



manashni

Volume 39 Issue 12 – December 2025

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
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UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL

PLACE: ZHCC

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

TIME: Different timings for each group

DATE: December 14, 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 **11:00 a.m. – in-person & by Zoom**



Youth Group: The Sunday School session at 11:00 a.m. **In person**



Wednesday, December 31, 2025 – New Year's Eve Gala. See flyer on last page. [Click here to Register.](#)

Calendar of Events for 2026:

31st January, Saturday - Jashan Sadeh

21st March, Saturday - Navroze Humbandagi and Function

12th April, Sunday - ZAH Carnival

31st May, Sunday - Gahambar

15th August, Saturday - Navroze Humbandagi and Function

4th October, Sunday - Gahambar

REPORTS

LIBRARY REPORT

By: Aban Rustomji

**Happy Holiday Reading!

As we celebrate this festive season, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all our donors and supporters. Your generosity makes every lecture, program, and book possible, keeping our Zoroastrian heritage alive and thriving.

Wishing you joy, peace, and inspiration in the year ahead!

As we cozy into the holiday season, many members have asked two great questions:

(1) *How do I find books in the Library?*

(2) *How do I check them out if the bookcases are locked?*

Here's a quick guide to help you make the most of our wonderful collection!

Exploring the collection is easy from any device!

Visit our online catalog: www.fires-fezana.org → Click on "Library Catalog"

JASHAN SETTING AT THE ATASH KADEH



ZARATHUSHTRA PHOTO AT THE ATASH KADEH



YOUTH GROUP REPORT ZANT LOCK-IN



You can browse by title, author, or subject to find exactly what you're looking for.

Our bookcases remain locked to protect valuable materials, but Library committee members have the keys.

To borrow a book, simply ask any committee member—they'll gladly unlock the case and check out the item for you.

Whether you're drawn to history, religion, fiction, cookbooks, travel, or art, the ZAH Library has treasures waiting to be discovered.

ATASH KADEH NEWS

By: Atash Kadeh Committee

As we reminisce and thank Ahura Mazda for the blessings bestowed upon us throughout the year, we also reflect on invaluable imprints left behind by our loving community members that have left this earth for their heavenly abode. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with all their families.

This season we once again want to honor and thank all our Ervads who have individually and collectively given of themselves to serve our community throughout the year. At the Atash Kadeh, we especially want to highlight our present Mobed who has served and continues to serve unwaveringly and with utmost dedication, even more so, after our beloved Ervad Maneck Sidhwa left us.

Ervad Pervez Gonda, we want you to know how much we appreciate you, and your deep dedication to our Atash Kadeh. Many folks may not realize how much work goes into the daily upkeep and its sanctity, to conserve and preserve. You exemplify cleanliness, and you go above and beyond to satisfy and accommodate everyone that visits the Atash Kadeh. We truly value you and thank you every day for your hard work and devotion.

The sponsor family for the monthly Behram Roj Jashan on November 2, 2025 preferred to stay anonymous. We wish to thank them very much for sponsoring and acknowledge their commitment to continue with this tradition.

The Tir Mahino Tir Roj Parab Jashan was sponsored by the family of **Tannaz Machhi and Debashish Chakraborty**, on November 25, 2025. The Tir Yazad Parab or Tiregan, is a festival of water and rain, honoring Tir Yazata (Tishtrya in Avestan), the divinity associated with the star that brings rainfall. Thank you, Tannaz and Debashish for your dedication and sponsorship.

The Houston Zoroastrian Study Group met on Sunday November 9, 2025 at 12:30 p.m..

Meheryar Rivetna mentioned that the next four to five sessions will discuss the connection of the Kayanian legends to the Zoroastrian beliefs—the *History Behind Ancient Persian "History"*. The presentations will touch upon elements from the *Shah Nameh* related to Zoroastrian theology. Persian history has a long-standing connection with the history of the Zoroastrian religion.

We are very grateful to all of you that assist us during events as well as at other times, and we thank all that give so willingly and without hesitation.

ZANT LOCK-IN



CHRISTMAS PARTY FLYER



YOUTH FOOD DRIVE FLYER



Happy Holidays to all. Cheers!

Your Atash Kadeh Committee
Khushrav Nariman, Feroze Bhandara, Shernaz Bhandara, Mitra
Khumbatta, Persis Behramsha

YOUTH GROUP REPORT

By: Shireen Anklesaria

Over the November 21-23 weekend, 8 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 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), 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 will host our Annual Kids Christmas Party on December 14, 2025, after Sunday School. A detailed report will be available in the January Manashni. Everyone is more than welcome to come please RSVP with <https://forms.gle/uFuSxUxMcF5U8bzbv5>. We hope to see you all there.

Additionally, the ZAH Youth Group is excited to announce that it will be hosting our own food canned drive until December 14th. 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 till December 14th. Donations can go in 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 Shireen Anklesaria at srankles@icloud.com. Thank you for your kindness and willingness to give.

SPORTS COMMITTEE REPORT

By: Percy Behramsha

Tuesdays come and go, but somehow the table tennis balls survive Senior Zoroastrian Paddle Warriors —though a few balls now appear to be questioning their life choices.

Each week:

- Expert rallies that would impress Olympic coaches—if only they'd been here.
- Generous “coaching” from the sidelines, much of it unsolicited but enthusiastically delivered.
- Tea time usually proves that many of us swing a spoon with far more accuracy than a paddle. A true athletic event.

BIRTH

LUCA WOLFE-KHURANA



THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER



Artwork designed by
Natasha Dungor

Our standards remain low, our enthusiasm high, and our sense of humor on the court... high.

"All bethha bekaars sitting at home are welcome to come and join the group. No playing required" It's a lot of fun.

See you around – Tuesdays 10.30am @ ZHCC Rustomji room.

—Your Lovably Chaotic Tuesday Crew (come join us)

MNE SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA AND APPLICATION

By: MNE Scholarship Committee

The MNE Scholarship is awarded to students enrolled at any accredited University, College, Community College, or accredited vocational or IT or advanced technology related institute with credible certifications. Two scholarship will be awarded in March 2026 - one scholarship of \$3,000 and one of \$2,000. The scholarship criteria and application form are on the ZAH website at below links:

[Click here for Application Form](#)

[Click here for Criteria for Eligibility](#)

Please note that applications are due by February 28, 2026.

BIRTH

Luca Wolfe-Khurana was born on November 27th, Thanksgiving Day at 5:20PM and weighed 7 lbs 9 oz! Proud parents Christiaan Khurana, Lauren Wolfe, and all the Grandparents couldn't be more thrilled!

Heartiest Congratulations to the Wolfe and Khurana families

THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER

By: *Meheryar N. Rivetna*

Note: This write-up is partly adapted from Meheryar Rivetna's article "The Science of Prayer" published in the Summer 2023 issue of The FEZANA Journal. It received accolades not only from readers in North America, but also as far from Karachi, Pakistan.

Is God a celestial bellboy whom we can call upon to do our bidding by reciting verses many of us hardly understand? Not in the least. While prayer is important having essential psychological benefits, prayer lies in putting into action the words recited.

In a small town lived a very pious Zarathushti. A man with not only firm religious convictions, but devoted to the welfare of his community. In short, as perfect as a human being can be.

The town got hit by torrential rains putting everything at risk. The streets were heavily flooded making transportation possible only by some watercraft. The man prayed for the rains to stop as he watched the water rise in the streets. His neighbors pulled outside his window in a boat asking him to jump in so they could take him to safety. He declined asking the boatpeople to help others. He was praying to Ahura Mazda for the rains to stop for his and everyone's safety. Ahura Mazda answers prayers, he believed; assuring his friends that his prayers would yield results. The rain worsened. The boat came back the next day with its occupants pleading the pious Zarathushti to get in the craft. He repeated his earlier commitment to prayer and its results. The rain got worse. The boat came once more for the Zarathushti. His faith in his prayers was unshakable, he told his neighbors; he assured them of his safety.

The water in the streets had risen to very high levels. The force of the water broke into the Zarathushti's home. With no escape route, the pious man drowned in the water flooding his home.

Without question, being pious and having lived a good life, heaven was his final resting place. Entering heaven's gates, he was livid demanding to see Ahura Mazda. When he met his maker, with tears in his eyes, he questioned the Wise Lord why his prayers were not answered. He had so much of the Good Lord's work to do on earth and now his life was cut short. Ahura Mazda, looking at the pious man squarely in the eye, said, "I don't know what your problem is. I sent the boat three times".

Our own personal efforts, not incantations, vibrate to deliver our entreaties. Prayers are answered by one's personal efforts coupled with using wisdom, rationality and right thinking. If the pious Zarathushti had used his wisdom and jumped in the boat, he would have lived.

The scholar Maneckshaw Dastur informs: "Mânthras (prayers), derives from the root 'man'—'to think' meaning "that which is to be thought about thus leading to precepts or doctrines in the religion, which are to be thought about and practiced." They are not "statements only to be recited in order to have its effect produced, but is a precept of life, which after being studied is to be put in practice, in one's actions." (1). Prayer lies in action. Actions speak louder than words. Dastur Maneckji Dhalla reminds us that "the purpose of prayer is to guide and inspire the devotee". He adds that fantasizing the Avesta is mystical and supernatural, that strange vibrations are wafted heavenwards by the mere utterance of its words, exerting miraculous influences, do not enhance its worth, but devalue it. Instead of being inspirational, Dastur Dhalla says, such beliefs turn prayer into sorcery. (2). Prayers are important. However, nature does not abrogate its laws to satisfy human pleas. Prayers are answered not by idle chanting, but by working in tandem with nature's laws, as ordained in our scripture, to fulfill our needs and desires. The Zoroastrian religion is a powerful, practical religion. It is not a fairy tale.

- (1) Dastur, Maneckshaw Navroji; *The Moral and Ethical Teachings of Zarathushtra*. (1928).
(2) Dhalla, Maneckji N., *The Saga of a Soul*. (1975).

NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA

[Click Here to Register](#)



NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 31, 2025 at ZAH CENTER

Questions? Contact:
Arzin Italia
(713) 679-4998

SUMPTUOUS DINNER
CATERED BY ALINGS!!

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

BYOB

BALLOON
DROP!!

DANCE IN THE NEW YEAR!!
DJ REY HERNANDEZ!!

CHAMPAGNE
TOAST!!

RATES: RSVP Deadline 12/23/25
**Rates After RSVP Deadline

ZAH Member: 12 years and up	- \$80 / \$125
ZAH Non-Member: 12 years and up	- \$105 / \$125
Member Children (5 years – 11 years)	: \$45 / \$60
Non-Member Children (5 years – 11 years)	: \$55 / \$60
Walk-Ins At the Door	: \$150

Organized by:
ZAH Entertainment Committee