



Issue 29 – June 2006 Newsletter

REVLON RUN/WALK 2006

ARTICLES:

| | |
|--|---|
| Mayor Bloomberg's Reception to Celebrate Nowrooz | 2 |
| Adult Religious Class- Prof. Irani's Talk | 3 |
| ZAGNY's Upcoming Events | 4 |
| Announcements & Scholarships | 4 |
| ZAGNY Website | 5 |
| Donations | 5 |
| FEZANA News | 6 |
| Calendar of Events | 8 |

The week leading up to the 9th Annual Revlon Run/Walk For Women brought bleak weather predictions with a soggy forecast similar to that of the 2005 event. But, on Saturday, May 6 as nearly 40,000 united in Times Square in the fight against women's cancers, the sun decided to shine and brought with it one of the most memorable days this event has ever seen.

Once again, under the able leadership of Captain

Usheen Davar, our ZAGNY team 1109 was able to raise **\$7,977** for this worthy cause. While 13 of us chose to walk, many more of you donated money in support of loved ones and we thank you all for your generous pledges. **Homi Gandhi** and **Sheroo Kanga** were once again truly inspirational and raised almost 80% of the team's total--collecting \$3,650 and \$2,626 respectively!



ZAGNY BOARD:

President

HOMI GANDHI
president@zagny.org

Vice President

NAWAZ MERCHANT
vicepresident@zagny.org

Treasurer

MINOO BENGALI
treasurer@zagny.org

Secretary

KHURSHEED DUSAJ NAVDER
secretary@zagny.org

Joint Secretary

KERMAN N. DUKANDAR
jointsecretary@zagny.org

Members at Large

VISPI KANGA
vispi@zagny.org

SHERAZAD MEHTA
sherazad@zagny.org

FERZIN PATEL
ferzin@zagny.org

MICHEL REID
michel@zagny.org

We look forward to seeing many more of you next year in Times Square for the 10th Anniversary of this major event!

PEDALS FOR PROGRESS

By Jasmine Dukandar

On May 7, 2006 I held a charity event at the Darbe Mehr called Pedals for Progress (P4P). I had the opportunity to partner with the P4P Organization to collect used bikes for the needy and less fortunate people overseas who need cheap transportation to get to their jobs, schools, etc. I also raised money to cover the shipping and handling charges for the bikes by organizing a bake sale. I was truly overwhelmed by the generosity of our community. Thanks to everyone's help and charity we received 36 bikes to send overseas and donated \$450 for shipping.

I'd like to thank **Aysha Ghadiali** for her help and for introducing me to this idea. I'd also like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone that donated bikes and/or money. The bikes that were collected will be sent to El Salvador and will be used as the main mode of transportation for many years by the people who are lucky enough to receive them. I'm proud and pleased to see our community coming together for such a noble cause and do hope that we will continue with such efforts in the future.



MAYOR BLOOMBERG INVITES ZOROASTRIANS TO CELEBRATE NOWROOZ

The mayor of the City of New York, Michael R. Bloomberg held a reception for various ethnic communities celebrating **Nowrooz—A New Year Festival** on Tuesday, March 28th at his Gracie Mansion. Since New Yorkers from several other ethnic communities who celebrate NowRoouz--Afghanis, Azerbaijanis, Iranis, Pakistanis and Zoroastrians--were invited, we at ZAGNY took this chance to show off our finery and diversity and came in our traditional dresses--women in *Garas* and saris with *Kors*; and men in *Daglis*, *Phetas* and *Paghdis*-- and could be easily distinguished from the others.

Upon arrival, guests were cordially greeted with wine and were given a tour of the Gracie Mansion, a beautiful country house that overlooks a bend in the East River, five miles north of the City. Built in 1799, this mansion stands in Carl Schurz Park above Hell Gate, a

roaring stretch of water where the Harlem River, East River, and Long Island Sound meet. Though this is the official residence of the mayor of New York City, the current mayor has chosen not to reside there and uses it more as a "People's House" where he hosts receptions, and accommodates visiting officials and dignitaries. As we all mingled and waited for the mayor to arrive, we were treated like celebrities and offered a wide array of appetizers and hors d'oeuvres that matched perfectly with the wine.

In his brief remarks the mayor explained eloquently what Nowrooz is all about. He mentioned that he was thrilled that we all had brought the magic of this festival to New York City since "...it unites people across ethnic borders, encourages them to put aside their differences and celebrate the culture and relationship that they all have in common." He also alluded to the beautiful display of the Hafta-shin table that had been put together with the traditional seven.

All-in-all, the evening was a memorable one—after all, it's not everyday that one gets invited by the mayor of New York City!

DONATIONS TO ZAGNY FUNDS

By Homi Gandhi

Each year at the time of renewal of membership, many of our members have donated small and large amounts towards one or many of the ZAGNY supported funds, namely New Building Fund, Scholarship Fund, Library Fund, Critical Assistance Fund, and General Fund. Over the past years ZAGNY has also made contributions to requests for critical assistance from individuals in India and in the US. This financial assistance goes to elderly/disabled individuals or those who find themselves in difficult medical situations and are strained in their financial circumstances. I find that this year many of the members have not renewed their membership and hence donations have been reduced. Your contribution goes a long way in continuing to keep these charities active and well funded. I urge you to renew your membership and continue to make an annual donation to any of your favorite charities that ZAGNY supports.

Additionally, there are other ways to increase our funds, one of which we observed at the Navroz function. One of our members, Aban Chavda, obtained a complimentary AIR INDIA round trip ticket to India, which was auctioned out at the function. Through the generous bidding of Jasmin and Manek Kotwal, ZAGNY benefited by \$ 900. Another instance of such corporate generosity came to light last week. One financial services company (RBS Greenwich Capital Markets) asked its employees to recommend their favorite charity. And one of our members, Meherzeen Daroowala, recommended ZAGNY and so we received last week a check of \$1,000 from RBS Greenwich Capital Foundation.

It is important to note that many corporations now donate generously to registered Charities. ZAGNY is a registered charitable organization with IRS section 501 ©(3) exemption. Many corporations match individual donations to charities. So when you donate to ZAGNY, please keep these facts in mind and enquire with your employer's Human Resources Department if they have such a program. These small gestures on your part will benefit your ZAGNY and your community. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Minoo Bengali, your ZAGNY Treasurer or simply write to him at treasurer@zagny.org.



ZAGNY ADULT RELIGION CLASS

'The Moral Obligations of a Zoroastrian life' by Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani

Summary submitted by Nawaz Merchant

On 7th May, 2006, ZAGNY community members were involved in a rare, spiritual opportunity- **Dr. Kaikhosrov Irani** joined us at the Darbe Mehr and shared his thoughts on significant spiritual matters. While the children attended their religious classes, parents and members listened avidly to Dr. Irani's engaging and informative discourse.

Dr. Irani shared his perspective on the Gatha's explanation of Creation- the God of Wisdom intended for the world to evolve into a manifestation of the Good Mind, progressing according to the principle of Asha. However, two entities came into existence, Spenta Mainyu (that which promotes Asha) and Anghre-Mainyu (that which opposes Asha, and is not named in the Gathas, but only in the later Avesta). The Amesha Spentas are the different aspects of Creation around us. In older times, symbols were used to teach these non-material concepts, and so we have a different Amesha-Spentas identified for each element of creation.



In a brief sketch of comparative religious philosophies, he discussed many elements of Hinduism which echo those in the Gathas- while each Hindu Divinity has a prescriptive 'recommendation' for individuals, the Upanishads or later works strongly echo the Zoroastrian precept of using logic, fact, and intense thought to evaluate each situation. What is this but exercising the Good Mind? Thereby in Hinduism also, an individual is asked to consider each decision wholly and honestly, before making conclusions.

What are the moral obligations of choosing Zoroastrianism? A

distinctive feature of Zoroastrianism is that it has no list of prescriptions - "do this, don't do that" such as the ten Commandments or the edicts of Islam. It does have a very strong directive however, in the deceptively simple words "Good thoughts, Good words, and Good deeds." In his inimitable style, Dr. Irani elaborated: The good mind is the intense thought we are asked to bring to bear on our decisions- honest, long-sighted thought, that will materialize in our conclusions. The good words are not inane politenesses, but the communication we are required to do, when we approach a decision. It is gathering of consensus or input, which should also weigh in our decisions. And what good is thought and discussion if nothing gets done? Well, the good deeds asked of us, are the implementation of these decisions to enable them to take material form.

Other interesting concepts Dr. Irani presented were - We are asked to promote Asha in our daily lives. But misfortunes come to all of us. What do the Gathas guide us to do in such cases? Asha is both goal and path-The very depth of our convictions lessens the harm of evil and misfortune.

"The face of Injustice" Dr. Irani spoke of a great Zoroastrian scholar of the middle ages, who said that each individual has the ability to detect the face of injustice in situations around him. Using examples from everyday life, Dr. Irani educated his audience with delightful anecdotes to demonstrate this point. The group was charmed by his humble manner and his narratives regarding his days within the world of Academic politics and his honest efforts to correct the wrongs that he recognized. By recognizing the face of injustice and taking steps to correct such wrongs, a Zoroastrian becomes a **'healer of existence'**. In my opinion, these two phrases capture the distinct and unforgettable instruction of Dr. Irani's spiritual guidance.

What is the sacred "offering" for a Zoroastrian? Not rituals, although Dr. Irani mentions that they surely have their place and their purpose. No, we are asked To do good, for the sake of Good. Do Right, for the sake of Right. This is exactly the text of Ashem vohu, the most popular Zoroastrian prayer. It is echoed in my recollection of a fundamental shlok from the Bhagvad Gita "Karmanyeva Adhikaraste, ma faleshu, kadachana..." And so Dr. Irani reminds us that this truth has been around for millennia, changing language, changing text, but the meaning is clear, and constant. We have only to see it.

Dr. Irani ended by reading passages from a book written by his father Dr. D. J. Irani. It is a translation called, "The Gathas, The Hymns of Zarathushtra" translated by D. J. Irani, ISBN 0-966577-60-4. Copies of the book are available in our library.

To paraphrase one of the concluding recitations from the Gathas, "He who aids others to see the Good path, he is worthy of thee, oh Ahura Mazda." Dr. Irani, teacher and guide to us all, we are grateful for your aid.

ZAGNY'S UPCOMING EVENTS

SUMMER PICNIC

Sunday, August 6, 2006

With summer just around the corner, it's time to mark your calendars for our ZAGNY annual picnic!! We hope that you all will join us with kids and families once again at the **Shepherd Lake Recreation Area in Ringwood State Park** (Ringwood, NJ). Stay tuned for further details in the next newsletter.

MUKTAD PRAYERS

August 15 – August 19, 2006

Our Zoroastrian community is invited to participate in the Muktaad Prayers (Tues., August 15th through Sat., August 19th, 2006). The muktaad prayers at the Darbe Mehr will be held on Saturday 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. **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

ZAGNY will hold its Pateti function on **Saturday, August 26th**, at the Pomona Darbe Mehr. We will have a fun filled program along with good old Parsi food--details to follow! **So please save the date and plan to attend!**

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratualtions

Dr. Rohaan Mehta, son of ZAGNY members Maharukh and Firdosh Mehta of Springfield, NJ and brother/brother in law of Parynaz and Khushroo Vimadlal was married to **Feroza Master** of Calgary, Canada at the Berkeley Plaza in Berkeley Heights, NJ on May 21, 2006.

Condolences

•To Behroz and Minu Dutia on the death of Behroz's dear mother, Mrs. Pillamai Kaikhushroo Patrawala, grandmother of Tanaz and Farzad, on June 10, 2006 in Mumbai, India.

•To Diane and Keki Mody on the death of Diane's dear father Mr. Jamshed Mody, grandfather of Darius, Jeannie and Gustad, on Wednesday the 7th June, 2006 in California.

Change of address: Parynaz and Khushroo Vimadlal--New Address: 79, Gregory Lane, Franklin Park, NJ 08823, Tel. No. 732 951 8496

Wanted--Caterers: In an effort to provide the best and most varied options to the community, ZAGNY would like to collect a list of caterers who can provide food with a predominance of Parsi flavors at functions of various sizes (100 to 300+). Please contact **Nawaz Merchant**, by phone at 908-237-0116, or by email at vicepresident@zagny.org, by **July 14th** with information on your menu selections and catering capacity.

Wanted--A 'Live-in-Nanny': For 6 days per week to look after a two month old baby and do light housekeeping and cooking. I live in Brooklyn Heights [Subway Station: Jay Street/Borough Hall] near Manhattan, NY. Contact #718 858 9491 or E.M.: drnamrita@hotmail.com.

SCHOLARSHIPS

ZAGNY Scholarship: We invite applications for financial assistance (Scholarship/Loan) for the academic year 2006-2007 from members who are studying at accredited institutions in the United States. Applicants should be full-time students. The last date for filing an application is **August 31, 2006**. Application forms and information can be obtained from the scholarship committee chairperson: **Sherazad Y. Mehta**, 405 West 48th Street, Apt 1FE, New York, NY 10036; Tel: 212-307-1712; Email: sherazad.mehta@arup.com

Fali Chothia, and FEZANA Academic Scholarships: Check out the FEZANA website <http://www.fezana.org/about.scholarship.fezana.htm> for further information.

ZAGNY WEBSITE NEWS

Please take a look at our website, located at <http://www.zagny.org>. In addition to the community forums (which have discussions on topics from Parsi recipes to current events) we now offer an announcement mailing list for time-sensitive issues.

Please visit <http://zagny.org/lists/?p=subscribe> today to **subscribe and stay informed**. Remember, this announcement list is only for issues that are important for the community. Please note--This is NOT a listserv - it is only for time-sensitive one-way communication *from* ZAGNY *to* the community. There is no option to reply and, as such, you will not get bombarded by emails from other subscribers.

DONATIONS

| | Building Fund | General Fund | Scholar ship Fund | Critical Assistance | Good Life |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Bharda, Darayes and Roshni | | | | 100 | |
| Chavda, Kamal | | 21 | | | |
| Cama, Lovji and Mehru | | | | 100 | |
| Dadina, Rohinton and Nawaz | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Dutia, Minu and Behroz | | 101 | | | |
| Gandhi, Rusi | 200 | 100 | 100 | 100 | |
| Hakim, Khushru and Roshan | 40 | | | | |
| Hodiwala, Adel | | | | 25 | |
| Irani, Kaikhosrov and Piroja | | | | 1,040 | |
| Johnson, Paul and Tricia | | 50 | | | |
| Khambatta, Hoshang and Renate | 200 | | | | |
| Mehta, Ruyintan and Monica | 50 | | | 50 | |
| Mehta, Sherazad | | | 25 | | |
| RBS Greenwich Capital Foundation | | | | 1,000 | |
| Unwalla, Rayomand | | | | | 15 |
| Vimadalal, Shahveer and Nazneen | | 21 | | | |
| Sethna, Rusi and Shernaz | | 50 | | | |
| United Way Checks | | | | | |
| Pfizer | | 279.71 | | | |
| Deboo, Shanaya | | 62.6 | | | |
| Davar, Virasp | | 123.35 | | | |
| Merchant, Nawaz | | 147.5 | | | |
| Total | \$590.00 | \$1,056.16 | \$125.00 | \$2,415.00 | \$15.00 |

FEZANA NEWS

ZAGNY is extremely proud of how well our President, **Homi Gandhi** conducted his campaign for FEZANA presidency. He ran a great race. As you can see below, the tally was really close!

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| President : | Rustom Kevala | 26.35 (Elected) |
| | Homi Gandhi | 23.2 |
| | Hosi Mehta | 16.45 |
| | Absentations | 5.00 |
| Asst. Secretary | Anahita Dayushnejad | 40.25 (Elected) |
| | Vahista Falahati | 20.75 |
| | Absentations | 8.00 |
| Treasurer | Katayun Kapadia | Unopposed |

Letter of Thanks From Elected FEZANA President, Rustom Kevala

Dear Association Presidents, FEZANA liaisons, and friends:

I am truly humbled and awed by the trust you have placed in me by electing me as the next FEZANA President. I sincerely thank you for your support. I will do my utmost to live up to your expectations.

While in Atlanta, my wife Yasmin and I visited the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site on Auburn Avenue, where until recently, generations of middle-class and well-to-do blacks had lived, prospered and died in segregated isolation. It reminded me of how our fellow-Zarathushtis had to endure discrimination in Gabr Mohallas in Iran. What sustained them through those difficult times was their unwavering faith in the goodness of Ahura Mazda.

I commend and thank the outgoing FEZANA President Firdosh Mehta for an extremely well-conducted and productive annual meeting. The Atlanta Zarathushti Association (AZA), one of FEZANA's newest Members, hosted the meeting at a Zarathushti-owned hotel, with flawlessly organized lunches, dinners and a Jashan. AZA is growing – there have been six babies born during the past six months. All the members cheerfully helped with all the activities. As a bonus on the last day of the meeting, the Atlanta Chapter of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) held a very informative half-day seminar on small business development, chaired by Erv. Rustom Kanga.

As in Atlanta, the Zarathushti Community is growing and prospering all over North America. The time has come for us now to collectively address two questions: "Where do we want to go?" and "How do we want to go there?" Our long-term vision is clear – we want our religion to be recognized as a major world religion that has contributed significantly to the development of modern ethics, justice and morality. We can accomplish this vision only if we work together along a path that we all agree on.

My own thoughts on how we can embark on this path are outlined in my three-point platform that I can send you if you haven't already seen it on the FEZANA website. I invite you now to send me your written thoughts on what is most important to you, and how we should proceed to ensure success. Please pass on this message to all your members and urge them also to respond directly to me at RJKevala@aol.com.

Yasmin joins me in thanking all of you for your vote of confidence and we ask for your continued support and blessings.

Ushta te

Rustom Kevala
RJKevala@aol.com



*When it comes to service to India,
Air-India has it all.*

More direct flights from more U.S. cities.

NEW YORK • NEWARK • CHICAGO • LOS ANGELES

More service to more cities in India.

AHMEDABAD • AMRITSAR • BANGALORE • CALICUT
CHENNAI • DELHI • GOA • HYDERABAD • KOCHI • KOLKATA
LUCKNOW • MUMBAI • TRIVANDRUM

For schedules and reservations,
see your travel agent or call **1-800-223-7776**.

www.airindia.com



एअर इंडिया
AIR-INDIA



ZAGNY
106 Pomona Road
Suffern, NY 10901

Phone
845.362.2104

E-Mail
secretary@zagny.org

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST 2006

| | |
|---------|---|
| 8/6 | ZAGNY ANNUAL PICNIC |
| 8/15-19 | MUKTAD PRAYERS—DETAILS TO FOLLOW |
| 8/26 | ZAGNY PATETI FUNCTION—DETAILS TO FOLLOW |
| 8/31 | ZAGNY SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE |

SEPTEMBER 2006

| | |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| 9/10 | ZAGNY RELIGIOUS CLASSES (1 pm START) |
|------|--------------------------------------|



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRADUATES!!

ZAGNY
106 Pomona Rd.
Suffern, NY 10901

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.zagny.org
