manashni

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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: October 11, 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**



EVENT COMPLETED IN NOVEMBER 2026

WZCC EVENT – TALKS ON MEDICARE COVERAGE

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2027

Saturday, January 30, 2027Jashn-e-Sadeh
Sunday, March 21, 2027 – Nowruz Humbandagi
Saturday, March 27, 2027 – Nowruz Function
Sunday, April 11, 2027 – ZAH Carnival
Sunday, June 6, 2027 Dae Mas Gahambar
Sunday, August 15, 2027 – Shehanshahi Navroze Humbandagi
Saturday, August 21, 2027 - Shehanshahi Navroze Celebrating ZAH 50th Saalgirah Function.
Sunday, September 26, 2027 – Fasli Mehergan Gahambar

REPORTS

LIBRARY REPORT

See Manashni – Special Edition of Library event of October 9 & 10.

ATASH KADEH REPORT

By: Mitra Khumbatta Mistry – Atash Kadeh Committee

The month of October began with the Ardibehesht Mahino Behram Roj Jashan on October 3rd, sponsored by Dhun, Kayzad, Rashna, and Ryan Vajifdar and Adil and Vera Kaikobad.

Ardibehesht is dedicated to Asha Vahishta and represents order, truth, and the Best Righteousness. Truth is the logical outcome of the good mind. When truth prevails, order prevails and vice versa. It is also the law and order of the cosmos. Zarathushtra places greatest emphasis on Righteousness in our everyday life. Only the path of Righteousness leads us to Ahura Mazda

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

FIRST ATHRAVAN INITIATED AT ATASH KADEH IN HOUSTON



Sponsor – Behram Roj Jashan



Following the conclusion of our Athravan training and Navar Ceremony, the Houston Zoroastrian Study Group met on October 18th to discuss the themes of Yasna 34, which concludes the Ahunavaiti Gatha. Zarathushtra states that one must start with Vohu Manah if one is to grasp the full nature of Ahura Mazda. This Yasna emphasizes the pursuit and realization of Hurvatat and Ameretat, which Mazda grants to those who live their lives with truth and righteous action.

On October 19th the Khordad Mahino, Khordad Roj Parabh Jashan was sponsored by Meher and Gayve Anklesaria, Diana and Adil Balsara, Lyla and Raymie Daroga, Jessica and Jamshed Dubash and Farzana and Darius Wania. This auspicious day is dedicated to Khordad Ameshaspand, Hurvatat. Representing perfection, well-being, and health, Hurvatat presides over water, and embodies spiritual and physical progression towards perfection.

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.

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.

ATHRAVAN INITIATED

Dr. Hormuzdiar Katki was initiated as an Athravan on October 17, 2026, at Bhandara Atash Kadeh, hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH).

Dr. Hormazdyar Katki hails from an Athornan family and has served as a Mobedyar for the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (ZAMWI) for several years. He completed his Athravan training under Brigadier Ervad Behram Panthaki, following comprehensive curriculum covering prayers and their meanings, religious rituals and ceremonies, and Zoroastrian history curriculum developed by the North American Mobeds Council (NAMC).

ATHRAVAN INITIATED
IN ATASH KADEH IN HOUSTON
Nahn Area



Barashnum Ceremony in Urvishgah



YOUTH GROUP
BLOOD DRIVE



Brigadier Ervad Behram Panthaki, Ervad Rustom Vazifdar, Ervad Khushrav Nariman and Ervad Tehemton Mirza conducted the initiation in compliance with traditional Zoroastrian priestly practices. As part of the rigorous preparatory requirements, Dr. Katki underwent 2 Bareshnums, each consisting of nine nights of seclusion, and performed four Yasna ceremonies.

Hormuzdyar performed the Yasna ceremony, one of the highest level inner liturgical ceremonies, performed by Zoroastrian priests. The Yasna is performed to maintain cosmic order (Asha) and strengthen creation against chaos. It consecrates a health-giving and exhilarating juice (Haoma – Hom nu pani) made with a pomegranate twig, goat milk, consecrated water, and Hom Sali (twigs of a special plant found in Iran). He prepared this special concoction through a sacred ritual, reciting prayers our Zoroastrian priests have chanted for hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

We thank everyone for all their help during the Athravan Initiation Training from September 26, 2026, to October 17, 2026. The Atash Kadeh Committee is very grateful for your willing support and participation during the training as well as your attendance for the celebration. For those of you that could not attend the luncheon, we missed having you.

The New Athravan celebration was an accomplishment not only as the first Initiation in North America, but for the joint efforts of our entire community. During the Live Stream, we received high praises for the NAMC as well as for the Bhandara Atash Kadeh for facilitating participation for those that could not be present physically. It was indeed a momentous event.

From meals, to serving, to cleaning, to participating, to organizing, to showing support to Hormuzd Katki during his training, our volunteers' efforts went a long way to the successful completion of the Athravan Initiation.

As someone very eloquently put it……..
Let this be a beginning, not a milestone. With the same unity and dedication, may we do even more: nurture our youth, welcome new Athravans, deepen our prayers and traditions, and strengthen our community for generations to come.

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

YOUTH REPORT
Blood Drive
By: Cyrus Desai

The ZAH Youth Group hosted its annual blood drive at the October Ghambar. Through the generosity of our donors, we collected 20 units of blood from 17 successful donors, helping save up to 60 patients. We are grateful to everyone who donated and supported this initiative.

GOLDEN GROUP LUNCHEON
GARSON







One of the dishes



MISCELLANEOUS

GOLDEN GROUP LUNCH
LET'S DO PERSIAN
By Jehanbux Mehta

Ah, for that early morning, or for that matter the late evening cuppa garam garam chai slurped with that irresistible soft and oozy bun maska the likes that are served only at Boman Irani na chai shop! But that was not in our mind when we suggested to our members that we go Persian. It was leaning more towards platters of kababs, boties and stews with names that can be pronounced only with a roll of the tongue. Will there be rice the skeptics asked. Definitely, came the prompt reply. Receiving a favourable response, we proceeded with the onerous but pleasant assignment of finding a suitable restaurant.

This turned out to be more tasking than we had imagined. Houston is a foodie's paradise with cuisine from all over the world, even Mongolia and Ethiopia. Take your pick. And, of course, a score of authentic Persian restaurants, one better than the other. Price was a major consideration and in that category Garson stood out. Garson? Are the French messing around with Persian food? Non, non, mon cher, they serve genuine Persian dishes and it is rated khaili khoob, doustan e mun. They proved it to us. The only disappointment was that the food was served by burly Iranians and not by petite waitresses in frilly dress. Well, can't have it all, can we?

As we were only 34, instead of a buffet table, the management laid out five round tables, all set in one area allowing us to mingle and spread the latest news. On entering we noticed that each table was already laid out with baskets of crispy naans for dipping into the two large platters of humus, a bowl of mint leaves and feta cheese. At 1:00 p.m., the suggested lunch time, the appetizer plates were removed to make room for dinner plates and platters of large – gigantic, actually – beef kebideh, grilled boneless chicken boties and seared tomatoes. A heaped plate of two types of rice and bowls of two stews, ghemeh and ghormeh sabzi – I challenge you to pronounce them without rolling your tongue – filled up the space on the table. Oh, what a feast! Plenty left over which went into to-go containers for members to take home. On top of all this, slices of vanilla cream and choc cream cakes, courtesy the Golden Group Kitty. To help digest the meal, hot tea not from Boman's but served the Persian way, unsweetened in cute little glasses to be sipped with a tiny cube of sugar under the tongue.

All this for only $30 per member and $35 for non-members which was much less than the total cost. The difference, as you will have guessed, was picked up by the Kitty. A couple of vegetarian dishes were prepared for the one vegetarian present on that day.

All in all, it was an afternoon that will be remembered for long. Good food and plenty of it, enjoyable company and a top class restaurant with impeccable service. Can we replicate such an event? You bet we will when we celebrate the late Dolly Parton's birthday at our ZAH Centre on Saturday, January 16. Members should set aside the date. Details will follow.

MESSAGES BEHIND THE MYTH OF ZARATHUSTRA HEALING VISHTASPA'S STEED (1)

By: Meheryar N. Rivetna

As the myth goes, Zarathustra arrives at Kai Vishtaspa's court to enlighten the chieftain on his revelation of Ahura Mazda's laws. Vishtaspa's priests, the Kavis and Karpans, steeped in magical, mystical beliefs, that Zarathustra opposed, are fearful of losing control and power if Vishtaspa accepts Zarathustra's teachings. The priests plant paraphernalia associated with black magic in Zarathustra's room and announce to Vishtaspa that Zarathustra is a fraud, a practitioner of witchcraft. Enraged at Zarathustra's alleged deceit, Vishtaspa imprisons Zarathustra.

The next morning Vishtaspa's stable boy discovers the chieftain's favorite steed lying on the floor with all four limbs curled under its belly. Panicking, the stable hand runs to the chieftain to announce the calamity. Vishtaspa, devastated, calls all the sages of the land to cure the horse's condition. All to no avail.

That night, the prison guard is late in bringing Zarathustra his meal. Zarathustra asks the reason for the delay. The guard describes Vishtaspa's anguish over the steed's condition. Zarathustra tells the guard to inform Vishtaspa he can help. The guard conveys the message to the chieftain. Vishtaspa orders Zarathustra released and brought to him.

"How will the limbs of the horse be freed?" Vishtaspa asks Zarathustra

"I have four requests of you," Zarathustra tells the chieftain. "If you fulfill the four requests without subterfuge or duplicity, the steed will majestically stand on all four limbs." Vishtaspa agrees.

"My first request is to believe in your heart that I am the prophet sent by the Creator. If your tongue and heart are at variance, all my labors are lost." Vishtaspa agrees to accept Zarathustra as the messenger of Ahura Mazda Zarathustra praises God, says a prayer and the right foreleg of the horse shoots out.

Significance of the first request: Humankind must be sincere and unwavering in its commitments. Humans must say what they believe in. If one does not speak and act from inner conviction then all is for naught.

"The second condition is that your son Esfandiyar agrees in your presence to support the true religion I teach," Zarathustra says. Esfandiyar comes forward and agrees to Zarathustra's request. Zarathustra says a prayer and the right hind leg comes forward.

Significance of the second request: Humankind must fight for and live by Truth. Falsehoods promoted by cults, evil and irrational beliefs contrary to Zarathustra's teachings must be destroyed.

Zarathustra approaches Hutaosa, Vishtaspa's consort: "Great Queen Hutaosa, God has preferred you before all women. You have a husband who is king and you are blessed with a son as Esfandiyar. The king and Esfandiyar have pledged to follow the faith I bring. Let your heart also accept the true faith since faith must be based on moral principles." Hutaosa agrees. Zarathustra says a prayer. The steed's left foreleg shoots out.

Significance of the third request: Be grateful for the gifts Nature, i.e., Ahura Mazda, bestows upon us. Humans must have morals and values, and faith exclusively in Zarathustra's teachings. Because faith not backed by reason and virtue is meaningless.

The fourth request Zarathustra makes of Vishtaspa is for the Kavis and Karpans who planted the evil paraphernalia exposed. The porter reveals those who entered Zarathustra's room. Vishtaspa orders those vile people impaled. Zarathustra recites a prayer. The steed stands strong and firm on all four limbs.

Significance of the fourth condition: Righteousness is of great importance. Humans must be virtuous, denouncing falsehood. Mendacity is abhorrent to Ahura Mazda. The righteous are justly rewarded. Irrational beliefs, figuratively evil, are rightly punished. This is nature's law.

The story of Zarathustra performing a "miracle" on Vishtaspa's steed is without merit. Natural law dictates that virtues, not "miracles", always triumph over evil and that is what this myth illustrates.

The story is meant to demonstrate the importance of values highlighted in the Gathas. Literally taking the myth makes Zarathustra no less a magician than the ones he opposes and battles. The black steed is a metaphor for the darkness, or absence of righteousness, in Vishtaspa's mind owing to the cultic beliefs of the wizards with whom he is surrounded.

One must remove the shroud of miracles, fantasies and absurdities overlaying the myths linked to the Zoroastrian religion. By comprehending the messages underlying the myths, one discovers rich treasures in Zarathustra's Gathic teachings.

(1) Adapted from the Zarathusht-Nameh by Zarathusht-Behram. (1277).

ZAH GATE REPAIRS

The entry and exit gates at ZAH are being repaired and new hardware being installed for a smoother operation.

Currently the exit gate is being worked on and entry and exit will only be available thru the entry gate. Please make sure that you exit carefully as another car may be trying to enter. Once the exit gate is working again, they will start work on the entry gate, at which time all access will only be available from the exit gate.

We hope to complete this work in the next 2 weeks, and appreciate your patience during this time.

Thank you for your support

Best Regards
ZAH BMC and EC

2027 ZYNA RETREAT
AGES 15-35 | FEBRUARY 12TH TO 15TH, 2026
OPTIONAL REGISTRATION REMINDER: HAVE A PICTURE OF YOURSELF AND YOUR ROOMMATE'S NAMES READY FOR CHECKOUT.



OBITUARY
ERVAD JAL NARIMAN BIRDY
DECEMBER 1936 – OCTOBER 2026



It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of our most beloved priest, Ervad Jal Nariman Birdy. Jal selflessly served TMZA from its very inception, taking part in all religious ceremonies, and guiding our community with unwavering faith and dedication.

Jal was born on December 17, 1936 in Nagpur, India, to Najamai and Nariman Birdy. He was brought up there by his maternal grandparents, Framji and Jerbanoo Avasia. He attended school and college in Nagpur but obtained his Navar and Martab in Navsari at the ages of 10 and 11. He also traveled to Navsari every summer to stay in the large summer house his family had there, and described some very happy times he had in Navsari, especially when his younger brother, Mahyar, joined him from Valsad.

He got his engineering degree at a college in Jabalpur and acquired some work experience before moving to the UK. He left by ship in 1961, thinking he would return after bettering himself, but that was not to be. Arecipient of the Tata Scholarship and several other scholarships, he was enrolled as a student at the Imperial college, where he studied about concrete with a world-famous professor. While studying in London, he took the annual exam for the Institute of Structural

Engineers and scored the highest marks worldwide for the Concrete Section of that test. Always humble, he said it was just lucky that that year they happened to have one of the questions you could choose to answer about concrete, and Jal had done extensive study on concrete chimneys. He won the prestigious AE Wynn prize for that section that year.

In London he met, fell in love with, and married Soonu. He started serving the community as a mobed only after Dr. Kutar, the local dasturji, agreed to perform their wedding ceremony on the condition that he would become an active mobed in London, to which Jal happily agreed!

After many happy years in the UK, Jal and Soonu, along with their daughter, Meher, moved to Houston, Texas, where Jal was given an opportunity to work for Brian Watt, a company at which he eventually became Vice President. They stayed in Houston for eight years and there too he was an active mobed. Jal and Soonu always cherished fond memories of their time with friends in Houston.

In 1987, they moved on to Corona, California, where he began working for Moffatt and Nichol until his retirement in 2016, aged almost 80. Here too, he quickly progressed to Vice President, overseeing many notable projects, including the design and construction of the on-ramps to the San Francisco Bay Bridge. Of course, he was also a very active mobed here in California, even helping to start the Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman. He also served on the North American Mobed Council as president, from 1996 till about 2002.

A deeply loving husband and father, Jal's devotion extended far beyond his own family. He was a cornerstone of our community here in southern California, dedicating his life to service both locally in TMZA and ZAC, and also worldwide. He was a man of boundless generosity who truly gave everything he could, whenever he could – offering his strength- physically, financially, emotionally, and spiritually, to anyone in need. His kindness, wisdom and selfless devotion leave an indelible mark on all our hearts. Jal shall be dearly missed, and his memory will be eternally cherished! He is survived by his daughter, Meher; son-in-law, Afshad Mistri, grand-children Tasha Mistri Dubash and Jamsheed Mistri, and great-grand-daughter, Ariana Mistri Dubash.

May his soul reach the highest heaven!