

VISION



FALL 2003 NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

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Congratulations

Thanks to you... our goal is within reach



\$750,000

Black Tie Gala Raises \$139,000

The 2nd Annual OZCF Black Tie Gala, held on September 27, 2003 at the spectacular St. Volodymyr Cultural Centre, proved to be a true success, once again surpassing expectations! Over 350 patrons showed their absolute support to this year's fundraising event. The theme marked the 3000th Anniversary of Zoroastrian Culture, a jubilant time for Zoroastrians around the world.

The evening started out with cocktails and welcomed the crowd to peruse the silent auction items. Items such as spa gift certificates, golf gear, works of art and hockey tickets excited the attendees as the bidding got underway. Guests were invited to have their picture taken as a souvenir. The wonderful meal was preceded by a superb rendition of Oh Canada sung by our own Kamal Driver. Dinner was followed by a live auction conducted by a professional auctioneer who, with the help of his young Zoroastrian volunteers, did a great job of getting the crowd excited over items such as a trip to Malta and the Dominican Republic, electric scooter, week at a cottage and a fur coat, to name a few. The live auction proved to be one of the highlights of the evening raising \$19,000!

Under the always-cheerful leadership of Kermin Byramjee, the Gala committee organized a hugely successful evening. Well done! to over 75 volunteers, including the ever present 'official Parsee Photographer'-Sam Gazdar, who diligently took pictures of every aspect of the evening. Thank you Sam for always doing such a wonderful job.

Of course, no fundraising event is a success without the generosity of sponsors and donors. Behram and Rena Baxter, Shahroukh and Riah Sidhwa, Farshogar and Jasmine Jasavala and Storchem Inc. were the sponsors for this evening. They very generously sponsored the venue, meal, bar and music and were presented with beautiful bouquets donated by Priscilla and Homi Contractor of Timeless Gardens Florists.

The items for the silent and Live Auctions, door prizes and raffle draws were also generously donated. The evening continued to thrive with dancing to the live music of Craig and the Cruisers. Revellers enjoyed a midnight dessert table of pastry, fruit, cheese and crackers.

The OZCF committee challenged the crowd to surpass the \$ 75,000 fundraising mark. An amazing amount of over \$139,000 was raised at this year's OZCF Black Tie Gala event. This, added to the existing funds, brings us a step closer to making the OZCF Vision a reality. *Continued on inside page*

Up-Coming Events

- Nov. 14, 2003 Theme Night: Ramada Hotel
- Nov. 28, 2003 Showcasing 3000 years of Zoroastrian Culture: Markham Theatre
- Nov. 30, 2003 Open House of East & West-end Religious Groups: Darbe Meher
- Dec. 31, 2003 New Year Party: Clarkson Community Center
- Jan. 31, 2004 Lecture Series: Royal Ontario Museum
- Mar. 21, 2004 Jamshedi Navroze Party & Talent Contest

Showcasing 3,000 Years of Heritage

Zarathushtis of Ontario are preparing to present an event to celebrate 3000th Anniversary of the Zoroastrian Culture. To showcase, create/raise awareness of our Zoroastrian Culture, this event is to be held Friday, November 28 at the Markham Theatre, 171 Town Center Blvd. in Markham, Ontario. Some of the activities will include an exhibition of the Zoroastrian artefacts, and an evening of performances with a view to provide visibility of our Zoroastrian faith and culture, particularly to the non-Zoroastrian communities. Ticket price of \$10.00 includes entertainment and snacks, and may be purchased directly at the box office by calling (905) 305-SHOW (7469)

For further information, please contact the event coordinator - Kerman Katrak @ 905-707-7359 or Roshan Davar @ 416-494-5204



One of our Own Performs at Stratford

Nazneen Contractor is an aspiring actress who is forging an outstanding career on the Canadian screen and stage. Nazneen, who has just turned 21, has already made a successful round of TV serials including 'Star Hunter', 'Relic Hunter' and 'Matthew Shepherd Story'.

Last year she was selected to perform in the 2003 Stratford Festival of Canada, which is considered the Mecca of classical theatre in North America. Nazneen is participating in three shows this season, one of which got a five-star rating from the Toronto Star and the critic added that Nazneen's performance was "...the most stunning debut (he) could ever recall."

Nazneen has also been selected to participate in the esteemed Stratford Conservatory, which will last up to the end of January next year.

Amazing achievements, Nazneen !



Did You Know?

This October a new Indian five rupee coin will be issued in commemoration of Dr. Dadabhoi Naoroji (1825-1917). This "Grand Old Man of India" was the first Asian in British Parliament who championed for India's independence for half a century.



Birth Announcement

Congratulations to Shilpa and Cyrus Madon on the birth of their beautiful twin daughters on October 6th, 2003. Congratulations also are extended to the proud grand parents, Freny and Shavak Madon and Dr. and Mrs. Soni.

Buy an Advertisement

Patrons are requested to contact the Newsletter personnel if they would like to make any announcements or place any advertisements by the 15th of each month. (they will then be put in the followings months issue).

Advertising rates are as follows:

One Colour Newsletter

\$25.00 for ¼ page

\$50.00 for ½ page

\$100.00 for full page

Full Colour Newsletter

\$35.00 for ¼ page

\$60.00 for ½ page

\$110.00 for full page

(4 colour issues per year)

You may also consider purchasing space in the newsletter to wish the community well and in this way help allay some of the costs involved in sending out the newsletter. Although the newsletter is sponsored, the cost of the mailing is not; so every little bit helps. We look forward to hearing from our business members and well-wishers.

Contact: Roshan Byramjee (905) 849-4684 or Kamal Driver (416) 490-1374

If you would like to receive this newsletter by email rather than regular mail, please write to ron.michelle@rogers.com

Help the OZCF save on postage.

Black Tie Gala Raises \$139,000 *Continued from front page*

The OZCF was honoured to have as guests of honour, Her Worship-Ann Mulvale, Mayor of Oakville; Hon.-Joyce Savoline, Chair of the Regional Municipality of Halton; and Hon.-Peter Pomeroy, Past Chair, Regional Municipality of Halton. These dignitaries expressed their support of OZCF's vision and goals. Each of them encouraged and wished OZCF success in their fundraising endeavours to achieve the goals to purchase land in their jurisdiction and build a place of Worship and a Cultural Centre. They congratulated the Zoroastrian Community at large in honour of UNESCO's recognition to celebrate 3000th Anniversary of Zoroastrian Culture.

Here is an impressive list of other dignitaries who were unable to attend the Gala but sent congratulatory letters.

"On behalf of the people of Ontario, I extend best wishes to all supporters of the Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation, and wish you well in your efforts to build a local centre where your faith and culture can flourish."

Lieutenant Governor of Ontario- Hon. James K. Bartleman

"Essentially since the dawn of time, the teachings of Zarathustra have inspired and illuminated the minds of countless followers around the world. Today, three millennia later, the Zoroastrian faith is alive and well in our great nation of Canada, as Toronto is the only single metropolis with the largest Zoroastrian population in North America."

The Minister of Canadian Heritage - Hon Sheila Copps

UNESCO's aim is to encourage governments, NGOs, individuals, groups and local communities to undertake actions to identify, preserve, and disseminate oral and intangible heritage. The cultural and religious centre proposed by the Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation is a fine example of such an initiative- ... We wish the 8,000 Zoroastrians of Canada a joyous celebration!" David A. Walden-Secretary-General of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Other congratulatory Letters were received from Bonnie Brown-MP of Oakville; Ted Chudleigh -PC Candidate in Halton; Firdosh Mehta-President of Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA); and The Premier of Ontario - Hon. Ernie Eves .

For a complete script of these letters please refer to our website.



The First Naturopath

Entering the Health-Care World: In May 2002, Canada received its first Zoroastrian naturopathic doctor. Roxanna Mirza, ND graduated from the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine and became the first regulated Zoroastrian Naturopathic Doctor in Canada. After receiving her regulation in Ontario, she spent five months in India working with world-renowned homeopathic doctors and naturopathic hospitals in Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore and surrounding areas.

During her time in Mumbai, she co-edited a book on pediatrics and homeopathy written by the esteemed Dr Farokh Master. Upon arriving back to Toronto, Roxanna has set up her naturopathic practice in the Humber Family Chiropractic Centre in Etobicoke. Along with initiating the "Health Talk" series at the Darbe Meher, Roxanna most recently gave a lecture at the NEXUS 2003 Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Toronto, entitled "Plunging into our Gene Pool- Causes and Preventions of Disease that Afflict Parsis the Most". New patients interested are welcome, and may call to set up an appointment at her clinic at: 416-744-7900.



Future Events

Herald in the New Year

Date: December 31, 2003

Place:

Clarkson Community Centre, 2475 Truscott Dr., Mississauga (Erin Mills Parkway- South of QEW, Turn west on Truscott Dr.)

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Tickets:

\$25.00 per adult

\$12.00 per child 12 & under

Children under 4- free

Ticket includes: dinner, music, and party favours for the New Year. Liquor and soft drinks will be sold.

Accommodation is absolutely limited to 140 so book your tickets early! Tickets will be sold on a first come first serve basis. NO EXCEPTIONS AND NO REFUNDS.

For reservation contact:

Meher Panthaky 905-568-4946

Roshan Davar: 416-494-5204

Kamal Driver: 416-490 1374.

Please mail your cheques, made payable to OZCF c/o Meher Panthaky, 5508 Spangler Dr., Mississauga, ON, L5R 3A2

Other Interesting Events

On Sunday November 30th, the East-end and West-end Religious classes will be held together at the Darbe Meher in the form of a Youth Open House, where all are welcome to peek in the classroom activities, and ask questions.

On Saturday January 31, 2004 there will be a Lecture Series at the Royal Ontario Museum. All are welcome. More details on this and the Food Fair and the Multi Faith lecture/discussions to follow in the next issue. Please stay tuned for these interesting events.

Zoroastrians Participate at United Nations

BY: SHANAYA MISTRY

For the second consecutive year, FEZANA participated at the United Nations' Fifty-sixth Annual Conference for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with a team of ten representatives. The conference on "Human Security and Dignity: Fulfilling the Promise of the United Nations", took place from September 8 - 10, 2003, at the UN headquarters in New York City. This conference was successful in highlighting one fundamental message: global discourse on security issues cannot focus on military security alone, but must be defined in terms of 'human security'. This requires NGOs to promote policies and programmes that emphasize sustainable economic and social development, human rights and environmental protection. The FEZANA representatives at the conference were among 2000 individuals representing 600 UN-related NGOs from 65 countries.

At the conference, FEZANA was able to offer the UN community a Zoroastrian perspective on global issues and was successful in promoting awareness of our community and its activities. As a 'youth participant' at the conference, I found it an enriching experience that I am not likely to forget. I strongly encourage the youth in our community to participate further in FEZANA's NGO initiatives.

For more information on the conference, please see www.fezana.org or contact me at shanayamistry@hotmail.com.



Award for Toronto Parsi Drama Group

Exciting and great news for our Toronto Parsi Drama Group! "MY BINDI.COM" has nominated our production of "Tehmulji Noo Timetable" for an award in the performing arts category. My Bindi.Com is an organization dedicated to promote South Asian culture and arts for the last 3 years. This award is based on "People's Choice" online voting which will end on October 21st 2003. The award night is to be held November 6, 2003.

Please vote for the Natak in the following manner: Go to www.mybindi.com then click on "3rd annual my bindi awards", click on "vote today" then check the "Toronto Parsi Drama Group - Temulji noo timetable" in Best Stage Production. Only one voting per e-mail is allowed. Please encourage your friends to vote. This is the first time ever, in Canada that a Gujarati language program is nominated for this award.

For more details, please call Meher Panthaky at (905) 568-4946.

For Your Interest

The following is an excerpt from an article that appeared in the BBS News World Edition on April 18, 2003.

Historic Find Helps Save Parsi Culture

A collection of more than 90,000 rare manuscripts about the history and heritage of India's declining Parsi community has been discovered and is to be preserved. Many of the documents are hundreds of years old and written on slowly perishing materials such as tree bark.

The Parzor Foundation, based in Navsari in the western state of Gujarat and set up under the auspices of UNESCO, is undertaking the process of preserving and microfilming the texts.

Historical Texts

The head of the Parzor Foundation, Dr Shernaz Cama, told the BBC that it was essential that efforts were made to save these documents that deal with issues as diverse as astrology, astronomy, medicine, history, music, and more. The task - partly funded by the National Archives which contributed 300,000 rupees (\$6,250) - forms part of the Preservation of Parsi Zoroastrian Heritage project.

The Navsari project is therefore seen as playing an important part in keeping the culture alive and the international support it is receiving through United Nations is significant.

Courtesy of BBC News. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/> for complete article.

Providing Partial Funding

The Zoroastrian Youth of North America, a sub committee of FEZANA has announced that they will be providing a "partial" funding support to a few young Zarathushtis who will be attending the 3rd World Zoroastrian Youth Congress (3WZYC) in PUNE, INDIA, from 27th to 31st December 2003.

Request for support to be submitted on or before October 31 2003 to Sherazade Mehta, ZYNA Co-Chair, 1799 Centre Street, #34, West Roxbury, MA 02132 USA. Recipients will be notified by ZYNA, by 30th November 2003.

Make this vision a reality

Your donations are tax free.

Please send your donations to OZCF, 4244 Taffey Cres., Miss., ON, L5L 2J2 or speak to one of our directors.

Thank-you for your generosity.

For more information visit
ozcf.com