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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: July 12, 2026

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**



JULY EVENTS COMPLETED

4th July, Saturday – America's Semiquincentennial (250th) Birthday (completed)
18th July, Saturday – Youth Fund Raiser (completed)

UPCOMING EVENTS

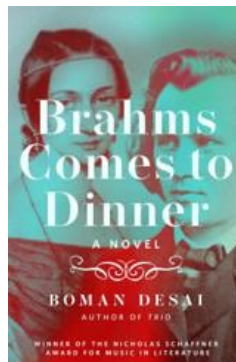
24th – 26th July 2026 – Z Camp 2026
15th August, Saturday - Navroze Humbandagi and Function
21st August, Friday – Library Event – Book Reading Boman Desai
4th October, Sunday – Gahambar
9th & 10th October, Friday & Saturday – Library Event
7th November, Saturday – Play by Shahnaz Sidhwa

REPORTS

LIBRARY REPORT

By: Jangoo Mistry

Book Reading Friday, August 21



We are delighted to announce that the celebrated, prolific Zoroastrian author, Boman Desai, has accepted our invitation to come to ZAH again for the third time. He will read from his newly published acclaimed novel, ***Brahms Comes to Dinner***, for us before settling down in Mumbai. In his previous visits, Boman has captivated us by reading from his earlier works and sharing his classical music compositions.

Johannes Brahms, the brilliant music composer whose compositions are still performed in stages around the world, was in love with Clara, the widow of Robert Schumann, yet another immortal composer. Desai's earlier work, **"TRIO"**, revolved around this central trio of luminaries and the unrequited love of Brahms for Clara, who remained faithful to her husband Robert Schumann, initially incapacitated and later deceased.

ZAH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Aderbad Tamboli – Chairman
Percy Master – Secretary
Neville Divecha – 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
Masani, Cyrus
Masani, Neville
Nariman, Khushrav
Nariman, Viraf
Pavri, Shapur
Sanjana, Bahmanshah
Sanjana, Kurush
Sidhwa, Kayomarz
Sidhwa, Yazad
Unwalla, Peshotan
Vimadalal, Freyaan
Vimadalal, Khushroo

BAHMAN MAHINO BEHRAM ROJ JASHAN



In his latest, *Brahms Comes to Dinner*, Desai continues the compelling historical novel of a romance that intertwines music and love - love between the great composer Brahms and Clara, the widow of his musical champion Robert Schumann, who chose instead to give her life over to the performance of her late husband's work, immortalizing the one true love in her life.

Boman Desai was bound for a career in market analysis when a chance encounter with Sir Edmund Hillary, his first hero, turned him back to writing, which has been fortuitous for his fan base.

Gentle Reminder: On Friday, August 21, we will host an evening event at 6:30 pm, featuring a book reading by Boman Irani starting at 7 pm. It will be a potluck event, and if past events are any guide, these potlucks will present a huge selection of delectable foods. We would greatly appreciate it if you could give a quick RSVP to Arnavaz Sethna (281) 468-4988 and help us plan the logistics for the event.

SEE FLYER BELOW

ATASH KADEH REPORT

By: Mitra Khumbatta Mistry

The month of June began with clear-cut focus as our Atash Kadeh Committee concentrated on planning for our July 2026 retreat. Our AK committee, along with the 2026 NAMC Institute of Zoroastrian Studies, hosted a Sacred Purification Retreat, a Bareshnum Retreat at the Bhandara Atash Kadeh from July 8-11, 2026. This 4-day Retreat included several distinguished speakers and lecturers, that focused on a wide variety of Zoroastrian topics. Bareshnum is the highest Zoroastrian purification ritual and traditionally undertaken before candidates conduct advanced ceremonies. The retreat also focused on religious studies, guided discussions and reflections, and prayer: all working towards a deeper understanding of our Zoroastrian faith.

The Houston Zoroastrian Study Group met on June 7th to continue their discussion on the themes of Yasna 30, which introduces dual spirits in Zoroastrianism: Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu, good and evil respectively, which represent Asha (Truth) and Druj (Falsehood). The HZSG continues to discuss excerpts from the book "Religion of Asho Zarathusht and Influence Through the Ages" by Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli.

The month of June ended with the Bahman Mahino Behram Roj Jashan on June 30th sponsored by **Amy and Erach Balsara, Phiroz Dharukhanavala, Zenobia and Jal Guzder, Arni and Piloo Ilavia, Tannaz Machhi and Debasish Chakraborty, Yasmin and Shapur Pavri, and Avan and Jehangir Shroff**. Bahman Ameshasphand is the guardian over animals, and the embodiment of the Good Mind, *Vohu Manah*. During this season, many Zoroastrians following the Shenshai or Kadmi Calendars may observe a vegetarian diet in an effort to honor living creatures and practice self-discipline.

Our AK Team is constantly working in the background to keep our beautiful hall running in full force. Machis and Tandarosti prayers continue each month as always. We also continue to zoom these prayers for the benefit of those who wish to attend remotely..

YOUTH FUNDRAISER CASINO NIGHT

Poker Table



Spinning Wheel



Raffle
Scarf by
Avanne



A special note of thanks as always to our Mobed, Ervad Pervez Gonda, who tirelessly keeps our Atash Kadeh flourishing with the help of Ervad Khushrav Nariman.

You can reach us at AtashKadeh.ZAH@Gmail.com or call any of our committee members if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.

Committee Members: Khushrav Nariman, Feroze Bhandara, Shernaz Bhandara, Persis Behramsha, Mitra Khumbatta Mistry..

YOUTH REPORT

By: Shireen Anklesaria

Your ZAH Sunday School Groups are excited to invite you to our annual ZAH Youth Fundraiser, taking place on Saturday, July 18, 2026, at ZAH. This year's theme is "Casino Gymkhana Night" and we look forward to welcoming you for an evening filled with entertainment, music, and community spirit, with a philanthropic and benevolent purpose.

The night will feature casino and poker tables, mahjong, trivia and games for all ages 2 - 99, two lively rounds of bingo, lots of prizes, raffle, silent auction, music, dance, and more. Guests will also enjoy an assortment of wines, a variety of delicious appetizers, dinner, and desserts. Additionally we will have special games for our younger guests with many prizes from ages 2 and up. Additionally we will have special activities for our younger guest that they can enjoy with many prizes to go around.

The purpose of this year's fundraiser is to support communities around us. Proceeds will go toward charities the Youth have chosen such as **The Faris Foundation** that focuses on Childhood Cancer Research, **The Parks Youth Ranch** that provide 24/7 emergency shelter, counseling, and life skills support for youth experiencing homelessness, abuse, or neglect, and **East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry** that addresses the basic human needs of families facing food insecurity and/or temporary financial crisis in East Fort Bend County. We plan on volunteering at these organizations and also donating the net proceeds from this event to ensure that communities around us continue to have a safe, welcoming, and engaging space for years to come.

Tickets are priced at \$25 per person ages 12 and over, \$15 for kids ages 5-11 with children under the age of five admitted for free. Raffle tickets will also be available for purchase at \$5 each, 6 for \$20, or 20 tickets for \$50, with a chance to win

1. 2 Club Level Tickets to a Rockets Game, including parking (based on schedule)
2. Jophiel's Raw Silk Black Koi Fish Gara Tote (12 x 11.5 inches - Approx. US \$150)
3. Pure Silk AVANNE Tie (White Farohar Design in BLUE color)
4. Pure Silk AVANNE Scarf (In a beautiful Blue-Green color)

Please register here: <https://zah.org/events/youth-event/>

JULY 4 CELEBRATION U.S. FLAG ON THE STAGE



WATCHING BOYE CEREMONY AND LISTENING TO THE BELLS



BAR-B-QUE LUNCH



MISCELLANEOUS

A Historic Fourth of July Celebration at ZAH Marks America's 250th Birthday

By : Farzana K Sidhwa

On July 4, 2026, our Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) proudly joined fellow Americans in celebrating a truly historic occasion, the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America. This once-in-a-lifetime Semi-quincentennial celebration brought together our community in a meaningful tribute to the nation we proudly call home.

As part of the nationwide observance, ZAH participated alongside FEZANA's Interfaith Activities Committee in hosting the Virtual Interfaith Prayer Gathering, where representatives from diverse faith traditions offered prayers and reflections. The gathering beautifully demonstrated the strength that comes from respecting and celebrating our shared values while embracing our diverse beliefs.

The celebrations continued with the National Bell Festival's "Ring Out America" observance. Following the Boye ceremony at the Atash Kadeh, our community joined thousands of others across the country in ringing bells to create a symbolic "Canopy of Sound" marking America's 250th birthday. It was a moving reminder of our commitment as Zoroastrians while expressing our gratitude for the freedoms and opportunities we enjoy in the United States.

Following the ceremonies, the ZAH Entertainment Committee, under the dedicated leadership of Arzin Italia, was honored to organize a celebratory luncheon at the request of the ZAH Executive Committee. The overwhelming response from our community exceeded all expectations, with nearly 126 members and friends registering to be part of this historic celebration.

As guests returned from the Atash Kadeh, they were welcomed with piping hot pakoras and crispy kettle chips that disappeared almost as quickly as they were served! The festive atmosphere came alive as our very own DJ Gary filled the hall with patriotic favorites. Young and old alike enjoyed the music, while the children especially delighted in dancing to the classic "Yankee Doodle."

Recognizing the significance of America's milestone birthday, the Entertainment Committee planned a hearty Texas-style barbecue lunch, expertly catered by Brookstreet Bar-B-Que of Sugar Land. While choosing the menu was easy, estimating quantities became quite the challenge as registrations continued to climb until the very last day. Countless hours were spent calculating just the right amounts of brisket, sausage, barbecue chicken, macaroni and cheese, baked potato casserole, salads, and all the accompaniments to ensure everyone was well fed.

The delicious meal concluded on the sweetest of notes with homemade-style apple pie served alongside creamy vanilla ice cream, a fitting dessert for an unforgettable Independence Day celebration.

MARCHING WITH THE FLAG



OUR ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE



NAZC PICTURES



UDVADA ATASH BEHRAM



Events of this scale and significance are only possible because of the dedication of so many volunteers. Heartfelt thanks go to every member of the ZAH Entertainment Committee, whose tireless efforts over a very short planning period transformed this vision into a memorable reality. From procuring supplies and coordinating food and beverages to decorating the hall and managing countless behind-the-scenes details, every volunteer played an essential role. We would also like to take this opportunity and thank our ZAH Executive Committee for their support and help.

Special appreciation goes to Yasmin Medhora for generously donating the beautiful decorations that added such warmth and elegance to the celebration. Sincere thanks are also extended to Parveen Irani for donating the soft drinks and to Jasmin Katrak for providing tea for everyone to enjoy.

Most importantly, our deepest gratitude goes to every member of our community who attended, participated in the prayers, joined the bell-ringing ceremony, and celebrated this extraordinary day with us. Your presence, enthusiasm, and fellowship made this historic event truly meaningful. Together, we not only commemorated America's 250th birthday, we celebrated the values that unite us as proud Zoroastrians and grateful Americans.

Here's to many more years of community, friendship, service, and shared celebrations!

NAZC PICTURES

The NAZC2024 photos that everyone had uploaded on the google drive are finally uploaded to our NAZC2024 website. These can be viewed on this link -[Photos | NAZC 2024](#). See all the pictures and relive the fantastic Congress we had.

ESTABLISHMENT OF ATASH BEHRAM

(From Kiss-e-Gulistanbanu)

Our forefathers encountered a deadly storm after leaving Div, and they had pledged that if they got out alive, they would establish an Atash Behram in the first stop they make. To honor that pledge, they immediately started the work of settling in the small town of Sanjan. According to the book "Kiss-e-Sanjan" which is written to enumerate the events they started the process of establishing the Atash Behram. With the help of the *Aalat* that they had brought with them when they left Khorrasan, they were able to establish Atash Behram within five years of their residence on the land given to them by Jadiv Rana for this purpose. The Atash Behram was established with all the splendor and pageantry in the year 721 A.D. and gave the name *Paak Iranshah*. This Atash accompanied them wherever they went.

GRADUATES

HIGH SCHOOL

NOZER SETHNA



Nozer graduated from Clements High School and will be going to University of Houston.

MEDICAL

Dr. SHAYAN BHATHENA



Shayan Bhathena completed her four-year residency program in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics (Med-Peds) at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston. She has accepted a position at the University of Washington Clinic in Seattle and will be starting her professional career there later this year in November.

DR. ASHISH CHAKRABORTY



Ashish Chakraborty (parents Tannaz Machhi and Debasish Chakraborty) completed his MD from the NYU Grossman School of Medicine and has been accepted for residency at the Colombia campus of New York Presbyterian Hospital, pursuing Internal Medicine. Among other awards and volunteer roles, while at NYU, Ashish was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. Ashish gave thanks to all his grandparents, and immediate family as part of his graduation dedication message.

Western Philosophy's Debt To Zarathustra

Meheryar N. Rivetna

Zarathustra's influence on all the major world religions is well established. What is less known is the impact his teachings have had on western philosophy.

Eminent scholars of Zarathustra's teachings, without exception, opine that he was the first in recorded history to define moral character and show its place in religion. Zarathustra was the pioneer prophet who showed the path of freedom to humankind: the freedom of moral choice; the freedom from blind obedience to meaningless rituals and rites. Zarathustra taught that religion has its truth in moral significance and not in external practices of imaginary value.

Zarathustra's inspiration on western thought starts with the Greeks who, after coming in contact with the Persians, became aware of Zarathustra as the Persian founder of a faith with profound moral principles for all of humankind.

Pythagoras was influenced by the Zoroastrian belief of the dual forces, good and evil, in nature. Heraclitus borrowed the concept of *Asha* to describe the order in nature. In *Alcibiades*, Plato refers to the teachings of Zarathustra, son of "Hormazus". Plutarch, in *Isis and Osiris*, makes reference to the sage Zoroaster and to "Ormazes" and "Areimanius" as well as the six creations of "Ormazes" (the *Amesha Spentas*.) Diogenes Laertius, in *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, mentions Zoroaster and the good spirit "Oromasdes" and the evil spirit "Arimanius." Aristotle, Pliny and Agathias are among others who make reference to Zarathustra in their respective philosophical works.

The French philosopher Voltaire, having read Zarathustra's teachings in a Latin translation, recognized the Zoroastrian faith as an "unspoiled religion." His classic proclamation is said to be: "*Ecrasez l'infame*" (vanquish evil in all its forms), echoing the Persian prophet's fundamental dictum of destroying evil in all its forms. In his book *Zadig*, Voltaire has his protagonist of that name follow the teachings of Zoroaster and describes Zoroastrian motifs such as the "Chinvar Bridge."

In the American classic *Moby Dick*, the author Herman Melville has a character "Fedallah—the Parsee", a harpooner who is an adherent of the Zoroastrian faith. Fedallah is portrayed as a mysterious character who is on board the ship *Pequod* to destroy its evil captain Ahab—representing the Zoroastrian dictum of human obligation to destroy evil.

The American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson was drawn to Zarathustra's principles with his reverence for fire. Emerson highlighted the fact that Zarathustra was the first to teach through allegories (very much the way the Gathas are composed.)

In *The Parsee Nameh (West-East Divan)*, the German philosopher Johann Wolfgang Goethe states: "Their [Zoroastrian] religion is clearly based on the dignity of all elements, as manifesting God's existence and power. Hence the sacred dread to pollute water, the air, earth. Such respect for all natural forces that surround man leads to every civic virtue. Attention, cleanliness, application are stimulated and fostered."

Samuel Laing, the English engineer and student of Zarathustra's teachings says in his book *A Modern Zoroastrian*: "The code of morality enjoined by the Zoroastrian religion is as pure as its theory is perfect."

While many Zoroastrians blatantly reject western scholarship, Zoroastrian (Parsi, in particular) scholar-priests such as Ervad Kavasji Edalji Kanga, among others, are categorical in that the adherents of the Zoroastrian religion owe a tremendous debt to western scholarship. Western philosophers with their intense study and appreciation of Zoroastrian doctrines illustrate their debt to Zarathustra. The Zoroastrians, in turn, owe the deeper understanding of their prophet's wisdom and teachings to western scholars, instead of wallowing in beliefs and practices contravening Zarathustra's principles.

Professor William Edward O'Mara IV, wrote in his Ph.D. Dissertation when a student at UC-Irvine: "The advent of Zoroastrianism represents a revolution in world religious thought, and its influence can be felt in the most fundamental elements of the world's largest and most pervasive religions (Christianity and Islam). It is, in fact, easily argued that this little-known ancient religion is both the oldest of the prophetic, revealed religions, and marks the true beginnings of Western civilization... [It has been] fiendishly difficult for Western thinkers to escape the long shadow of Zarathustra."

ZAH Z-CAMP
JULY 24 - 26, 2026
By: Darius Tamboli

We are so excited to announce that the ZAH Z-Camp is back better than ever this year from July 24th-26th, 2026!

Registration for the Z-Camp 2026 is now open, you can register at this link: [ZAH Z-Camp 2026 | Registration](#). Online registration closes on **July 11th, 2026** or earlier if capacity is reached. No late registrations will be allowed with only 20 (over 12 yrs) out-of-town spots available so please register early.

- **When:** Saturday, July 25th from 10:00 am – Sunday, July 26th, 2026 3:00pm.
 - Friday, July 24th from 7:00 PM for out-of-towners and over 12 attendees **ONLY**
- **Ages 12 and over:** Camp overnight for two nights (Bring your sleeping bag and pillows)
- **Ages 5-12:** Day Camp Only (Sat 10:00am – 11:00pm and Sun 9:00am – 3:00pm)
- **Cost:** \$40 per Z-Camp attendee
- **Camp Dinner with Kids (Sat evening):** \$25 per person
-

For parents/grandparents and guests, please join us on Saturday, July 25th at 7:30 pm for “Camp Dinner with Kids” (\$25pp, registration required) and on Sunday July 26th at 2:00 pm for the final event, awards, and more!

All kids, ages 5-22, come see your old friends and make new ones at a weekend camp which has always been great fun. Thank you to all those who have already shown interest, although if anyone in Houston, between the ages of 23–30 yrs, wishes to volunteer for the Z-camp please get in touch with Kayo Sidhwa as soon as possible.

As the prices are extremely subsidized, please consider being a sponsor or donating to the camp. If interested, please email Kayo Sidhwa at kaysid@hotmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you at the Camp.



YOUTH FUNDRAISER

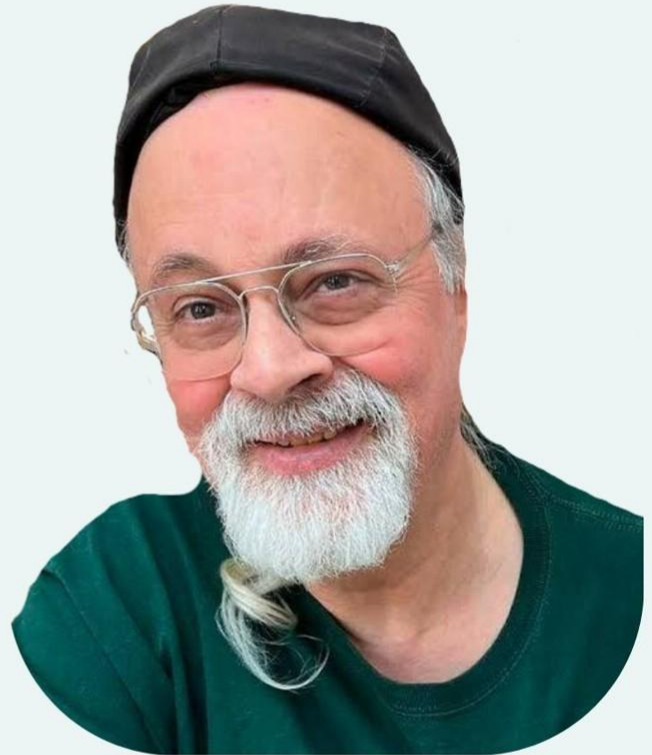
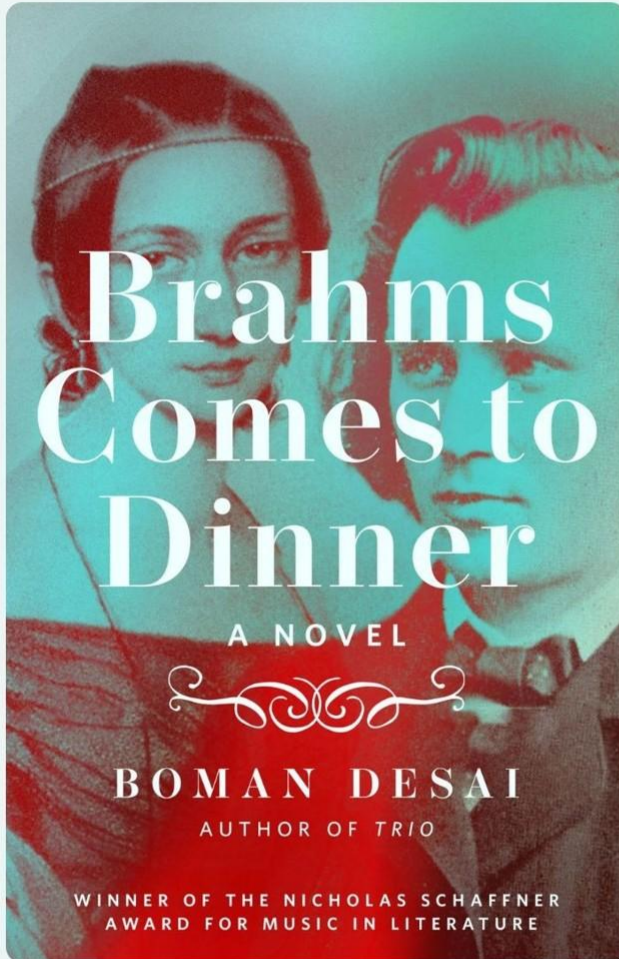
Save the date July 18th, 2026 for the Youth Event. We are excited to host Casino night and Games at the Center. We want to say thank you for all the support you have given us the past 10 years with our fundraiser and we would like to host an event for you. We hope to see you there!



Boman Desai: New Book Release!

Friday, August 21st, 2026

@ ZAH, The Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center



Potluck dinner at 6:30 PM

Reading at 7:00 PM

To attend, register by emailing

Arnavaz Sethna

ahsethna@yahoo.com

