Parents : Michelle Balsara Malik and Ashar Malik; Grandparents : Adil and Diana Balsara - Samira and Arshad Malik; Uncles and Aunts to **Sophia** are Joel and Emily Balsara, Josh and Danielle Balsara, Nick and Sierra Balsara, Amer and Saima Malik

Grand Parents Adil and Diana are overjoyed with their bundle of joy, **Sophia**, born on 1st October 2025 - on the Third Wedding Anniversary of Michelle and Ashar.

Heartiest Congratulations to the Balsara and Malik families

Dylan Khosravian, a boy to Farzeen & Darius Khosravian, sister to Eva, grandson to Nasreen & Rustom Khosravian and Fariba & Farhad Khosravi, born on 7th October, 2025

Heartiest Congratulations to the Khosravian and Khosravi families

OBITUARY

Ervad Maneck Hormusji Sidhwa passed away peacefully at his home on September 18th at 1:40 a.m. He is survived by his wife, Pervin; sons Xerses and Burjis; daughter-in-law, Persis; and grandchildren, Arman and Ameera.



Ervad Maneck Hormusji Sidhwa
November 6, 1947 – September 18, 2025

Ervad Maneck Hormusji Sidhwa was a pillar of the ZAH Community. As a caretaker and one of the priests of the Atash Kadeh, he dedicated countless hours to providing spiritual guidance and performing sacred ceremonies, including marriages, Navjotes, Jashans, funerals, and other religious services for the community.

ZAH will always remember him, for his quiet strength and his unwavering commitment to the community.

Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved Sidhwa family

Fali Eruch Antia, husband of Roshan Antia, father of Anahita Kanga and Mithra Patrawalla passed away in Houston on Saturday evening, October 18th, 2025.

Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved Antia, Kanga, and Patrawalla families



WZCC Houston Chapter Event Friday, November 7th Topic: Travel & Tourism

Explore how the travel industry has evolved over the years, including when it's more advantageous to book your own reservations versus using a travel agent. Learn strategies for reducing travel costs and gain insights into the business aspects of corporate travel.



Ken Bhappu
Corporate Sales; Turkish Airlines



Farida Divecha
Sales; AAA Texas



Jamshed Irani
President; Mazda Travel

Location: Zoroastrian Association of Houston - ZAH
8787 W.Airport Blvd, Houston, Tx.
Dinner 7p.m. to 8 p.m. ; Presentation 8 p.m. Onwards

RSVP - Yasmin @ 713-301-1521

Members : \$20 per person; Non Members: \$30 per person
WZCC Annual Membership \$50 per couple

NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 31, 2025
at ZAH CENTER

SAVE THE DATE
Details coming soon!!

SUMPTUOUS DINNER

LD DANCE COMPANY

LATIN DANCE PERFORMANCE BY
LUCIA DARGAM
AMERICA'S GOT TALENT PARTICIPANT

DANCE IN THE NEW YEAR
DJ REY HENANDEZ!!

