



Zoroastrian Association of California

August 2010

2010-2011 Executive Committee

President – Vira Santoke Vice President – Tehmi Damania Treasurer – Rooky Fitter
Joint Secretaries – Persis Choksy & Sheila Madon Program Chair – Lily Mistry
Youth Coordinator – Mehernosh Gundevia

GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW ZAC CENTER WHAT A DAY!!

July 18th 2010 marked a momentous day in the lives of Southern California Zoroastrians: the grand opening of our new hall and finally, a sense of 'belonging'.

ZAC was established in 1974 and for a long time has been looking for a center of its own. A wonderful lady by the name of Purin Boman made the initial donation of \$100,000 with the express wish that it be used towards the purchase of a hall. Along with the help of several other donors and a generous grant from the Hong Kong association, that dream came true.

Our new hall is on a quiet street near Chapman University in Orange, CA with mature trees and lots of parking; a place large enough to accommodate our Southern California Zoroastrian community.

We had an amazing turnout of over 330 people for the Grand opening. Fareshta prayers were led by 8 mobeds, and the Fareshta Baj was performed at the Anjuman Atashbehram in Mumbai. Immensely grateful thanks go out to the scores of volunteers who made the delicious Dhun-dar, Parsi stew and shrimp patyo. The occasion was made even more festive with authentic falooda and icecream, generously made and served by Purin Boman's daughter, to the crowds entering from the 90 degree Southern California sun. Volunteers happily cooked and served delicious ravo, malido, mevo and fruits to everyone after the prayers. After felicitations and an interesting skit, in a symbolic gesture, Dogdoe and Tehemtán Arjani planted a pomegranate tree in the garden near the main door. The Arjanis have worked conscientiously and faithfully for years and the acquisition of this hall is testament to their dedication and generosity.

Everyone left after eating some delicious cake to mark the end of a historic and happy occasion.

ZAC expressly wishes to thank all who worked tirelessly and relentlessly in the sole pursuit of finding a structure suitable for the needs of the community; Heartfelt thanks also go out to the donors and volunteers who spent hours and days ahead of the opening; cleaning and sprucing up the hall, making it a joy to come to.

DASTURJI MEHERJIRANA'S CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO ZAC

To Zoroastrian Association of California, Its office bearers, workers, members, non members and all Zarthoshtis:

My dear sisters and brothers,

Compliments and congratulations from K.N.Dastoor Meherjirana for your securing a prayer hall and a place to assemble for religious education, funfare and world-renowned Parsi humor and dinner.

In the United Nations conference of Human Environment held in 1972, it was pointed out that the universe operates not just on physical laws, but chiefly on the moral and spiritual laws revealed by all the prophets and avatars, seers, saints and sages, and that humans, in order to survive on this tiny globe have to take serious notice of those divine laws and base their lives on them.

The holy Avesta (with about 10% left with us) proclaims that the foundation of those divine laws is three-fold: Armaiti, Hutoxi and Meher Patet. Armaiti means complete absence of pride and ego; Hutoxi is love, compassion and selfless service towards all humans and the whole Creation, Meher Patet is the constant vigil against the breach of all thoughts, words and deeds which are prescribed by all religions. May Ahura Mazda the loving Almighty ordain that the trio be the mode and manner of ZAC's operation.

Let us try hard to dissolve our ego; let not our love for each other diminish the slightest. If we differ, let us cultivate unity in all diversities and respect each other's views, howsoever far away they appear to be. Let the other do whatever 'he' thinks right, 'I' will do what 'I' think right; but 'I' will not hurt 'his' feelings by my thoughts, words and deeds. God is in both of us. Yes there is devil too. But if I can invoke God in him, our love will never tarnish and it will be heaven on earth; but if we invoke the devil in each other, it will be hell.

If this becomes the banner of ZAC, it will do unimaginable wonders. May it so happen from the very first day: today, July the 18th. Let 7/18 be ZAC's day of unity in all diversities of love and selfless service to all and each.

Yours in service and sincerity,

K N Dastoor, Meherjirana.

THE MAZDAYASNIE CONNECTION CONGRATULATES ZAC

For obtaining the new premises, a center for social, cultural & religious needs.

Nothing happens by chance. There is no accident in nature. Some sincere benefactors had been looking for a suitable place. They were able to purchase one and inauguration was held in the month of Spendarmard. Why Spendarmard? Spendarmard Ameshaspand (a female deity) has jurisdiction over one of Dadar Hormuzd's creations – earth, land.

She is the very embodiment of humility, love, tolerance, patience, service, selflessness, forbearance, etc. Trash buried under the ground is transformed into manure. The Gahambar currents enter the soil and give you crops and you have food.

Steering humans through the sea of spiritual evolution through the six Gahambars, Spenta Armaity (Avesta for Spendarmard) reminds us to till and cultivate the stony soil of our being with the plough of religion, in the absence of Ego.

Is this not significant then? ALL THE BEST!

Silloo Mehta

UPCOMING EVENTS

PATETI/PARSI NEW YEAR

Our Pateti function is scheduled for **SATURDAY, AUGUST 21st 2010** at the new ZAC hall in Orange, CA. This promises to be a very entertaining evening starting at 7 pm, with short skits, dances and stand-up comedy. We have lowered prices from previous years, and expect greater attendance at our new hall.

Please fill out the attached form and mail to Sheila Madon.

Pricing is as follows:

\$20 ADULTS

\$15 SENIORS/CHILDREN UNDER 10

\$40 NON-MEMBERS/WALK-INS

Please call Sheila 858.675.1017(H)/858.774.0574(C) or email smadon5@sbcglobal.net. We will accept calls upto noon on Friday August 20th. Anyone calling after noon will be charged walk-in rates of \$40. This will be strictly enforced.

DASTURJI MEHERJIRANA'S TALK/FELICITATION

Mazdayasnie Connection along with ZAC is very proud to welcome Dasturji Kaikhushroo Dastoor Meherjirana to Southern California. Dasturji will be speaking on "Atash" and will be felicitated on **Sunday, September 12th 2010** at the ZAC hall. Anyone who has heard him knows how articulate a speaker he is and it is always a treat to be part of his lectures. We request you to be there by 10.45 am as the talk will start promptly at 11 am through 1 pm after which we will break for lunch and card playing/carom, activities for children, etc. The afternoon session will run from 4-6 pm and tea and refreshments will be served. This is a free event but we would greatly appreciate donations. We also request volunteers for rice and kachubar and will need a head count on the number of people coming, so please contact Sheila 858.675.1017/858.774.0574/email smadon5@sbcglobal.net.

LADIES' CLUB

Ladies Club will be held **Sunday September 19th 2010** at the ZAC center in Orange at 12.30 pm. Our guest speaker Dilzeen Engineer will be talking about fashion and design based on your body shape and size. Dilzeen is a qualified dress designer who has studied advanced fashion and clothing technology, so if you have a favorite outfit, either wear it or bring it with you so she can share her expertise with actual samples. Please also bring a favorite dish to share (keep in mind we have limited heating facilities - just a small microwave) and come prepared to have a good time reconnecting with friends.

SUNHERI YAADEIN

Versatile singer Soli Kapadia will be performing with his group of musicians and a surprise female Bollywood singer on **SUNDAY AUGUST 8th 2010**, at Hoover Middle School, 3501 Country Club Drive, Lakewood, CA. The show will begin at 2.30 pm, with Soli singing ghazals as well as old and new Bollywood favorites. Ticket prices are \$20, \$30 and VIP seating, with seniors and students getting \$5 off ticket prices. Please contact Pervin or Hosi Amroli: 818-992-4487 for tickets, or if you need more information.

PAST EVENT - KARAOKE NITE

Those who attended Karaoke nite on July 25th at the Woodlands Hall in Artesia agreed that it was one of the most fun-filled, entertaining fundraisers. Hats off to Farida Lakdawala, Nauzad Sadry and Zubin Chichgar who planned and organized this seemingly effortless evening. Hidden talents came out in full force and rusty vocal chords were put to good use. Everyone sang their hearts out, and it was a pleasure to listen to the dulcet voice of Nauzad once again. There were some major donors who made the evening such a success, and we thank them all. Our goal was to raise \$10,000 through this fundraiser but still have a ways to go, so we encourage all who can, to please make a check out to *Farida Lakdawala* for any amount you feel comfortable. Please continue your contributions so that we can all have a good time and continue to support the community.

ESSAY COMPETITION

The Zoroastrian Association of Houston Library is holding an essay competition to promote Zoroastrian scholarship among our youth. The winner will be awarded a \$1,000 prize and free registration to the 10th North American Zarathushti Congress in Houston, TX in December 2010.

Topic: The Shah Nameh: A Glorious Past---A Prologue to the Future

Eligibility: Open to all Zoroastrians living or studying in the USA & Canada under the age of 25 as of December 31, 2010.

Deadline: October 31, 2010

Email vsantoke@zacla.org for further details.

FALI CHOTHIA CHARITABLE TRUST SCHOLARSHIP

The Fali Chothia Charitable Trust is accepting applications for its 21st annual scholarship awards. Scholarships are open to Zoroastrian students in North America enrolled in four-year or graduate-level programs. Applications may be downloaded at:

<http://www.zamwi.Org/about/2001FCCT.pdf>

CONGRATULATIONS

Behram M. Amroli was born July 7th 2010. The proud parents are Anahita and Mehernosh Amroli. Big Sister Taronish is very excited about her little brother, and so are the proud grandparents: Pervin & Hosi Amroli of Southern California and Zarine & Firoz Gotla of Sydney, Australia.

THE HOLY DAYS OF MUKTAD

Festival of all souls – MUKTAD: ASTAD ROZ, SPENDARMAD MAH (**Monday August 9th to Wednesday August 18th**), to the 5th Gatha day (the 5 gatha days are supplementary days and therefore no month is ascribed to them). It is believed that during this 10-day festival, the spirits (Farohars) of our dear departed ones visit their near and dear ones in the physical world. Priests perform special rituals over cooked food, fruits and fresh flowers during which the spirits of our dear departed are invoked in order to seek their protection and blessings, in this world. In the last watch (Ushahin) Gah of the 5th day, a special Afrinagan ceremony is performed, in honor of the Farohars by way of gesture to bid the spirits a final farewell from this world. During these 10 days, the living must keep their homes and hearts extra clean and be in a state of heightened consciousness, to experience the presence of the spiritual beings. It is said that the Muktd prayers should be offered for at least one generation that is for say, 16 to 30 years.

This is our 19th consecutive year we are organizing the Muktd festival in California. We take this opportunity to thank all of you (our community members) for making this holy community event possible and so successful.

Prayers scheduled Monday August 9th to Wednesday August 18th.

The Muktd prayers will be performed everyday Monday to Thursday at 10.00 am and Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 5.30 pm. Also the prayers will be performed on Wednesday the 18th midnight and a New Year Jashan will be performed on Thursday the 19th at dawn.

The prayers will be performed at 14801 Doncaster, Irvine, CA 92604.

Due to many requests from the community members we are restarting the tradition of putting the individual vase for an individual deceased person on the Muktd table; we will also have an Anjuman vase for all the collective departed souls.

If you wish to have a separate vase to be kept for your dear departed family member or a friend please do send it to us by August 1st 2010. It will be our pleasure to include the names of your dear departed ones in the prayers during these holy days of Muktd. Please email the names to us at zbhandara@gmail.com at your earliest.

Thank-you

Sincerely,

Zarrir and Zerkxis Bhandara

CONDOLENCES

Neville Lakdawala, brother of Khushroo (Farida) Lakdawala, passed away in Mumbai on July 4th 2010 after a prolonged illness. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the families.

YOUTH CORNER

Hi everyone,
Just wanted to keep everyone posted as to what is happening now that we have a place to hang out in our awesome center. I will be planning some events in August on Sundays where we can come in the afternoon, play basketball, enjoy some lunch and afterwards catch a movie at the hall. Movies will be voted on and will be rented from Red Box. This will give us all time to just hang out and socialize. The first of these events will be on August 8th and I will be sending more details out to you when I can. Also in order for us to start making the center more Youth friendly there are a few things that the Youth require from the community, in the form of donations. We are looking for table tennis tables, outdoor badminton/volleyball nets, foosball & air hockey tables to be used for inside entertainment by the youth. We are also looking for a piano, drum kit, movie projector & screen, large speakers for said projector and maybe any video game consoles that are no longer in use. Any donation would be really appreciated and if you have something in mind or any of the items mentioned above please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you all and hope to see a good turnout at the events. Also just a quick plug – if you haven't yet signed up for the Youth List now's the time because activities and their schedules are only sent out to those on the list. Also if you haven't become a ZAC student member this can be a great way for you to save money on trips when we go anywhere. For more details, comments, and or questions please email me at youth.zac@gmail.com.
Mehernosh Gundevia – ZAC Youth Coordinator

Zarathushtra's Last Sleep (by Deenaz P. Coachbuilder)

*Sharp flashes of lightning illuminate the bare
mud packed rocky halls. At 77, the restless night
seeps into his bones. When will they claim
this wind-swept limestone plot, his enemies?
Dry wood chips fall from leathered hands
as he tends the sacred flame.*

*Rest. Rest on the charpoy. Sip warm tea.
He smells the lacy mauve pomegranate flowers
in the gardens of his father. Shimmery
turquoise struck lake so close to home. Friendly games
with whittled bark-sticks and smoothed stones,
rice baked in the warmth of clay pots,
cousin Medyomah's wild tales woven into the dawn.*

*They thought it was hard, the struggle, the bitter cold nights,
year after year, time forgotten in my mountain hideout,
high above the clustered sandstone track.
But I loved it, Ahura Mazda.
How could I have not? It was you and I.
Crystal clear, your world, so clean, so simple,
your word.
I would have stayed forever,
but you bade me return to teach the others.*

*Such a harsh journey into exile.
Friendless, reviled, to what land could I flee?
Who would protect me through my arid wanderings?
Ours is but a temporary sojourn in this amazing world,
the path hewn in a quest of good against evil.
Follow the road of Asha, I cried, and gain salvation.*

*He shivered in remembrance
of the first kissing of his cloak
among the mud structures of Balkh,
so long ago. Through me they came, to you, the only One.
Fragments of Dogdo's lullabies
cradled him to sleep.*

*And then they came, the envious Turanian Bratrush,
his hatred carried him through the fire hot caverns.
With a single heave, he pierced.
And broken bones were left
to mingle with the lens of time.*

*The Fravashis came down to this world.
They swept him with their tears,
and released his soul.*



Zoroastrian Association of California

2010 PATETI FUNCTION

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21st 2010, 7 pm onwards
ZAC CENTER, 1424 E. WALNUT AVE., ORANGE, CA 92867

You may mail this form with a check payable to "Zoroastrian Association of California" to the address below, or fill out the form online and pay via PAYPAL at www.zacla.org. Payment must be received by August 20, 2010. The cost at the door will be \$40.

TITLE _____ LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE: (____) _____ - _____ MEMBER: Yes/No

Adult Members _____ x \$20 = \$ _____

Senior Members/Children 5-10 _____ x \$15 = \$ _____

Non-Members _____ x \$40 = \$ _____

Children under 5 years Free

Total: \$ _____

Please mail this form along with your payment to:
Zoroastrian Association of California
c/o Sheila Madon
18721-145 Caminito Pasadero
San Diego, CA 92128



18721-145 Caminito Pasadero
San Diego, CA 92128

TO:

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pateti/Parsi New Year – August 21

Dasturji Meherjirana's talk/felicitation – September 12

Ladies' Club – September 19