



Zoroastrian Association of California

December 2023

2022-2023 Executive Committee

President – Rooky Fitter, Vice President – Firouz Felfeli, Treasurer – Phiroze Gundevia,
Jt Secretaries – Mehernosh Amroli and Vira Santoke, Program Chair – Parvez Erani,
Youth Coordinator – Daisy Pithawalla

NEWSLETTER 2023-5



We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy and Prosperous New Year 2024! May the year be filled with beautiful notes of harmony, love and gratitude!

As we bring in the new year, we also welcome three new members on the Executive Committee. They were elected unopposed at the General Body Meeting on November 18, 2023. Persis Choksy joins as the new treasurer, Darayus Mistry takes on the post of the program chair and Sheila Madon is the new jt. secretary.

It means it's time to **renew your membership**. Members are also encouraged to nominate a candidate for “**Youth of the Year**” award. Forms are attached to this newsletter and they can also be found on our website, zacla.org.

We will be ringing in the **New Year** together at our Center on Dec. 31. There'll be good food, games, song and dance. Join in the fun! Time: 8 pm;

Cost: Members: Adults \$35, Youth (11-17) \$25, Children (10 and under) free.

Non Members: Adults \$50, Youth (11-17) \$50, Children (10 and under) \$5

As Always, out-of-town guests will be charged member rates.

West Coast Swing dance will be taught by our own Sam Billimoria.

Registration deadline is December 27th. Please, no door entries.



Upcoming ZAC Events:

Save the dates for the following gahambars, parabhs, important religious days and social events! Watch out for email blasts giving details on all these events, as to time, place, cost, etc., or visit the [ZAC website](#) closer to the event date, under the events section.

New Year Eve Party	Sun., Dec. 31
New Year Bui (12:15 a.m.) and Maidhyarem Gahambar	Mon., Jan. 1, 2024
Sherevar Parabh	Tues., Jan. 16
Jashn-e-Sadeh	Sat., Jan. 27
Super bowl party	Sun., Feb 11
Meher Parabh	Tues., Feb. 27
Jamshedi Nowruz Jashan	Wed., March 20
Jamshedi Navroze function	Sat., March 23

Past Events:

On October 1, 2023, the **Ladies Club** arranged a very informative lecture entitled Radiance and Finesse, by Cyrus Mistry, an experienced entrepreneur in the world of Diamond jewelry manufacturing. After a delicious pot-luck meal, Cyrus shared with the audience the Enchanting Realm of lab-grown Diamonds and Tanzanite stones.

On Sunday, Oct. 15, **Ayathrem Gahambar** (feast of the home coming of the herds from pasture) jashan was performed by Ervads Zarrir and Zerkxis Bhandara. Lunch was arranged by Katy and Dhun Alamshaw in loving memory of Barjor Alamshaw.

A jashan for **Khordad Parabh** was performed on Friday, Oct. 20 by Ervad Zerkxis. The delicious dinner of dhun dar patiyoo, was sponsored by Maneck Chichgar in loving memory of his wife, Pervin.

ZAC celebrated **Halloween** on Oct 28 with over 100 Zarthushtis enjoying a night of fun, fright and scare! This event was held jointly with the California Zoroastrian Center.

November 12, marked the **7th Salgreh of our Atash Kadeh**. The preparations started a day earlier with deep cleaning of the premises by 19 volunteers. On the day of the salgreh, in the wee hours of the morning, beautiful chowk designs were created by Annu and Kerman Dungore, with har-torans made by Rukshana Colabewala. A Hama Anjuman maachi was offered to the holy atash padshah in all 5 gehs. About 75 Zarthushtis were present for the jashan performed by Ervads Arda-e-viraf Minocherhomji, Kyan Arzan Lali, Zarrir and Zerkxis Bhandara. After the jashan, Ervad Zarrir gave a brief talk on the meaning of the term “Agiary” and thanked donors Arda-e-viraf and Hootoxi Minocherhomji for sponsoring the lunch. Ervad Arda-e-viraf was then called to address the gathering. He stressed that service to others was even more important than making donations and praised the Ervad sahebs who devotedly serve the community. Giving the vote of thanks, ZAC



president, Rooky Fitter thanked ex-president Tehmi Damania and the ZAC community for their stupendous teamwork, commending how they had come a very long way in the past few years. Chasni was served alongside delicious pulav-dar prepared by Reshma Rustomi. We would also like to thank Houtoxi Contractor, Shirin Engineer and Xerxes Commissariat for the ravo, Katy Alamshaw and Vira Santoke for the dessert and Freny

Bacha for donating the fruits for the jashan. The afternoon ended with merriment, laughter, and a deep sense of gratitude.

General Body Meeting was held on Saturday, Nov. 18. Election Officer, Homayar Gandhi, duly installed the new Executive Committee for the term 2024-25. Minutes of the meeting will be sent to all current members in due course.

On Sunday, Nov. 26, the **Tirangan jashan** was performed by Ervads Jal Birdy, Zarrir Bhandara, Zerkxis Bhandara and Kyan Lali. The delicious lunch afterwards was arranged by Ervad Jal Birdy. After lunch, Zane Commissariat on piano and Mahfrin Santoke on flute joined the members in singing happy birthday for our dear Jal!



Holiday Party on Saturday, December 2, was enjoyed by 60 members, young and old, with song, good food, and merry-making. The highlight of the evening was the game “Guess the Christmas Song”, created by Mahfrin Santoke, which gave all the children and adults an opportunity to not only guess the right answer, but also perform the song! With Zane Commissariat on the piano, Zara Commissariat – flute, Ushain Mistry - drums, Katie Spenta – accordion, Cowsie Malva - harmonica, lots of enthusiastic singers and Behram Amroli very ably handling the audio-visual, music and merriment echoed in the hall. Then Santa (ably played by Phiroze Gundevia) arrived with presents, much to the joy of all the children! Our grateful



thanks to Xerxes Commissariat for preparing the delicious dinner and to Benifer Dholoo, Shirin Engineer and Vira Santoke for yummy desserts. Also, we would like to thank Jal Birdy, Cowsie Malva and Chisti Dadachanji for donating the prizes and Benaifer Dholoo for the delicious coffee.

Amardad Parabh was celebrated with a jashan on Wednesday, December 20. After the prayers, Ervad Zerkxis gave a short talk on the importance of Amardad Ameshaspand. Chasni and a delicious dinner of dhundar patiyo was enjoyed by all attendees who drove to the Atash Kadeh despite the inclement weather.

Youth Events: We had a **youth bonfire** event on October 14th with a small group of 8 people. We started around 6pm and enjoyed the night by playing some games, watching the sunset and having some chicken sandwiches, chips and of course, s'mores!! Thank you to everyone that came out and made this event enjoyable. Looking forward to the next one :)

On December 16th we had a **holiday youth party** with CZC at ZAC, with a total of 90 people in attendance!! The beats from the music kept everyone on the dance floor, creating an electrifying atmosphere. It was a night filled with amazing music, dancing, and delicious tacos, making it a festive celebration to remember. We gathered great feedback and are looking forward to hosting another youth party soon.

(Submitted by youth co-ordinator, Daisy Pithawalla)

Congratulations!

Ryaan and Riaa, children of Farzin Morena and Cyra Contractor, grandchildren of Sam and late Dolly Morena and Farhad and Houtoxi Contractor, on their navjote on November 24, 2023, at our very own ZAC Center. We wish Ryaan and Riaa all the best in life!

Matrimony

33 year old Parsi male, from a priestly family in Navsari, currently working in Surat, invites correspondence from interested girls. He holds an M.A., B Ed. Diploma in Computer hardware from IIHT (Banglore) and is pursuing M. Ed. Mobile number: 09427715350 Email: Zarvanpanthaki29@gmail.com

Condolences

Noshir Faramrose Jesung, 86, passed away peacefully at his home on Oct. 13, 2023. He was the husband of late Gool Jesung and devoted father to Kaivan and Tanaz, as well as father-in-law to Pam and Chris. He was the son of late Parinbanoo and Faramrose Jesung and brother of Nariman Jesung.

Noshir was a very active member of the Zoroastrian community in southern California. He served as ZAC president in the early years and was the “unofficial” Parliamentarian at every meeting, being very well versed with the Constitution and its amendments. He was also one of the religious class teachers and was instrumental in starting Gujarati language classes for the children, teaching them not only to speak, but also read and write the language. Although an engineer by profession, he was also an artist and used to teach art to children and adults during summer break.

Noshir will be greatly missed by all those who were fortunate enough to know him.

Rohinton (Roy) Cawas Fatakia passed peacefully in his sleep on November 29. He was the son of Cawas and Pilo Fatakia from Bangalore. He is survived by his loving wife, Erna; sister Yasmin and her husband Xerxis; and his son Darius and his wife Tricsha. He was the father of late Cyrus Fatakia. Roy was a kind and gentle person who was always smiling. In addition to his love for his family and friends, Roy loved sports. Roy will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

Naju Furrokh Dastur, 87, passed on to her spiritual journey on December 1. She was the wife of late Furrokh Nariman Dastur; mother of Jehangir, Burjor and Rashna; mother-in-law to Godafrin and Corry Dastur, grandmother of Roshni Mejia, Khurshid and Yazad Dastur; grandmother-in-law to Victor Mejia; great-grandmother of Anand and Navaz Mejia. She was the matriarch of the Dastur family, quiet force in her family and in the Southern California Parsi community.

Our sincere condolences to the families of the deceased!

Children's Religious Classes

Children's Religious Classes are conducted every third Sunday of the month. Please contact Zerkxis Bhandara (zzbhandara@gmail.com) for more information.

Hum Bandagis

Hum Bandagis conducted by Ervads Zarrir and Zerkxis Bhandara in person and over Zoom, continue on Sunday mornings, followed by pot-luck lunch. A bui ceremony before and after the Hum Bandagi is also performed by our Ervad sahebs every Sunday for the benefit of all the attendees.

Thank You!

Zara Commissariat for cleaning up the alcove in the Hong Kong room and organizing the books in the book cases.

Scheherazade Aresh for the donation of her beautiful Yamaha piano.

Christine Kay for donating her time and expertise to tune the piano and taking care of minor repairs. Christine is a very experienced piano technician and has done a terrific job on our new piano, much to the delight of our audience at the Holiday party!



The Atash Kadeh cleaning crew...Nineteen members got together on Saturday Nov. 11, to deep clean our Atash Kadeh. Thanks to the following members who spent their afternoon cleaning the entire premises as well as all the alat, making sure everything was spotless and sparkling in time for the salgreh. (Dhun and Katy Alamshaw, Phil Avari, Freny Bacha, Zarrir and Zerkxis Bhandara, Jimmy Colabewala, Zane, Zara and Xerxes Commissariat, Ruzbeh, Farzan and Zubin Daruwalla, Khushroo Dubash, Annu and Kerman Dungore, Mehernosh Pithawalla, Burjor and Vira Santoke).



Other News

ZYNA is organizing an annual retreat in Vancouver, from February 16 to 19, 2024. Zoroastrian Youth of North America aged 15-35 are invited for a weekend full of community building, connection, and cultural engagement! The focus of this long weekend event is to empower and engage the youth of today to become the leaders of tomorrow.

For any questions or concerns reach out at **youth@fezana.org**

“Zoroastrian Youth of the year” Program:

1. The intent of this program is to identify an all-rounded youth, who reflects true Zoroastrian spirit & is an example for other “Z” youth to emulate.
2. This program is backed/sponsored by 3 families who believe in identifying & recognizing that individual during annual ZAC Navroz function in March.
3. We at ZAC regularly recognize Youth who excel in studies at school/university, but fail to recognize Youth who demonstrate the true Zoroastrian spirit viz: helping others, respecting elders, show leadership skills, are not only multi-talented but above all are religion conscious etc. This Program Sponsors are looking for Youth who demonstrates the above virtues.
4. This program will be advertised through ZAC Newsletter/email blasts to our community. The community/Parents are urged to identify such an individual, who they think is worthy of being nominated as “**Zoroastrian Youth of the Year**” by filing out the Nomination form & returning it to Sponsors below.
5. If members feel that they need to be part of this worthy program, they can reach out to the Sponsors below.

Thank you for supporting this program.

Sincerely,

Phiroze & Yasmin Gundevia & family
Mehernosh & Yashmin Pithawalla & family
Kushroo & Rooky Fitter & family

Nomination form may be downloaded at

<https://zacla.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/youth-of-the-year.docx>

Nomination Form for “Zoroastrian Youth of the Year”

I, _____

nominate _____

for “Zoroastrian Youth of the year”.

I will accept the decision taken by the Sponsors below.

Please return the Nomination form to:

-Phiroze & Yasmin Gundevia
phiroze.gundevia@gmail.com (949 506 8721)

And copy:
-Mehernosh & Yashmin Pithawalla
m_pithawalla@hotmail.com (626 222 2340)

-Khushroo & Rooky Fitter
Khush@kpfitter.com (310 990 3273)



Zoroastrian Association of California

Membership Form January to December, 2024

Type*	Description	Cost	No.	Sub Total
Life	Husband/wife & children under 18 (DOB Req'd for children)	\$3000		\$
Family	Husband/wife & children under 18 (DOB Req'd for children)	\$125		\$
Individual	Adult over 18 (DOB Optional)	\$60		\$
Senior	Over 65 years of age (DOB Req'd)	\$40		\$
Student	Full-time student under 25 years of age (DOB Req'd)	\$40		\$
TOTAL:				\$

DOB: Date of Birth format mo/day/year **THE DOB INFORMATION WILL NOT BE SHARED OR MADE PUBLIC.**

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ *TYPE: L F I Sr St
 ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE ___ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ EMAIL _____ DOB ___/___/___

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ *TYPE: L F I Sr St
 ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE ___ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ EMAIL _____ DOB ___/___/___

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ *TYPE: L F I Sr St
 ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE ___ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ EMAIL _____ DOB ___/___/___

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ *TYPE: L F I Sr St
 ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE ___ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ EMAIL _____ DOB ___/___/___

DONATIONS are IMPORTANT

Maintenance \$ _____ Welfare \$ _____ Youth \$ _____ Education \$ _____ Religious \$ _____

ZAC relies on donations. Life members please do contribute

Please mark if we can share your email with FEZANA Yes No

Mail this form along with your check payable to ZAC: Attn: Treasurer. 1424 E. Walnut Ave, Orange, CA 92867 **OR** complete this form online and pay with credit card at www.zacla.org/membership/
(If additional space is needed, please use another form)

As the year draws to a close and we approach the holiday season it is traditional for Americans to support their favorite charities and non-profit organizations. We hope that this year you will include ZAC in your considerations when you decide to contribute. Thank You!



1424 E. Walnut Avenue
Orange, CA 92867

TO: