



Issue 35– May 2007 Newsletter

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10th ANNUAL REVLOK RUN/WALK

May 5, 2007



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With over 40,000 participants, the New York 10th Annual 5K Revlon Run/Walk attracted record numbers this year. With 33 registered walkers our ZAGNY team 1109 also had the largest turnout by far of all these years. ZAGNY walkers varied widely in age and ability. Three very special little participants---Master Feroze Schenck, Ms. Zahra Schenck, and Baby Delara Cama (unfortunately not in photograph above) enjoyed their stroll on that bright, sunny morning. We also had a large group of youngsters along with the usual core of dozen or so die hard supporters. It was owing to the tireless efforts of our team captain **Sheroo Kanga**, that we were able to not only get record numbers to walk but have surpassed all expectations in terms of fundraising. Our team dollars raised this year have gone into five figures for the first time, and till date a whopping **\$13,000** has been collected. Every single member took it upon themselves to go that extra mile and worked hard at raising critical funds that are going to go a long way in bringing us closer toward our goal of eradicating cancers and ensuring a bright future.

Thanks to your generous donations, our top 5 fund raisers this year are--

- Homi Gandhi, once again raising the highest amount--an impressive **\$4,527!**
- Sheroo Kanga following closely with **\$3,003**
- Spenta Cama **\$1,290**
- Dianne Udwadia **\$1,115**
- Khursheed Navder **\$998**

We do hope to see many more of you **Join in the Fight** next year!

INDIAN COWBOY
April 13 & 14, 2007
By Nazneen Vimadalal



Indian Cowboy, written and performed by **Zaraawar Mistry** was staged at Asia Society Theater in April. The fictional story features "Guy" or Gayomar Katrak as the main character coming to America to realize his dreams of becoming an actor. The story is riveting. Zaraawar's compelling performance weaves humor and compassion as he takes us through the struggles and success of Guy's life filled with aspirations. Lot of material is packed in the ninety minute solo performance where Zaraawar does an amazing job keeping his audience captivated by the thirteen different characters he plays starting from Guy's mom Nergish to his good friend Tina Cama. I was particularly fascinated by Zaraawar's amazing ability to enthrall the audience with the selection of voices and accents. Gayomar returns back to Hyderabad rich in experience. The play ends with a mixed feeling both of melancholy and exhilaration.

Born in India, Zaraawar Mistry is an actor, writer, director and producer in Minneapolis/St. Paul. He is co-founder of the Center for Independent Artists and is the founder of Dreamland Arts. His one man play Sohrab and Rustum was selected by Minneapolis's City Pages as one of the year's 10 Best in 2002, and was presented at Asia Society in New York and Houston. Zaraawar, his wife Leslye and daughter Naaja live in their home which is attached to the studio theater building. Dreamland Arts, was named after a dilapidated movie theater in Secunderabad, where he saw many English language movies as a young boy.

VISIT TO THE SASANIAN ART EXHIBITION

May 5, 2007

By Tamina Daruvala

History is often thought to be a dead subject, a topic that is no longer pertinent to everyday life. The sight of so many eager Zoroastrians admiring the historical exhibition, *Glass, Gilding, and Grand Design: Art of Sasanian Iran (224-642)*, made me think otherwise. Approximately forty members of the ZAGNY community congregated on a Sunday afternoon to observe the visually stunning pieces – gems, fine wool, silks, gold and silver vessels, seals. Each artifact reflected the cultural traditions of the time period, such as the deification of the king and the hunting scenes, which symbolized valor in the face of adversity. These works of art also transcended cross-cultural boundaries; they displayed Greco-Roman, Egyptian, and Turkish influences.

This exhibit emphasized the dynamic, ever-evolving nature of history. Indeed, understanding a culture's past can deeply color our understanding of its present and future. The Sasanians had a considerable impact on the subsequent dynasties of Persia and on the rest of Central Asia. The exhibit highlighted the tremendous role that Persians played throughout history. The remnants of the once-flourishing Sasanian Empire generated such interest that it reassured me that our vibrant community is more alive than ever.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ZAGNY SCHOLARSHIP: We invite applications for financial assistance (in the form of interest-free loans) from Zoroastrian students who are or will be enrolled for full-time study in undergraduate or graduate-level program for the academic year 2007-2008. The Application Form along with detailed eligibility criteria and other related information will be posted on the ZAGNY website in early June. The deadline for filing an application is **July 25, 2007**. For additional information, please contact the scholarship committee chairperson: **Kaizad Darbari**, 200 E. 89th St. Apt 21G, New York, NY 10128. Email: kaizad@zagny.org

Teenage Interfaith Diversity Education program is sponsoring "The Wave of Change," a youth-planned and youth-run conference at the Harvard Divinity School at Harvard University on **Tues., June 26, 2007**. The purpose is to train teens in leadership skills and open communication. Up to 150 teens of a wide range of backgrounds will participate in a day of fascinating fun-filled dialogues, activities, workshops, leadership training, and an energy boosting opening activity! Zoroastrian youth who are willing to attend should register online at www.ifaction.org. If planning to attend please inform secretary@zagny.org so we can coordinate the travel plans.

THRITY UMRIGAR'S BOOK READ EVENT

April 26, 2007

About 35 people attended to hear **Thrity Umrigar** read from her bestselling novel "The Space Between Us" at the Tamarind Art Gallery on April 26. The reading was followed by a robust question and answer session, which was moderated by freelance journalist Aseem Chhabra. The reading was sponsored by the South Asian Journalists Association and ZAGNY. The Space Between Us, which tells the story of a Parsi woman and her domestic servant, has met with great critical and popular acclaim. For more information, check out her website-www.umrigar.com



BOOK REVIEW OF UMRIGAR'S NEW NOVEL

"IF TODAY BE SWEET"

By Pearl Satarawala Ball

"If Today Be Sweet", (coming out in early June) is not only a good story but it is the perfect novel for the Parsi reader. Umrigar's book is about a Parsi family that is balancing the cultures of India and America. The Parsi characters in the novel are named according to legendary heroes from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh: Rustom, his wife Tehmina, and their son Sorab become the Sethna's from Bombay. These characters are as honorable as their namesakes. Parsi men will feel inspired by Rustom Sethna's values of justice and his courage as they read of his stance in taking a Muslim family into their home during the 1992 Hindu-Muslim riots. Rustom Sethna is wise and dependable in everyway; he also has a great sense of humor. He uses the poet Omar Khayyam's verse to guide the family. As far as pun's go, Rustom apologizes to his readers as he explains, "...--pardon the pun, I am, after all, a Parsi gentleman and bad puns are mother's milk to us--..." Thrity Umrigar paints a picture of a strong and handsome Rustom to whom the family is devoted.

In turn, Parsi women will enjoy getting to know the kind-hearted and devoted sixty-six year old Tehmina. After her beloved husband's sudden death, Tehmina is searching to do the right thing as she makes her decision to remain in America to live with her son, his American wife Susan and son Cavas or return to her apartment in Bombay. Early in the novel she cries out to her Jewish friend Eva Metzembaum, "...Bombay is my home. Here [America], I am afraid that I will always be a stranger, that I will never get used to all these ways." Tehmina performs throughout the book with the utmost integrity and good intentions; she stumbles many times as she needs to adjust to being a widow who is now visiting her son in America. Ultimately she is triumphant and certainly, the Parsi women's heroine. In fact she is so endearing, one is tempted to ask her for recipes to the marvelous Parsi dishes that are described: *lamb kebab, mutton cutlet, pallov-daar, and masala omelet.*

The younger Parsi reader will also find pleasure and wisdom amongst the pages of If Today Be Sweet. Sorab and Susan Sethna are earnest, hard working and very much in love. Susan speaks to all young Parsi men as she exclaims, "It's what I love about you. All you Parsi men with your sentimental streak." Sorab's childhood friend, Percy Soonawalla, lightens up the more somber moments in the story with his antics. When trying to humor his friend who has had a harrowing day with his eccentric boss, he says, "Arre yaar, that's why we came to America in the first place, right? To have the freedom to chase women and get loaded whenever we wanted to? After all, isn't that what the pursuit of happiness is all about – the right to down a few pegs of Scotch, to look up the skirts of our long-legged blond American sisters, to eat enough meat and eggs to raise our cholesterol to new and uncharted heights? Heck, they don't call it the Promised Land for nothing." Writer Umrigar paints the picture of successful young Parsi men and women who have met with success and are satisfied with their choice to be Americans. Hand in hand with this, she reminds the youth of their heritage and the legacy of honorable service to society and humankind. Even the famed Sanjan story is presented so that we don't forget. Tehmina remembers for all of us: "Did she know the story? Every Parsi child who had ever drunk at her mother's breast knew the legend of how the small, tired group of Persians fleeing Islamic persecution in Iran had arrived in the small Indian town of Sanjan, seeking political refuge. The Hindu ruler, unable to make this group of Farsi-speaking foreigners understand that he couldn't possibly accommodate any newcomers, had greeted them on the beach with a glass of milk filled to the brim. No vacancy, the full glass was supposed to symbolize. But the Zoroastrian head priest was a brilliant man. Removing a small quantity of sugar from their supplies, he dissolved the sugar in the glass, careful not to spill a drop of milk. This was his famous answer—the answer that became a source of pride and a blueprint for future generations: Like sugar in milk, our presence will sweeten the flavor of your life, without displacing you or causing you any trouble. And so they were allowed to stay and became the Parsis of India."

It is not often that the Parsis have a chance to read and find themselves lost in the vernacular of their own culture and language. Thrity Umrigar's book is just such a treat--this is an opportunity to identify and celebrate with Umrigar's depictions of what is truly worthy and honorable of our Parsi family and human values. The characters Rustom, Tehmina and Sorab raise us all to a higher level of integrity. Their names link us to the epic heroes of the Shahnameh: Rustom, Tehmina and Sorab. One is proud to identify with them. If Today Be Sweet by Thrity Umrigar is a Parsi person's novel.

ZAGNY'S UPCOMING EVENTS

UPCOMING GHAMBHAR

JUNE 10th, 2007

On June 10th ZAGNY will hold a Ghambhar instead of the usual Barbeque, (BBQ will be held in September). The Ghambhar prayers will be held between 1.30 and 4 pm, followed by a traditional Ghambhar lunch. The Ghambhar is being sponsored by the Nentin family. The Nentins have expressed their wish and the ZAGNY Board has agreed, that any donations received from the attendees on that day be equally divided between two very noble causes: the Parsi General Hospital Fund and the Udvada AtashBehram Funds. Fund raising events for these two causes will be planned and sponsored separately as in previous years. Please join us and enjoy the Ghambhar, support a good cause, and enjoy some tasty food as well! It is imperative that we know how many people will attend the Ghambhar so that everyone is well fed and no one goes home hungry. **Please RSVP to Shahnaz@zagny.org or (530) 902 4436.**

SUMMER PICNIC

Sunday, July 29, 2007

We invite you and your families to our annual ZAGNY picnic at the Shepherd **Lake Recreation Area** located in **Ringwood State Park** (Ringwood, NJ). The spring-fed waters of the 74-acre Shepherd Lake offer swimming, boating, canoeing fishing, hiking trails etc. The park is open from 8:00am to 8:00PM daily. **THERE IS NO RESERVED SPACE SO PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY.** Some of us will try and get there around 9 am to save a few tables for our ZAGNY group. Since the park does not allow signs, we will have someone meet you in the parking area to direct you to the picnic location. There is no per person admission charge, however the park charges a parking fee of \$10.00 per car.

Bring your favorite potluck picnic dish (enough to share with 8-10 people), and come prepared to have a great time! Grills are available for cook-outs. ZAGNY will provide watermelon, iced tea, hot tea and charcoal for the cook out. Call **Ferzin Patel (845-354-5163)**, **Kerman (732-494-7976)**, or **Vispi (201-227-1890)**, if you plan to attend.

On the day of the picnic, once you are in the park, **Ferzin, Kerman and Vispi** will have their cell phones switched on in case you need directions to the picnic area. (**Cell numbers for day of picnic: Ferzin Patel-845-216-1368, Kerman-732-742-2275, Vispi-201-248-7208.** Additional details are on the Park's website <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/ringwood.html>.)

So folks, do join us at our annual picnic--there's no better way to celebrate the summer season!

MUKTAD PRAYERS

August 15 – August 19, 2007

Our Zoroastrian community is invited to participate in the Muktdad Prayers (Wed., August 15th through Sat., August 19th, 2006). The muktdad prayers at the Darbe Mehr will be held on Sun. August 19th at 11:00 AM. Lunch will be served after the prayers. In order to accommodate workday schedules, ZAGNY typically offers the community prayer services at several locations around the tri-state area with the generous help from our members. Teshtar and Noshir Irani have indicated that they would like to host prayers on the 4th gatha (Sat. the 18th) at their house. **If you would like to host prayers at your home, please contact Sheroo and Vispi Kanga (201-227-1890) or Ferzin Patel (845-354-5163) or email us at secretary@zagny.org.** The host member provides all items required for the prayers such as flowers, fruits, malido, sukhad, etc. They may provide dinner for the attendees if they wish to. ZAGNY will help arrange for the attending priest.

We will notify the community on the places where prayers will be held in our next newsletter. The form for submission of names to be recited will also be included therein.

PATETI FUNCTION

August 25, 2007

ZAGNY will hold its Pateti function on **Saturday, August 25th**, at the Pomona Darbe Mehr. This board will live up to its reputation and provide a fun filled program, and good food--details to follow! **So please save the date and plan to attend!**

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations

With great pleasure **Dinyar & Meher Hodiwala**, announce the marriage of their son **Mahyar** to Army specialist, **Laura Bueno**, in Germany.

Condolences

•Earuch M. Lavangia, beloved husband to Tehmi, adoring father to Piroja & Rusi Press, Xarkhash & Katy Lavangia, and doting grandfather to Xerxina & Xenia, passed away in Ramsey, NJ, on April 16th, '07.

A note of thanks...

To our Family of Friends at ZAGNY,

A note of thanks for your expressions of sympathy on the passing away of my beloved husband & our Dad. May his soul rest in eternal peace. Sincere and heartfelt thanks to all who came to pay their final respects, and to all who visited us, called, sent cards and emails. Your comforting words are helping us through our difficult time of grief. The love and respect you have always shown Dad meant a lot to us. He will be greatly missed and will live on in our hearts forever.

With thanks and affection,

Tehmi Lavangia, Piroja & Rusi Press

•A very dear friend and community member, Khorshed Firoze Jungalwala, beloved wife of Firoze, loving mother of Ferzin and Jehangir, and doting grandmother of Davin passed away on Sat., May 12, 2007 at the age of 67 after a long battle with cancer. A memorial service was held on May 20th at the *Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr* in her honor. Touching eulogies were presented by family and friends. She will always be remembered for having served our Zarathushti Community with integrity, compassion and love. Her legacy will live on through the FEZANA sponsored "Khorshed Jungalwala Lecture Series" dedicated to promoting the educational and social doctrine of the Zoroastrian religion.

A SEASON OF GIVING.....

By Homi Gandhi

Normally at the year end times, one receives donation appeals so that we Americans get the tax benefit of such donations. However, our ZAGNY members continue donations throughout the year and I want to thank you all for your generosity.

Additionally, we collect donations for other humanitarian causes. One such cause, donations for Revlon Run/walk Against Breast Cancer, has become an annual ritual for our community for the last 6 years. ZAGNY Team of over 30 individuals participated on May 5, 2007, see story on page 1. Kudos to all participants, and thanks to **Usheen Davar** for involving ZAGNY five years ago, and to **Sheroo Kanga** for leading the Team so ably this year.

It is important to note that many corporations donate generously to registered Charities and match individual donations. ZAGNY is a registered charitable entity with IRS section 501 ©(3) exemption. So when you donate to ZAGNY, please enquire with your employer's Human Resources Department whether they have such a program. These small gestures on your part will benefit ZAGNY and your community. This is what our member **Meherzeen Daroowala** did. When asked by her employer, RBS Greenwich Capital Markets, she recommended, once again, her favorite charity ZAGNY and we received month a check of \$ 1,000 from RBS Greenwich Capital Foundation.

In turn, ZAGNY tries to help many needy causes. Let me relate one such instance. Your Scholarship Committee received a fund request from a Zoroastrian studying in Scotland. The funds were needed for the last payment of his tuition fees to complete his studies. Our scholarship guidelines do not allow this kind of payment. However, our Scholarship Committee Chairs, firstly **Sherazad Mehta** and now **Kaizad Darbari**, identified the needs of this candidate and presented this case to the Board. Your Vice President, **Nawaz Merchant**, did due diligence and, along with **Yasmin Ghadiali**, came up with an idea to give a loan from the Critical Assistance Fund. They appealed to donors within the community, and within a few months almost the full amount of loan has been replenished back into the Critical Assistance Fund. I thank all these noble individuals in making this student's dream come true. The student writes, "Receiving this 'special loan' motivates me to maintain my studies and complete my degree. I hope to graduate in the fall of 2007 and as soon as I'm in full time employment, you can rest assured that I'll repay the loan back to ZAGNY at my earliest. I look forward to being able to give back to the community once I begin my career professionally."

So you can see friends that the "Season of Giving..." is ongoing for ZAGNY throughout the year. We are working on methods to augment our Scholarship funds. We are working on ideas to make donations helping donors as well. If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions, please do not hesitate to call Minoo Bengali, your ZAGNY Treasurer or simply write to him at treasurer@zagny.org.

DONATIONS

Category	Critical Asst	General Fund	Scholarship Fund	New Bldg Fund
Antia, Shiraz and Unvala, Zarir			30	
Antia, Xerxes and Smita	200			
Baria, Noshir and Goolu	25	25		
Bhappu, Xerxes and Valerie	100			
Bharda, Aspi and Zarin	30			
Bharucha, Kerman and Jeroo	100			
Birdie, Khurshed and Mithoo	1,000			
Buhariwalla, Behram	50			
Cama, Rohinton and Mahrukh	100			
Cooper, Homi and Kashmira		21		
Cooper, Piroozi and Wittlin, Barry				151
Coorlawala, Uttara		25		
Dadina, Rohinton and Navaz				200
Dalal, Hormazdyar		50		
Daroowalla, Mehernosh and Tina	100		100	
Daruvala, Toos and Hira			100	
Daruwala, Vispi and Percis	50			
Davar, Virasp and Kamal	150			
Dastur, Kavsi and Barbara		61		
Deboo , Anahita and Pavri, Cavas	100	100		
Devitre, Dinyar and Aashish	1,000			
Dotivala, Tehmasp and Zarine	50			
Dutia, Minu and Behroz	200			
Dutia, Minu and Behroz in loving memory of Tehmina Dutia	200			
Gandhi, Rusi and Natalie	25	25	51	
Ghadiali, Yasmin and Jamshed	100			
Hakim, Lovji and Rupy	20			
	500			
Hirjibehedin, Farokh and Pouru	250			
Hodiwala, Adel	25			
Hodiwala, Mahyar	25			
Irani, Khushru and Farzana		50	50	
Johnson, Paul and Tricia		25		
Kapadia, Katayun	101			
Khambatta, Goolcher and Kayomarz			65	
Lalkaka, Rustam and Phiroza	50			
Madon, Rohinton and Yasmin		50		
Mama, Katayun and Kayomaaz	70			
Mehta, Ruyinton and Monica	100			
Mistry, Khorshed and Keyk	60			
Mistry, Tehmul and Dimeher	60			

DONATIONS (contd.)

Category	Critical Asst	General Fund	Scholarship Fund	New Bld Fund	Library	Kutar Fund
Mobed, Darayes and Goher	250					
Mody, Diane K. in memory of her father Jamshid Mody	300					
Mody, Khorshed J. in memory of her husband Jamshid	300		200			
Najmi, Parviz and Sima			50			
Nowrojee, Eruch and Immermann, Janet					101	
Parakh, Zal			500			
Patel, Dinshaw and Shernaz						60
Patel, Framroze and Armaity	41					
Patell, Roshan			100			
Press and Lavangia Families in loving memory of Earuch Lavangia	501					
Presswalla, Faruk and Daisy	100	100				
Prof. & Mrs. K. D. Irani	500		500			
Rabadi, Meheroz and Freny	50					
Ranji, Farhad	300		150			
Ranji, Shiroy and Jeroo			100			
RBS Greenwich Capital Company Donation Recommended by Meherzeen Daruwala	1,000					
Sarkari, Homi and Gul	101					
Sethna, Rusi and Shernaz		50				
Shroff, Jehangir and Avan	30					
Sukhia, Sarosh and Nancy		60				
Suntoke, Amy and Jamshed	20					
Tavaria, Soli and Naju	60					
Udwadia, Rusi and Karen	50					
Wadia, Goolcher and Jimmy		100				
Yolande Feris and Family In loving memory of Earuch Lavangia	100					
ZAGBA	301					
<i>Donations Through United Way</i>						
Nawaz Merchant			153			
Pfizer			38			
Shanaya Deboo	50					
Virasp Davar	101					
Total	8,996	742	1,987	351	101	60
GRAND TOTAL	12,237					

APPEAL FOR HELP--Frian & Burzin Mehta, a young Zarathustee family from Auckland, New Zealand have a 2 year old son, Khushru who is profoundly deaf in both ears and has also been diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. His only chance of hearing is with a cochlear implant in both ears, an extremely expensive procedure after which he will need constant rehabilitation. This young family is in great need of financial aid, in order to ensure that their child has the best possible chance to deal with his grave disability and improve the quality of his life. They would like to appeal to all generous and large hearted individuals, to help them in their hour of need. ZAGNY has sent a donation of \$500 from its Critical Assistance Fund and requests our generous donors to contribute to our Critical Assistance Fund so that we may help this and other such causes. **Please send your checks to ZAGNY Treasurer.**

ZAGNY

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 2007

6/3 WZCC NY CHAPTER MEETING---LIFE IN RETIREMENT (12 PM)
6/8-10 IVY F. GANDHI ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH CAMP
6/10 ZAGNY RELIGIOUS CLASSES (1 PM)/GHAMBHAR

JULY 2007

7/29 ZAGNY ANNUAL PICNIC

AUGUST 2007

8/19 MUKTAD PRAYERS AT THE DARBE MEHR (DETAILS TO FOLLOW)
8/25 PATETI FUNCTION (DETAILS TO FOLLOW)



CONGRATS TO OUR
Dads & Grads



ZAGNY

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.zagny.org