



ZANC MONTHLY BUZZ



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We invite you to share your life updates for inclusion in future newsletters.

[Email us](#) your news so we can celebrate these milestones together with the community.

All content must be received by the 20th of the month to be included in next month's edition. Thank you! We look forward to hearing from you.

Editor's Note

Dear ZANC Community,

August was a busy month for our ZANC Board, who organized four fantastic events: the Mukta prayers, the Navroz party, the AI class, and the Car Rally. Each of these required significant planning and preparation, which is especially impressive given that the organizers also balance full-time jobs and family responsibilities. A heartfelt THANK YOU to each one of our Board Members (and their families) for their time, effort, and dedication in making these events such a success. And the good times are not over yet! As we roll towards the end of the year, we've got more exciting member events on the way - including a cooking demo, the always popular Halloween contest, and a bingo bash - so keep an eye out and be ready to sign up! In other great news, the New Community Center fundraising initiative is on fire, with a whopping \$115,000 raised in the last two months - all made possible by the incredible generosity of our community.

As we head into Fall, the newsletter committee would love to hear from you! Share your favorite book with us, and we'll feature it in next month's issue. (See pg. 15 for details). Finally, if you missed the Navroz Naatak, you can see it [HERE](#). 🍁 Happy Reading 🍁



ATTENTION Z YOUTH (18-35)

One Last Splash Before Summer Ends

Grab your sunnies and your s'mores because it's time for Beach & Bonfire Day! 🌴☀️

📍 **Where: Ocean Beach in San Francisco**

July 17 **When: Sunday, September 21st @ 12 PM**

🌊 Expect sandy toes, salty breezes, and a cozy fire to cap off the fun. Come for the waves, stay for the flames and bring whatever beach-friendly goodies you love (think towels, snacks, games, chairs, and sunscreen).

RSVP via the Partiful Link [HERE](#)

Questions? Contact Zara at 925-984-0243

FUTURE EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

DATE / TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
Sat, Sept 27th, 5:30 pm	Ghambar	Campbell Community Ctr.
Sun, Sept 21st, 12 pm	Youth Beach & Bonfire	Ocean Beach, San Francisco
Sun, Oct 5th, 2 - 5 pm	Dar-ni-Pori Cooking Class	Dar-e-Mehr
Sat, Oct 25th	Halloween Costume Party	Dar-e-Mehr
Sat, Nov 8th	Bingo and Potluck	Dar-e-Mehr



GET INVOLVED! ZANC events rely heavily on volunteer support to run smoothly, and every helping hand makes a difference. Whether it's setting up, helping during an event, or cleaning up after, your time and efforts are always appreciated. Volunteering is a great way to stay connected, give back, and help create meaningful experiences for the whole community.

To volunteer, please contact Events Coordinator at events@zanc.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



JAMVA CHALOJI REGISTER FOR THE GHAMBAR

**SEPT 27th, AT THE CAMPBELL
COMMUNITY CENTER**

Jashan at 5:30 PM followed by dinner

[CLICK HERE](#) TO REGISTER

**THIS IS A MEMBER ONLY EVENT BUT
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED**

Registration closes on Mon, Sept 22nd

Questions? email events@zanc.org

**Always Wanted to make
Dar-ni-Pori but didn't know where
to start? Here's your chance!**

Join the talented Mrs. Gool Jokhi as she generously shares her culinary expertise teaching us how to prepare this much-loved Parsi delicacy.

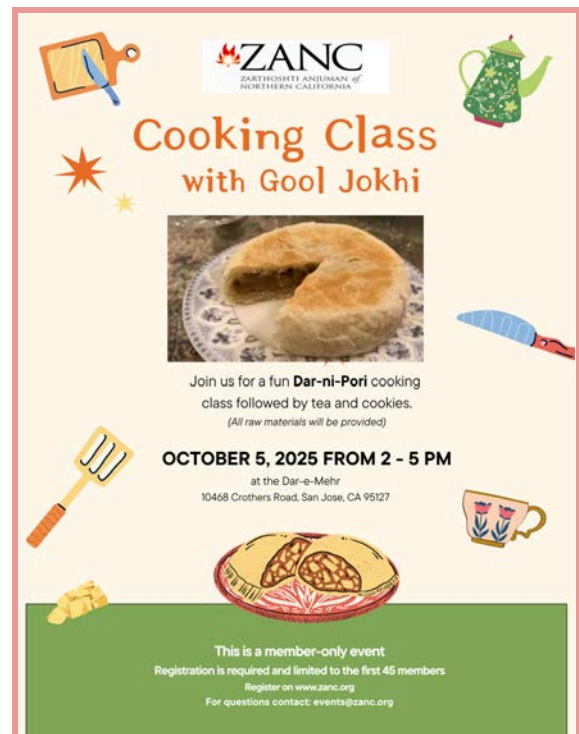
Date: Sunday, Oct 5th

Time: 2 - 5 PM

Place: Dar-e-Mehr

Registration: click [HERE](#) to register

**HURRY - only the first 45 members to sign
up will get a taste of the action!!**

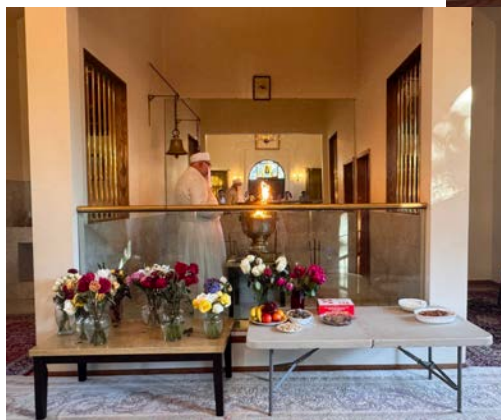


RECENT EVENTS



MEANINGFUL MOMENTS OF MUKTAD

Bay Area Zoroastrians came together at the Dar-e-Mehr last month for five days of Muktdad, a sacred time of remembrance and reflection for the souls of our loved ones. Prayers were led by Dasturji Kobad, with heartfelt contributions from Farhan Panthaki and Viraf Motafram. The Muktdad prayers took place from Aug 10th to Aug 14th followed by a Navroz Jashan and potluck on Aug 15th.



NAVROZ DINNER AND DANCE PARTY



This year's Navroz Party, which took place at the Shubham Halls in Sunnyvale on August 16th, was an absolute blast, with delicious food, lively dancing, a hilarious Parsi Naatak and a cute skit by the z-class students. **Many thanks to the Vadivala family for bringing us the Naatak and to Azita Patel for directing the kids' skit.** Families and friends, decked out in their finest, gathered around the lively photo booth capturing memories filled with laughter. It was a night that truly brought the community together to celebrate Navroz in the most rocking way! 📸 Click [HERE](#) to watch the Naatak 📺



Many more fun
pictures on the ZANC
Facebook page





Amazing Appetizers



Yummy Dessert



👉 The star of our naatak
Firuza Vadivala 🥰



👉 Our talented, young skit performers

NCZC (Northern CA Zoroastrian Center) UPDATE



We have joyful news to share this month: our fundraising has passed \$1.5 million for the New Community Center, including **\$115,000 raised in just the last two months.**



The NCZC Committee would like to thank everyone who has contributed so far. 🙏🙏
With your continued support, we will be on our way to our \$5 million goal soon!!

Now let's answer some of your FAQ's from our recent survey:

1) Why can't we use the funds to refurbish the existing center?

The funds were collected specifically for the New Community Center and cannot be repurposed. After years of study and consultation with land use attorneys, civil engineers, and county planners, it has been determined that the Dar-e-Mehr cannot be expanded, its current use cannot legally continue, and refurbishment is not a viable option. Both ZANC and PZO Boards are now aligned on a new center as the best path forward.

2) If we aren't refurbishing the current center, what will happen to it?

It will remain in the Guiv Trust and continue to be part of our community's assets.

3) I'm not comfortable giving until we have a property identified. What should I do?

You can make a pledge instead of donating right away. Pledges help us gauge community commitment, refine our search, and plan our working budget.

🔔 Hurry! Pledge or Donate to secure the \$50K matching funds by Sept 30th 🔔

READY TO SUPPORT? Check out the many ways you can give:

PERSONAL DONATIONS: Donate Online, Send in a Check, Direct Bank Transfer

COMPANY PROGRAMS: Corporate Matching, Stock Donations, RMDs

Have questions about bank or stock transfers, pledge forms, or anything else?

Simply email us at nczc@googlegroups.com

Specific donation details can be found on the [ZANC website](#).

So What Comes Next?

Hosted micro-fundraisers: We're organizing a series of intimate, community hosted events where ticket proceeds will benefit the New Center Fund. Reach out to Erin Press at erin.g.press@gmail.com to be a part of this exciting effort for our community!!

COMMUNITY NEWS

From Curious to Confident: AI Basics with Shiraz Kanga

On Sunday, Aug 24th, forty-five eager learners joined an engaging zoom class led by ZANC member, **Shiraz Kanga**, on how to understand and use AI in our daily lives. With interactive slides and simple, relatable examples, he guided this beginner-friendly session, to help participants explore how to use AI effectively - highlighting its advantages, limitations, and most importantly 'the art of good prompting'.

Shiraz has worked as a computer engineer in the Bay Area for over 30 years. In 2023, he developed a keen interest in Artificial Intelligence and has since immersed himself in this transformative field. Since July 2024, he has been teaching AI to beginners, making complex concepts approachable and engaging. Beyond the classroom, Shiraz leads a vibrant WhatsApp group where he hosts informative sessions for computer professionals and builds connections among those eager to explore this fast-paced field.



The ZANC community would like to THANK Shiraz for all the time and effort he put into this educational session to help us all understand a complicated topic.

Questions? [Email Shiraz](#)

Missed the Class? [Watch the recording](#)

Editor's Note: As someone who doesn't work in tech, I found this class both informative and engaging. I'm already putting the skills I learnt to good use. The title of this blurb was, in fact, created by ChatGPT using my 'effective prompt'. 🤖



IN MEMORIAM

Khorshed Nanu Daruvala passed away peacefully on July 24th, 2025, at 4:00 AM IST, at the age of 88. A Chartered Accountant by profession and a true finance whiz, she was among the early women CA's in India and a proud recipient of the prestigious Sivabhogam Gold Medal.

She was the beloved wife of Nanu Daruvala, loving mother to Pareezad Birje and Rukshad Daruvala, mother-in-law of Karishma Sorabjee and Anand Birje, and cherished grandmother of Shania and Yohaana Birje.

She loved her Bay Area visits where she enjoyed attending ZANC events and the community gatherings.

We pray for her soul to rest in eternal peace 🙏

Z-CLASS UPDATES

Dates, Fees and Registration for the 2025-26 School Year



The 2025-26 [Z-Class](#) will mark the fourth consecutive year that both ZANC and PZO have come together to support grounding children in the wonderful philosophies of our religion. Through this collaboration, they help our youth connect with fellow Zarathusti's, fostering bonds of camaraderie and friendship lasting a lifetime.

CLASS DETAILS:

Days/Time: Classes meet at the Dar-e-Mehr every 2nd & 4th Sunday from 10-11:30 am

Class Policies: Click [HERE](#) for detailed information on class policies & volunteering

Contact: If you have questions or need more information email zclasspzo@gmail.com

REGISTRATION:

[CLICK HERE](#) to register online or bring payment on the first day of class (*registrations will not be accepted after the first day of classes*)

YEARLY SCHEDULE AND FEES:

1st Semester: Sept to Dec 2025	2nd Semester: Jan to May 2026
September 14 (Picture Day) September 28 October 12 October 26 November 9 December 14 (Yalda)	January 11 January 25 February 8 February 22 March 8 March 22 (Norouz - all can attend) April 12 April 26 May 3 (graduation - all can attend)
Class Pricing: 1 Child: \$110 2 Children: \$176 3 Children: \$264	Class Pricing: 1 Child: \$140 2 Children: \$224 3 Children: \$336

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



Z-CAMP A BIG SUCCESS!

The annual [Z-Camp](#), which was held in San Jose from July 24th to 27th, brought together 91 enthusiastic campers aged 13 to 17 for a fun-filled gathering centered on service, engagement, and building community. Through thought provoking discussions, games, and group activities, campers built camaraderie, had tons of fun and formed new friendships within the Zoroastrian community (all without their

cellphones 🙄). **A HUGE THANKS** to the camp organizers, daily volunteers who prepped and cooked for over a 100 people, and the wonderful counselors who took time away from work and family to mentor the spirited campers for four days.



Visit [ZANC FB](#) for more fun pictures and videos.



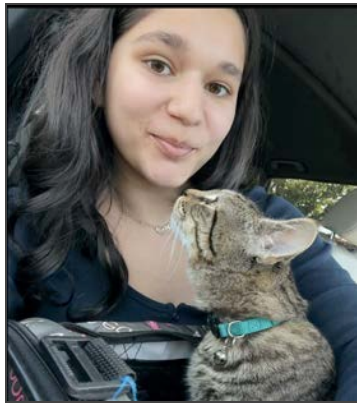


IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Zia Mehta



This month, we're excited to spotlight ZANC's own rising star - a recent high school graduate and passionate animal lover, Zia Mehta. From caring for pets to dreaming big about her future, Zia's journey is just getting started, so let's hear what she's got to say!



Hi, **my name is Zia Jokhi Mehta** and I am from San Jose, CA. I graduated from Evergreen Valley High School this year and will be **attending Washington State University** this fall to major in Animal Science on the Pre-Vet track. My dream is to eventually become a Veterinarian with a specialization in surgery, and hopefully open up my own emergency hospital.

Animals are my passion, and being a Veterinarian was the only career path I have ever considered. I love to volunteer at local farms/animal shelters and spend time doing veterinary relief work in underprivileged areas. I have traveled internationally to assist veterinarians in life-saving surgeries for animals whose families couldn't afford care, an experience that not only touched my heart, but also strengthened my dream of specializing in surgery. One day, I hope to open my own veterinary hospital that will provide low-cost emergency care for animals in my community, while also offering high school students the opportunity to gain hands-on clinical experience from a young age.



In my free time, I love to hang out with animals, crochet, watch TV, and go shopping 😊. But my most favorite thing to do in this world is to spend time with my bestest friend - **my sweetest dog Loki**.

My family, while saddened by the distance that will be created by my going away to college, has been unwavering in their encouragement and support for my career. I have one **sister, Shireen**, and two loving, supportive parents, **Sanobar and Hector Mehta**. All the opportunities and experiences I've had would not have been possible without them, and I hope to make them proud every step of the way!



IN OTHER NEWS



Introducing: *What is Zoroastrianism?*

A new video resource from the FEZANA Religion Education Committee

We are excited to share *What is Zoroastrianism?* A short, engaging introduction to the foundational concepts of Zoroastrianism, designed for anyone curious to learn about the faith. It is suitable for individuals new to Zoroastrianism, interfaith gatherings, educational settings, or visitors to Zoroastrian centers. **Directed by award-winning filmmaker Tanya Hoshi**, this project reflects a commitment to share our ancient tradition in a meaningful way.

 **Watch the video [here](#)** (Or by visiting the "[Videos](#)" section on our website)

Help us create more inspiring and accessible educational videos about Zoroastrianism by donating to the FEZANA Religion Education Committee. Every contribution helps us reach more communities, and expand understanding and engagement around the world. **Thank you for helping us expand and connect — one story at a time.**

CLICK [HERE](#) to donate (Please select "Religion Education" when donating.)

FEZANA Calls for Participants for the 70th Annual CSW Conference (Application Deadline: September 19th)

A group photo of the FEZANA UN-NGO Committee members, a diverse group of men and women of various ages, standing together in front of a white wall.

FEZANA UN-NGO Committee is looking for Participants!

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Sept 19, 2025

WHAT: Attend the 70th Commission on the Status of Women Conference
WHERE: UN Headquarters in NYC
WHEN: March 9 - 20, 2026

A simple icon of a lightbulb with a yellow glow, symbolizing an idea or focus.


This year's main focus will be on, "Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers".

Individuals interested in attending the conference, are requested to:



A circular button with a white border and a hand cursor icon, with the text "APPLY ONLINE" inside.

- 1) Fill out a form: shorturl.at/5YLgt
- 2) Send in a two-minute video of yourself on how you see yourself fitting into the UN.
- 3) Send your video, resume, and letter of intent for attending the CSW70 by **Sept 19, 2025**, to both Committee Co-Chairs:
 - Dr. Behram Pastakia (Behram@fezana.org)
 - Miss Afreed Mistry (Afreed@fezana.org)

ARTS AND EDUCATION

**NAMC**
Institute of
Zoroastrian Studies

For application form use QR
code or link:
<https://www.namcinstitute.org/namc-isa-course-registration-page/>

**ONLINE COURSE**
Introduction to Zoroastrianism
Saturdays at 11am Eastern
September 6, 2025 to October 4, 2025

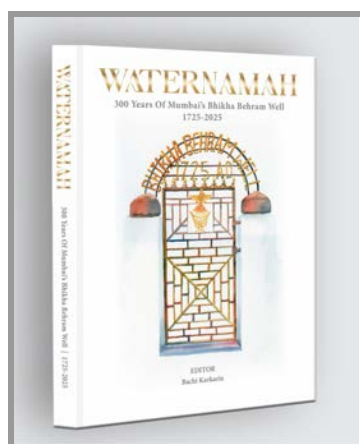
NAMC INSTITUTE OF ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES

Introduction to Zoroastrianism - This is an online, introductory course designed to provide an understanding of the doctrines, rituals, and practices of Zoroastrianism and its influence on other succeeding faiths.

Sept 6th to Oct 4th at 8 am (PST)

Questions? [EMAIL](#) the registrar

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



Waternamah: Stories of Faith and the Bhikha Behram Well

A landmark book celebrating sacred water and community resilience.

For over three centuries, the Bhikha Behram Well has quietly witnessed the unfolding story of Mumbai. Built in 1725 by Bhikha Behram, a devout Zoroastrian whose vision and generosity made clean water accessible to all, this sacred site has slaked the city's thirst—physically, spiritually, and culturally. *Waternamah* is an extraordinary collection of essays, reflections, and photographs that honor this enduring symbol of faith and resilience. Edited with care and insight by eminent journalist **Bachi Karkaria**, this beautifully produced volume is both a tribute to the Bhikha Behram Well and a reminder of the profound connections between water, community, and faith.

100% of the proceeds will go directly to the Bhikha Behram Well Trust to support the continued conservation and upkeep of this unique heritage site.

ORDER YOUR COPY AT: [The Zoroastrian Shop](#)

CONNECT AND CONTACT

Join ZANC WhatsApp Groups, Facebook and Instagram



- WhatsApp: [CLICK HERE](#) to join WhatsApp
- Facebook: [CLICK HERE](#) to join Facebook
- Instagram: [CLICK HERE](#) to follow Instagram



Stay engaged with other Zs, post pictures, and strengthen our community connections.

NOTE: You will still continue to get the ZANC monthly newsletter and event notices via email.

Maintain Active Membership: Active memberships are vital to ensuring the continued growth and success of our community here in Northern CA. Your membership dues go toward maintaining our Dar-e-Mehr, sustaining ZANC's operations, and funding valuable programs that benefit all members. [CLICK HERE](#) to join or renew your membership.



All feedback & suggestions are welcome & encouraged:

General questions: email the [ZANC BOARD](#)

Membership: email the [ZANC SECRETARY](#)

Volunteering: email the [EVENTS COORDINATOR](#)



THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Stay connected with the ZANC Newsletter — your source for community news, announcements, and upcoming events. Please [EMAIL](#) us your personal milestones so we can celebrate and acknowledge them with the community.

All content must be received by the 20th of the month.

Editor: Dianne Patel (newsletter@zanc.org)

Collaborators: Delzin Choksey and Kathleen Chothia

And Finally...



CELEBRATE NATIONAL BOOK MONTH WITH US

October is National Book Month - let's share the joy of reading with our community by highlighting your favorite reads in our upcoming newsletter!

Whether you're into mystery, classics, thrillers, biographies, or any other genres, tell us about a book you love. To be included in our October edition, please [EMAIL](#) the ZANC Newsletter Team with:

- The Title of your favorite Book
- Author
- Your Full Name

All content must be received by
the 20th of the month

What is a Ghambar and why do we celebrate it?



Ghambar (or Gahambars as they are originally known) are seasonal festivals when Zoroastrians come together for communal gatherings, feasting, resolving conflicts and giving thanks for God's six creations. According to Zoroastrian lore, it was during these six periods that the elements of nature (sky, water, earth, plants, animals and humans) were created by Ahura Mazda.

Traditionally, each Gahambar is a five day celebration that is held at six different times of the year based on agricultural and seasonal cycles:

Mid-spring (Apr 30 - May 4)	Herding time (Oct 12 - Oct 16)	Mid-summer (Jun 29 - Jul 3)
Mid-winter (Dec 31 - Jan 4)	Harvest Time (Sept 12 - Sept 16)	Mid-path (Mar 16 - Mar 20)

The word *Gahambar* is derived from 'Gahan Bar,' meaning the time of fruition and harvest. These are joyous occasions where both the wealthy and the less fortunate come together in celebration. During this time, community members volunteer to prepare and serve the meals, without regard to status, as everyone sits together and shares the same food.

Gahambars are a living demonstration of beliefs, principles and values cherishing the seven acts of goodness that one should strive for: Charity, Generosity, Honesty, Piety, Community Participation, Speaking Well of Others and Remembering our ancestors.

At its heart, Gahambar is more than just a festival - it is a celebration of community, tradition, and the enduring values of charity, unity, and gratitude that guide Zoroastrians. By coming together to share meals, honor nature, and strengthen bonds, the community keeps these timeless traditions alive, passing their lessons of generosity and harmony to future generations.

Sources: [CZC](#), [Parsi Times](#), [Parsi Cuisine](#)