



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,

Welcome to the first issue of 2026! This past year was a busy one for our ZANC Board, who organized many fantastic events, each requiring significant planning and preparation. A heartfelt THANK YOU to every one of our Board Members (and their families) for their time, effort, and dedication in making these events such a success.

As we head into January, please remember to renew your ZANC membership and pay your annual dues. This year, the process has been streamlined to make it easier to submit payments and update pertinent details. **All members, including life members, are requested to review and complete their personal information, even if no details have changed in the past years.** This information will help us maintain accurate records of all families, track youth participation, and, most importantly, assist in creating a much needed ZANC directory. Our existing data on families is in need of significant updating, so we kindly ask everyone to do their part in this endeavor.

Cheers to another exciting year of events and lively gatherings! 🥂 Happy Reading 🥂



GREETINGS FROM THE ZANC BOARD

Dear Members,

As we celebrate the holiday season and the close of 2025, we'd like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to each one of you - our ZANC Community!

This past year has been one of meaningful growth and connection. Thanks to your unwavering support and participation, **our membership grew by 10%**, reaching 216 member households and nearly 400 individual ZANC members. **We organized 13 events**, from cooking contests to many celebrations for our kids and adults. We were also proud to **welcome our first youth-focused Board Member, Zara Minwalla**, who has helped unite Bay Area youth through fun and engaging gatherings.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our donors, and all of you - our ZANC family - who show up, help out, participate, and make every gathering so much fun! A special thanks also to our **NCZC committee** who work tirelessly behind the scenes and our **Newsletter team** who bring you an informative and vibrant newsletter each month (no small feat!).

As 2026 approaches, we're excited to pursue the following goals:

- Build a strong and vibrant youth community
- Encourage broader participation from all ZANC members at our events
- Host some events specifically focused on our senior members
- Publish a member directory
- Strengthen our relationship with the PZO

**We wish you all a Happy New Year! May 2026
be filled with much joy and good health.**

With warm regards,

The ZANC Board

(Fredy, Jamshid, Zara, Bomi, Dilber, Burzin and
Zareer - not pictured)



RENEW YOUR ZANC MEMBERSHIP BY FEBRUARY 28th

**BECOME
A MEMBER**

Active memberships are vital to ensuring the continued growth and success of our community here in Northern California. Your membership dues help maintain our Dar-e-Mehr, sustain ZANC's operations, and fund valuable programs that benefit all members. Your continued commitment contributes to the preservation of our Zoroastrian heritage, fosters a sense of belonging, and strengthens our community.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO FILL OUT THE MEMBERSHIP FORM AND PAY DUES



The Board requests all members to update their personal details even if there are no changes. Accurate information will help us maintain proper records and support the creation of a much requested member directory in the future.

NEW THIS YEAR:

- **Easy-to-Use Member Update Form:** Allows members to update their information in minutes using autofill, ensuring records stay current each year.
- **Free Youth Membership (ages 18-25):** Open to all youth ages 18–25 to help them connect with our Youth Coordinator and grow the ZANC youth community. Please ensure that all eligible youth complete their registration details.
- **Redefined “Family Membership”:** Now clearly defined as all members of a household living under one roof (parents, their children under 18, and grandparents). Kids over 18 will complete the Youth Membership, with no fees.
- **Convenient Payment Methods:** Easy payments via Paypal, Credit Card, Check.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP:

- **Access to ‘Member Only’ Events:** enjoy exclusive access to all social events, programs, and celebrations.
- **Priority Access to Community Events:** receive early registration access for events, programs, and activities before they are opened up to non-members.
- **Voting Rights:** participate in elections for board members, vote on bylaw amendments, and approve annual budgets or community special projects.
- **Leadership Roles:** be eligible to serve in key leadership roles, including positions on the ZANC Board or as a trustee.
- **ZANC Facebook group:** stay connected with updates, announcements, and photos from recent gatherings.

FUTURE EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

DATE / TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
Sun, Jan 18th, 11 am - 12 pm	Speaker (Caring for Caregivers)	Zoom
Sun, Feb 1st, 5:30 - 7:30 pm	Ice-Skating Social @ Winter Lodge	Palo Alto
Sat, Mar 7th, 11 am - 2:30 pm	AGM & Special General Body Meeting	Dar-e-Mehr
March 21st, 11 am - 2:30 pm	Navroz Jashan and Potluck	Dar-e-Mehr
Sat, Mar 28th, Time TBD	Navroz Function (with PZO)	ICC, Milpitas

VOLUNTEER



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, to the whole community.

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

REGISTER FOR THE 2026 WZC IN SINGAPORE

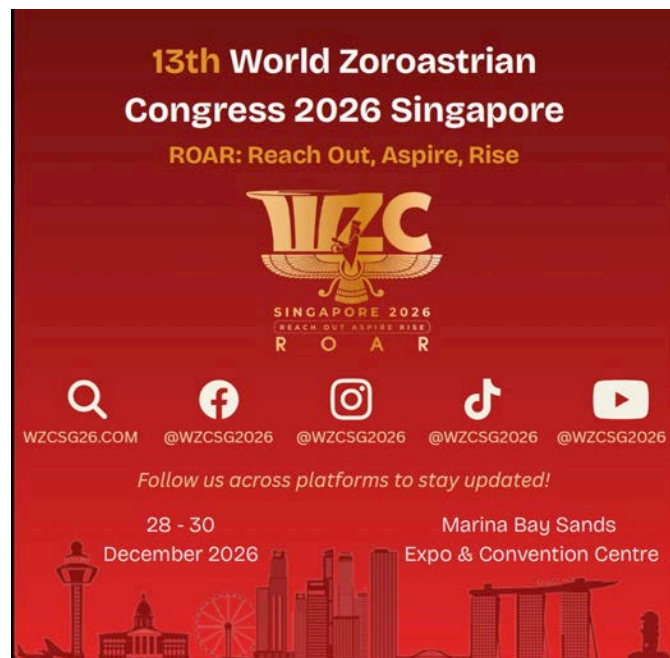
It's almost time!! The Singapore WZC team is looking forward to welcoming our Global Zoroastrian Community to the 13th World Zoroastrian Congress from December 28th - 30th, 2026.

**Registration will open on
Wednesday, January 21st**

Click [HERE](#) to register.

Stay updated with the latest news
here 🖱️

[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Tiktok](#) |
[YouTube](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS



Zoom Speaker Series Sunday, Jan 18th at 11am

We are pleased to invite you to a special Zoom talk given by **Dr. Mukund Acharya**, a social entrepreneur, and healthy-aging advocate. Dr. Acharya is the Founder and Executive Director of [Sandhya's Touch](#), a nonprofit that provides grants to improve the quality of life of patients and families facing serious or chronic illness and [Sukham](#), a non-profit organization focused on healthy aging and preparing for life's transitions in the South Asian community.

This one hour interactive talk will explore important and relevant topics such as:

- The challenges caregivers commonly face
- Why caregiver well-being is essential
- Practical strategies for self-care, resilience, and support

[CLICK HERE](#) FOR THE ZOOM LINK



WINTER FUN - LET'S GO ICE-SKATING!

**SUNDAY, FEB 1st, 5:30 to 7:30 PM
THE WINTER LODGE, PALO ALTO**

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

THIS IS A MEMBER ONLY EVENT

Ticket Prices are \$34 for Skaters and
\$8 for Non-Skaters

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: January 27th

Questions? email events@zanc.org

RECENT EVENTS



ANYTHING - PAR - EEDU CONTEST

ZANC's final event of 2025, held on December 7th, brought together eleven enthusiastic participants, each presenting a creative masterpiece. Our four judges evaluated every dish with scores from 1 to 5 across four distinct categories carefully considering originality & presentation, taste, balance of spices and overall dish to title rating. This was a blind contest with each dish assigned a number to ensure fairness and keep it totally unbiased. With so much talent in the room there were some seriously impressive egg-cellent creations enjoyed by all!



The contestants (top) & winners (bottom)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS

- 1st Place: Rusi Sorabji - *Khat-toe Mith-toe Kheema Par In-doo* in Bread Bowl (yes it's 'toe')
2nd Place: Parizad Bharucha - *Chicken Kheema Par Eedu Casserole* ('khandani' recipe)
3rd Place: Shiroy Choksey - *Murghi Focaccia Par Eedas* Fried Dish (many 'eedas')



👉 Thank you to our wonderful judges, Godrej Keravala, Bomi Patel, Kobad Jamshed, and Nina Bhaisa who had the tough task of tasting and evaluating so many dishes and making it fun for all!

More Pics on the ZANC FB page



A LOOK BACK AT ZANC IN 2025

In 2025, ZANC experienced a renaissance with a refreshed Board and committees. This “energetic” Board elevated ZANC to new heights in events, engagement, and technology, leaving the community excited for even greater accomplishments in 2026. A major milestone this year was the introduction of clear role specifications for all Board members, strengthening leadership and accountability across the organization.

VP Fredy Kadva and Secretary Burzin Patel, led a “Tech Revamp”: Our two engineers on the Board, led a much-needed modernization of ZANC’s technology. They worked hard to streamline email communications, introduced TicketTailor for quick and easy event registrations, and deployed Jotform for membership payments and data collection. Thanks to these improvements, **memberships increased by 10% in 2025**, as joining and renewing became faster and more convenient than ever. Members can now also register for events within seconds, and tickets are scanned at the door, resulting in a much smoother experience. Fredy’s creation of several WhatsApp sub-groups has also enhanced community connections, idea-sharing, and friendships.

Events Coordinator, Dilber Mistry, successfully delivered several outstanding events. She manages event logistics, car-pooling and oversees volunteers with great efficiency. With her creativity and dedication, ZANC hosted a lineup of fun and engaging activities, from baking contests and bowling to bingo nights and more.

Youth Coordinator, Zara Minwalla, planned exciting activities to engage ZANC youth. Her events, which included hikes, beach bonfires, fruit picking, and city walks, brought young members together throughout the year. Each event was thoughtfully designed to strengthen youth connections and build a vibrant sense of community.

President Bomi Patel brought years of experience to this role. He has a strong commitment to community building and represents ZANC at external events ensuring our organization is well represented across the broader Zarthoshti network.

Treasurer Zareer Bhathena worked hard to keep ZANC’s finances transparent and well-organized. This allowed the Board to plan confidently for future programs. Beyond managing budgets, he never hesitates to jump in wherever needed at events, assisting the team in every way possible (and yes, his bartending skills are always a hit!) 😊

Member-At-Large Jamshid Kekobad was an invaluable source of support. He is always ready to lend a helping hand at every event and his willingness to step in wherever needed make him a trusted go-to resource at all our gatherings, ensuring every event stays on track.

Newsletter Revival: 2025 also saw the revival of ZANC's newsletter, now published monthly, keeping the community informed and connected like never before - all thanks to my powerhouse **all-women team** of **Kathleen, Delzin, Sanobar, and Erin**. Their dedication ensures that each newsletter is not just informative and timely, but also a reflection of the spirit, enthusiasm, and camaraderie of our community.

Social Media: ZANC's **Facebook page** and **Instagram** have also seen significant engagement this past year. Youth member **Suhana Patel** helps me manage the ZANC Instagram account from the East Coast while attending college. Her efforts keep ZANC's online presence strong and engaging and the content fresh and dynamic.

COMMUNITY NEWS

December Youth Event: Holiday Hang-Out in San Francisco



The fun conversations lasted way into the night. Everyone came decked out in their cool holiday gear and enjoyed a festive night filled with laughs and city magic! 🎄🧑‍🎄🎁

On Saturday, Dec 13th, several youth (ages 18-35) embarked on a full-on city holiday adventure. The evening started with the Union Square tree sighting and ended with a tasty dinner at Pakwan Restaurant.



IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep sorrow and a heavy heart that we announce the passing away of Yezdi Faram Unvala at the age of 71, on December 15th, 2025.

Yezdi was the loving husband of Feroza, father of Lyla and Cyrus Unvala, and father-in-law of Chase Kauf. He was deeply loved and will be missed by all.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH



PARSI CURRY with Adil Engineer

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup Peanuts
- ½ cup Chana
- 2 Onions
- 8 Whole Dried Red Kashmiri Chillies
- 1 ½ tbsp Dhana Jeroo
- 2 ½ tbsp Curry Powder
- 2 ½ tsp Turmeric
- 1 Branch Curry Leaves
- 4 Medium Roma Tomatoes, stem top removed
- ½ Small Fresh Coconut, shelled and cut*
- ½ tsp Sugar
- 2 tbsp Oil, plus extra
- Optional: protein of choice (shrimp, chicken, etc)
- * OR 5 oz Shredded Coconut

ABOUT THE CHEF

Adil's recipe carries 3 generations of history, evolving recipes from his mom and grandma with tips from his mother-in-law. It's his most requested recipe among family and friends, but brings him the most joy to make because **his daughter, Jasmine, loves it!** The dish brings back memories of his grandma's farmhouse, where a helper would grind the mixture in a traditional **khal-pathro**, creating unforgettable aromas. Cooking this curry over the years has taught him to be resourceful and enjoy the process. It does require patience but if it could speak, Adil says it would say, **"Keep Roasting!"**

SHARE YOUR RECIPE!

Get featured in the "Stirring Up Stories" community recipe collection project.
Email sanobar3104@gmail.com for info!



DIRECTIONS

 10 Servings

1. Roast peanuts and chana together, in a single layer on a baking sheet, at 200 F in the oven for 10 minutes.
2. Cut onions into large pieces and puree in a blender. Remove seeds from chillies, add to onion mixture and continue to puree. Add dhana jeroo, curry powder, turmeric and blend till smooth. Add 1 of the tomatoes and blend.
3. Heat oil on medium heat in large wide pan, add curry leaves and cook for 1 min. Add blender mixture to pan, stir well, and roast masala on low heat, stirring frequently.
4. Puree tomatoes in blender. **Chef's Tip:** if using tart tomatoes, use less to maintain flavor balance.
5. If using fresh coconut, add to tomato mixture in blender and puree till smooth. If using shredded coconut, skip this step and add directly to the pan. Add blender mixture to pan, stir well and continue cooking on low heat.
6. Powder peanuts and chana using spice grinder, add to pan, continue to cook and stir frequently, adding more oil if needed. Cook until mixture changes color, sides are smooth, smells toasted and oil separates. **Chef's Tip:** Cook anywhere from 1 hour up to 3 hours for enhanced flavor!
7. Slowly add hot water to the pan to desired consistency for curry (recommend keeping it creamier). Cook till boiling, then add sugar and protein of choice. Cook till done, and serve with rice and khachumber.
8. **Bonus Tip:** double recipe and freeze half (after mixture is cooked and before adding water).

Written by Sanobar Mehta

Z-CLASS UPDATES

A MEANINGFUL CELEBRATION OF YALDA

Yalda is one of the oldest Persian traditions which celebrates the longest night of the year, marking the winter solstice and symbolizing the triumph of light over darkness. On this night, families and friends gather to stay up late, light candles, share stories, read poetry, and enjoy a gorgeous spread of symbolic foods like pomegranates, watermelon, nuts, and sweets. The red fruits represent the glow of dawn and renewed life, and the gathering itself symbolizes warmth, love, and the promise of brighter days ahead. It's a heartfelt celebration of hope, patience, and the joy of being together.



Z Class celebrated Yalda on Dec 14th, with a full house of parents, students, teachers, and volunteers. Despite the foggy, cold morning, the warmth of happy faces filled the Dar-e-Mehr. After the **morning prayers**, all the youngsters enjoyed some delicious hot chocolate. Middle and high school students then **performed a Shahnameh play called Zal and the Simurgh**.



The celebration continued with a bountiful healthy snack table, and a gorgeously laid out **Yalda table**.

After the scrumptious meal, the students engaged in some creative crafts of making **pine leaf wreaths**, **clay necklaces with sun and moon symbols**, and **pomegranate themed crafts using felt and balloons**.



It was a joyful morning of creativity and togetherness, all while staying cozy and honoring the spirit of Yalda. Gatherings like these help keep our traditions alive and meaningful for generations to come.



NCZC (Northern CA Zoroastrian Center) UPDATE



Kicking Off 2026!

Pledges, Naming & What's Ahead

We're excited to kick off 2026 with strong momentum as we continue building toward our new Community Center. Thanks to your generosity, we are starting the year at \$1.5M raised, a meaningful milestone and a great foundation for what's ahead.

Ways to Support this Initiative in the New Year

Naming Opportunities

We offer naming rights for key spaces within the future center, from major rooms to smaller community features. Naming can be done by individuals or families, or in honor or memory of loved ones. Details and availability will be provided upon request.

Pledge Option

For those who aren't ready to give yet, or who prefer to commit once a property is identified, **we also offer the option to PLEDGE**. This allows supporters to make a meaningful commitment now, with flexibility on timing, and we hope it makes participation more accessible to everyone.

Small Group Info Sessions (Coming Soon)

This year, we'll begin hosting small, informal information sessions about the new Community Center. These will be hosted by NCZC committee members in homes or small group settings and are a great way to learn more, ask questions, and invite friends. We'll be sharing a calendar of available sessions in January. If anyone is interested in hosting one, please [email](#) us. We'd love to include you!

Looking Ahead

We'll be rolling out new brochures and information sheets in the coming weeks, along with additional opportunities to engage, host, and connect with the project throughout the year. Thank you for being part of this exciting moment. We're looking forward to a year of growth, connection, and progress together.

 **Pledge or Donate Today for our New Community Center** 

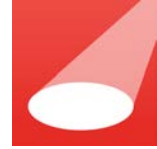
Donate Online, Via a Check, Bank Transfer, Corporate Matching, Stock Donations
Have questions? Email us at nczc@googlegroups.com

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



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Shiraz Zack Kanga



Our first spotlight for the new year shines on Shiraz Zack Kanga, who is a lifelong member of ZANC, proud mom of three boys, nature lover, active supporter of charitable causes and a seasoned Bay Area real estate agent with over 20 years of experience.



Shiraz and her husband, Shiraz Kanga, began their life together in Foster City in 1993. Together, they've raised three wonderful sons, Rustam, Zubin, and Cyrus, all of whom grew up in the Bay Area and remain closely connected to family and the local community.

Originally from the scenic towns of Gholvad and Dahanu in India, where her family owned chickoo, mango, and coconut orchards, Shiraz is first and foremost a nature enthusiast. She's passionate about her beautiful garden (who some would call a "jungle"), her beloved chickens, and her love of plants and animals. Ask her about any plant, and she'll not only name it, but



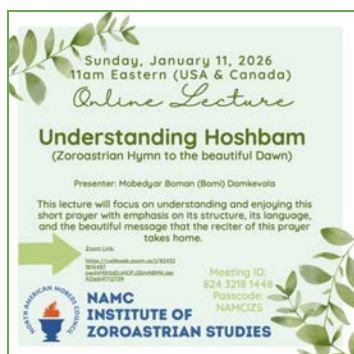
also share fascinating facts, like her surprising take on why figs aren't considered a vegetarian fruit! 😊



Shiraz also believes in 'giving back to the community' and is deeply committed to service. She is the Founder and Board President of [Light of Life Charity](#), a nonprofit that provides services in Education, Healthcare and Employment to uplift women and children in over 800 villages in rural India. She currently chairs the World Community Service Committee at the Rotary Club of Foster City, where she has led projects such as installing 12 computer labs in rural Indian schools to expand access to digital learning. Shiraz also champions higher education through her role as the Chair of a Global Scholarship program which supports students pursuing a Master's or a Ph.D.

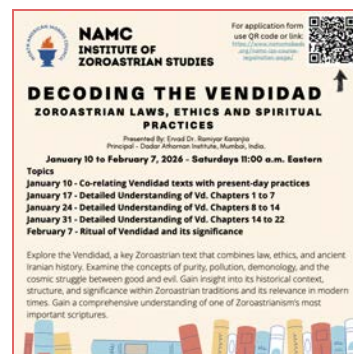
A graduate in Biochemistry from St. Xavier's College in Bombay, Shiraz found her calling in real estate after moving to the Bay Area. Since then, she has built a successful career helping buyers, sellers, and investors across the Peninsula and East Bay. As a proud ZANC supporter, Shiraz has pledged to donate \$1,000 to ZANC for every home bought or sold by a ZANC member through her.

ARTS AND EDUCATION



NAMC INSTITUTE OF ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES

Help us continue offering these virtual lectures/courses by making a small [donation](#) to NAMC-IZS.



January 11th
at 8 AM (PST)
[Zoom Link](#)

Thank you for your support!

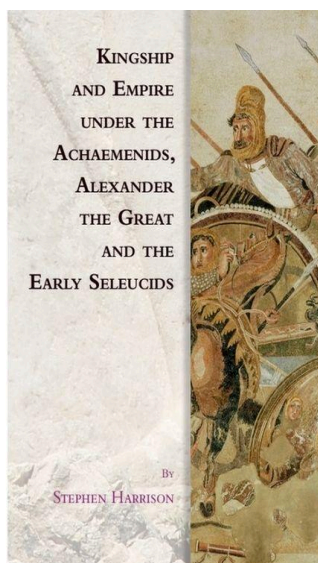
Jan 10th to Feb 7th
at 8 AM (PST)
Register [HERE](#)

NAMC welcomes everyone to experience the strength of collective prayer. Join this uplifting online community every Sunday as we come together in prayer, unity and reflection.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the link

Sundays at 11:30 AM (PST)

All are welcome - family, friends, and the worldwide Zoroastrian Community



Kingship and Empire under the Achaemenids, Alexander the Great and the Early Seleucids by: Stephen Harrison

Stephen Harrison's new study offers a fresh and engaging look at how three great empires—the Achaemenids, Alexander the Great's realm, and the early Seleucids—understood and presented their kingship. Rather than treating these periods separately, it shows how ideas of power, legitimacy, and imperial identity evolved across time and invites us to rethink how empires borrow from one another—and how they invent new ways of ruling. Available at [Target](#) and FEZANA FIRES.

(Source: Fezana Bulletin - Dec 2025)

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, Kathleen Chothia

Contributors: Recipes (Sanobar Mehta) and NCZC (Erin Press)

And Finally...

HOLIDAY



GATHERINGS

