



Month: Meher (S), Year:YZ 1379

# Zor & More

Issue # 1, February 2010

A PUBLICATION OF THE ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA

We really do believe that, if we work together as one, following the simple yet priceless tenets of our faith- Humata, Hukhta, Hvarshtha, we can move mountains.

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**!! Special Note !!**

**ZAF is an exempt non-profit organization under the IRS code 501(c) (3)**

**Our tax ID number is**

**EIN 65-0786849**

**Donations are Tax-deductible**

**We acknowledge with gratitude**  
**This issue of Zor & More is sponsored by**  
**Mrs. Sheroo Vazir, Franah & Gerry Marino and Sara**  
*In memory of*  
**Dear Dick Vazir**  
**A loving husband, father and grandfather**

## **A MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD**



**Dear ZAF community:** As we start the second year of the term in office, your Board is proud to review the past year and share with you its vision and goals for this year.

The year started with the new Board in place at the AGM at the Picnic in March. At that time, our pledge was to be an effective team at your service. Since then, thanks to your support and generous donations, ZAF was able to successfully hold the traditional gatherings of Navroze, *Muktaad* (for the first time in ZAF area), Pateti (combined with Orlando and Zatambay groups) and a gracious and well-attended Ghambaar. Our year-over-year membership and donations have grown by approximately 16% and 300% respectively, and ZAF has now obtained the tax-exemption approval. The total cash balance is also higher than before, in spite of many new initiatives have been taken that are consistent with the charitable, philanthropic and educational objectives of ZAF.

This year our overall objective is to continue to build on the foundation of your trust and support to enhance the unity, pride and future prospects of the community. Specifically,

1. Support the children's and youth initiatives and continue to recognize the graduates.
2. Create specific targeted funds with ground-rules for operating them to manage charitable contributions in the areas of daily operations, children & youth programs, critical assistance and good-citizens program. This work has already progressed well and will be presented to you at the AGM.
3. Initiate planned and focused fund drives to generate donations for the different funds identified in objective #2 above.
4. Change some of the high priority by-laws. These also have been identified, drafted and will be presented to you at the AGM.
5. Work with other organizations outside of ZAF so that we are recognized beyond the ZAF community.
6. Have ZAF web site operational by April, 2010. Thanks to the web committee, the prototype is ready.
7. Continue and enhance the communication with the local community and north American community (FEZANA) via the web site, newsletters, directory update and e-mails.
8. Further enhance the bond between the three organizations (ZAF, Zatambay & Orlando) by seeking opportunities for joint activities.
9. Continue to have the traditional gatherings, keep you apprised and seek input.

We hope the above meets with your expectations. Again, please accept our sincere thanks for your confidence and trust.

Your feedback is invited. *Sincerely, in your service,.....The ZAF Board*

## **NAVROZE CELEBRATION**

**The ZAF Board takes great pleasure in announcing the program and date for the Navroze celebration. We are looking forward to the beautiful program starting with a Navroze humbandagee, the arrangements, children's play about our cultural history, dancing and great food.**

**Date & Time:** Saturday March 20, 2010, 7:00 pm  
**Place:** Sunset Lakes Community Center, 2801 S.W. 186th Ave., Miramar, FL 33029  
**Phone # at the center:** 954-602-3340

### **Program:**

- **Registration & Social Hour: 7:00 pm – 7:45 pm (Cash bar & music)**
- **Humbandagee: Z-Club Children**
- **President's Welcome: 7:50 – 7:55**
- **Entertainment: 8:00 – 9:00**
  - **Z-Club Children:**
    - **Introduction: Aban Kavasmaneck**
    - **Mini Play "Commander Ardeshir & Paak Iranshah"**
  - **Explanation/ Significance of the traditional HAFT SEEN table (by Z Club children)**
  - **Salsa Dance Demonstration: Cyra Mobed & Oscar Duran.**
- **Buffet Dinner: 9:15 .-> (MENU: APPETIZERS Chicken, Chaat, Samosa & Chutney, Dinner: Tandoor Mixed Grill, Chicken Tikka, Malai Kebab, Shammi Kebab, Butter Chicken, Palak Paneer, Daal Makhni, Vegetable Pulao, Naaan, Raita,.)**
- **DJ - Dance**

- Dessert (Gulab Jamun & Falooda)
- Dancing Cont'd
- Adjourn 11:00 pm

**Discount for Members and advance registrants:** To get the discount for members and early registrations, the 2010 membership dues must be paid, unless you have already paid earlier.

**IMPORTANT:** Your checks must be made out to "Z.A.F. Inc" and postmarked no later than March 13 to obtain the discounted fee. If it is not, then the difference in rate will be collected at the gate

Please see the enclosed registration form for complete details and mail it with your payment

**AN APPEAL FOR HELP FOR THE NAVROZE GATHERING:** The ZAF Board appeals for your assistance with the Navroze gathering. To make it possible for one and all to attend in light of the shaky economic times and with the sole intent to keep the cost down, we would appreciate any help in the form of cash donation. The proceeds will go to the ZAF general operating fund to make up the deficits that will be incurred by keeping the entrance fees very low compared to the actual cost. The projected cost is about double the expected entrance fee receipts.

We are a tax-exempt organization (EIN # 65-0786849). Your donation is tax-deductible but the dinner entrance fee and membership dues are not deductible.

Please see the enclosed registration form for complete details and mail it with your payment

**Membership:** You are urged to continue to support your community Association. The membership fees are our lifeline to pay for the normal operating costs such as postage, government fees, stationery and hall rentals. The fees are: Family in one Household = \$ 50, Single living alone = \$ 25, Full time student living alone = \$ 10

Please see the enclosed registration and membership form for complete details and mail it with your payment



## **Z-CLUB CHILDREN'S CORNER,** by Aban Kavasmaneck



**Toy drive for needy children:** Our industrious children have been productive and busy with their Z-Club activities. Over the holidays, as we had informed everyone, the Z-Club participated in a toy drive for needy children. Zane Todywala, our Director for Fund raising and Special Projects was in charge of the drive, with all the children participating in this worthy cause. The Z-Club collected \$107 in donations, as well as 45 gift-wrapped toys which were delivered to the Salvation Army. (see photos below). We would like to thank all the parents and our ZAF community members for being so generous and encouraging towards this Z-Club Board activity.



**Zane and Stefan Todywala delivering \$107 and 45 gift-wrapped toys to the Salvation Army associate!**

**An historical Play:** The Z-Club children are also busy practicing the play they will be presenting at our Navroz function on March 20, 2010. The play is entitled, “**Commander Ardeshir and Paak Iranshah**”, and, as always, our children are prodigious and precious on stage and we look forward to the entertainment they will be providing us. Once again, I would like to thank all our parents, the ZAF members and the ZAF Board for their invaluable support.

**The dates for the next three Z-Club meetings:** Please see “**Calendar of Events** “ on the last page of this newsletter:

## **YOUTH ACTIVITIES**, by Nina Deboo & Dustyn Shroff

**Youth - Call for Conference in Houston:** As many of you may already know, the next North American Zoroastrian congress is being held in Houston, Texas. The congress is a leading conference for Zoroastrians all over North America. Houston is very excited to host the 15th North American Congress from December 29, 2010 through January 1, 2011.

The theme for this congress is: “Preserve! Protect! Perfect!” – Preserve the Past, Protect the Present, Perfect the Future.

This email is a request to all youth and young adults to express their thoughts so we can accomplish a panel of speakers for an inspirational, successful, energized, and thought provoking Congress. Our team has been put together to focus only on making happen the youth part of the congress, which will include 3 sessions.

The idea is to address issues, concerns & resolve with a positive approach, also developing lifelong friendships, and becoming visionary leaders of the future. Please do not limit your suggestions strictly to pure religious topics but also to topics that can reach out to youth, such as basic business topics, community service, traveling topics (those are only a few) – anything that you believe can be interlinked into how we preserve, protect and perfect our religion.

We are asking for your help. Please send your ideas and suggestions which will be put in a format for approval. We would like to make sure this congress is as remarkable as we imagine it to be. Also, please feel free to forward to who you feel appropriate (including your selves); and remember all ideas are welcome. Including yours! We would like to hear suggestions by end of February or sooner.

Justin Mody, Kashmira Beheramsha, and I have the privilege of being youth chairs, and we want to really focus on the values and principles of our culture and religion...but we want to also target matters that are affecting youth and our young adults and young families.

Looking forward to your suggestions and hope to see you at the end of the year!!!

Sincerely & with warm Regards, Kashmira, Justin, & Zeeba [Zeeba N. Kayani (281)610-6593 (cell) (713)500-3227 (713)500-0388 (fax) Contracts & Grants Director @ Developmental Pediatrics University of Texas Health Science Center

## **Do Something Seed Grants (Deadline: Ongoing): A FEZANA initiative for youth.**

Are you working to start a community action project or program? Do you need money to put your ideas into action? If you answered, "YES!", you are eligible to apply for a Do Something Seed Grant.

Do Something Seed Grants in the amount of \$ 500/- are given out every week to help young people.

The Grants are targeted towards project ideas and programs that are just getting started. These grants can be used to jump-start your program or to realize your ideas for the first time. These are grants for all types of community action projects around causes that you care about and are important in your community!

Deadlines are on a Rolling basis. Apply now! [www.dosomething.org/grants/seedgrants](http://www.dosomething.org/grants/seedgrants). You will be notified whether or not you have won within 2-3 months after submission.

## **ZAF COMMUNITY NEWS**



### **Zersis & Anahita Minocher Wedding**

ZAF's friend, Treasurer and Board Member, Zersis Minocher and Anahita Edulkaka tied the knot on December 3, 2009 at the Grand Aria Banquet Hall, Kala Ghoda, Mumbai. Congratulations to Zersis and Anahita and we wish them life full of health, prosperity and happiness.



**The newlyweds: Zersis and Anahita**



**The newlyweds: Gustad and Tanaz**

### **Gustad & Tanaz Mody Wedding (Orlando)**





Parents Yasmin & Adi celebrating with the Happy Couple cutting the Wedding Cake and our own Youth posing for the photo!

Tanaz Irani, daughter of Yasmin and Adi Irani of Orlando declared: "Pasandeh Kardam" on January 2<sup>nd</sup> in Orlando with Gustad Mody in front of over 300 family and friends! Ervad Keki Mody, Gustad's father, and Ervad Rohinton Madon performed the traditional Parsi Ashirwad! The newlyweds Tanaz and Gustad went on their honeymoon to the caribbean on a cruise and were back in New York City.

### **Daryush & Andrea Mehta Wedding (Cambridge, MA)**

Daryush, son of our own Nahida & Dinyar Mehta of Orlando wedded to Andrea Gabert on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 in Cambridge and Foxboro, MA in company of a large gathering of family and friends! Two ZAGBA Mobeds performed the traditional Parsi Ashirwad! This was followed by a Lutheran Wedding. The newlyweds Andrea and Daryush went on their honeymoon in Kaua'i! Great weather and lots of fun adventures, including a lu'au, a boat cruise, a helicopter tour, and surfing lessons! They are back in Boston area.



Daryush and Andrea wedding - Parsi Ashirwad, Daryush family, and Andrea family!

### **Navjote**



### **Arzaan Bharucha Navjote!**

On Sunday, December 27, 2009 in Mumbai, India, the Navjote Ceremony of Arzaan C. Bharucha, brother to Sanaya C. Bharucha and son of Diana and Cyrus V. Bharucha of Burke, VA, **grandson of Homai and Pourus R. Khajautia of Tampa, FL** and Rashna and Viraf E. Bharucha of Houston, TX, was performed. On the same day, Diana celebrated her Khorshed Roj Birthday and she and Cyrus celebrated their Eleventh Wedding Anniversary! The entire event was filled with Ahura Mazda's Blessings, Prayer, Love, Family and Friends.

### **In Memorium – Our own “Mamaiji” Tehmina Gundevia!**



Our own “Mamaiji” Tehmina Gundevia, 89, wife of late Burjorji; mother of Arnavaz (Gustad) Irani (Boca Raton); Sam (Pam) Gundevia (Vancouver), Minoo Gundevia (Montreal); grandmother of Jhangir (Zena) Irani (Philadelphia); Rustam (Jennifer) Irani (Tampa), Navroj Irani(Boca Raton), Cameron Gundevia (Vancouver), Jason Gundevia(Vancouver); great-grandmother of Zachary, Sam, Nicole, Meher and Hvovi; passed away in Mumbai on February 1, 2010. May her soul rest in Garo Demaana (The House of Songs)!

We in the community will sorely miss her ever present smile and loving warmth and pray that her soul rest in eternal peace. Our sincere condolences to the family for the loss.

### **In Memorium – Our own Dick Vazir!**



On April 13<sup>th</sup> 2010, it will be the “Varsi” (Anniversary) of our own Dick Vazir! May his soul rest in Garo Demaana (The House of Songs)!

### **FEZANA Scholarship for Art Students**

The Performing and Creative Arts Scholarship (P&CAS) is accepting applications for year 2010. This scholarship is for US and Canadian residents who are studying in the field of performing and creative arts. So if you are studying to be a dancer, artist, singer, actor, etc please apply. Applications are due by May 31, 2010. Applications are on [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org). You can also contact Sherazade Mehta chair of the P&CAS committee at 972-385-4847 or [sherazadem@yahoo.com](mailto:sherazadem@yahoo.com) for further information. Thank you *Sherazade Mehta* chair - P&CAS committee.

### **FEZANA Scholarship for Excellence In Sports (EXISS)**

Created in 2005, the objective of the Excellence in Sports Scholarship is to provide financial support to young Zarathushtis (between the ages of 10-30) who are performing exceptionally and at highly recognized levels in all areas of Sports activity. The purpose of the scholarship is to enable the recipients to get world-class training or study with experts in their field and

thus fine tune and enhance their talent and capabilities. Application is attached. The deadline for applications is **May 31, 2010**.

If you or someone you know may benefit from this scholarship, we encourage you to apply. Please pass this announcement on to your local associations and groups. For details or more information contact Zenobia Damania at [admin@fezana.org](mailto:admin@fezana.org) or call the Fezana Office at 630-468-2705. Thank you, *Zenobia Damania* **For the FEZANA EXISS Fund Committee**

### **The Zoroastrian Diaspora to North America (IIT graduates):**

Dr. Dolly Dastur, (Editor, FEZANA magazine) is preparing a magazine issue which will be focusing on The Zoroastrian Diaspora to North America.

In connection with this she has asked me to prepare an article high lighting the contributions of IIT graduates in North America. I thought the best way to do this is to request all of the Fezana associations to put an insert in their next communication vehicle asking Zoroastrian IIT graduates to send me, Edul Daver at <[daver@acupowder.com](mailto:daver@acupowder.com)> information about themselves including Name, address, E-address, IIT location, Year of graduation/Major and a very brief paragraph (100 words) about their highest/proudest accomplishment. I will use this to come up with a very general article. Also have them include names and E-addresses of all other Zoroastrian IIT graduates that you or they may have information about.

I am also looking at this as an opportunity to develop a listing/directory of all Zoroastrian IIT graduates in North America. So please help me start the ball rolling and with your direct and indirect help we can accomplish both objectives. It will be greatly appreciated. Best Regards, *Edul Daver (Ex Secretary WZCC and IIT alumnus)*

### **An appeal for help:**

*The following appeal has been received (through FEZANA welfare committee), for a family in Dallas area. The name is withheld to respect the privacy but we are indeed assured that it is a genuine case as the President of Dallas Zoroastrian Association Kamran, the past President of FEZANA (residing in the area) and the Dallas Zoroastrian community are assisting financially and in other ways with the situation.*

A lady in Dallas area had a cancerous tumor removed from her brain. She cannot work due to the treatment she is going through. She, her husband a 13 years old daughter are refugees from Iran. The husband does not have a job at present. Your contribution will be sincerely appreciated. Please make checks payable to "FEZANA" and mailed to: Ms. Katayun Kapadia, (Treasurer - FEZANA), 33 Preamble Drive, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054. Please mark the check in the footnote: "*Dallas cancer patient -Welfare Committee*".

### **Haiti Earthquake Victims Relief Efforts:**

While there are many avenues to help the victims of the earthquake in Haiti, we have announced the following two to the ZAF community:

- On January 13<sup>th</sup>, an appeal was sent out to ZAF e-list to donate by texting HAITI to 90999. A sum of \$10 would be automatically sent to the Red Cross and charged to your phone bill.
  - On January 25<sup>th</sup>, ZAF Board, on behalf of our North American Zarathushti community, announced to the ZAF e-list that you may make out your donation checks payable to "FEZANA WELFARE", (marked Haiti Victims Fund on footnote). And mail to Ms. Katayun Kapadia, 33 Preamble Drive, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054. The FEZANA welfare committee will pool the collections and forward them to UNICEF and Shelter Box programs.
- If you have not had a chance to send help, we urge your kind support for this tragedy.

## **NEWS FROM ZATAMBAY & ORLANDO GROUPS, by Soli Dastur**

- **Orlando Announces Their Jamshedi Navroze Celebration:** Sarvar and Rustom Demehri invite all Florida Zarathushtis to join us all in the celebration of Navroze on Sunday March 21<sup>st</sup> at their home. The festivities will have the traditional Haft Sheen Sofreh and will start with a traditional Jashan at 11 AM SST (Soli's STD Time)! This will follow with a Irani/Parsi lunch. Please call Sarvar (Home: 407-767-9799, Office: 407-699-1224) for reservations.



- **ZATAMBAY Announces Their Jamshedi Navroze Celebration:** Jo Ann and Soli P. Dastur invite all Florida Zarathushtris to join us all in the celebration of Navroze on Sunday March 28<sup>th</sup> at their Hira Villa home. The festivities will have the traditional Haft Sheen Sofreh and will start with a short Hum Bandagi using the just printed FEZANA Naurooz Prayers at 11 AM SST (Soli's STD Time)! This will follow with a pot luck Irani/Parsi lunch. Please call Jo Ann (941-351-2240) or Anahita Tamboli (813-251-0101) and let them know what you would like to bring for the lunch. Hope we have a great turnout.
- **ZATAMBAY is flocked by Snow Birds from the North:** It is with great pleasure that we would like to announce that we now have over 6 Zarathushtri families in our area. It all started with Keki Shroff and his sister Naju from Toronto, who bought a condo in Sarasota last year very near to Jo Ann and Soli. They used to go to Tenerife, Canary Islands for years but Sarasota lured them away. Then we have Katie and Dinyar Dinshaw again from Toronto who bought a home in Sarasota once again near Jo Ann and Soli. Then we have Aspi and Yasmin Sarkari from Toronto again who bought a home in Bradenton. Then we have Shirin and Jimmy Jagos from Halifax, Nova Scotia, who are renting in Sun City Center for 2 months, near Yasmin and Rustom Kevala. And finally we have a permanent Florida resident in Goolu and Noshir Baria from Connecticut who bought a home also in Sun City Center. They are also ZAF members. On behalf of ZATAMBAY and the whole of Florida, we welcome all these snow birds and hope that one day they melted away from snow bird to permanent residents! Jo Ann and Soli had a Parsi Palghar Chai party for them and you can see them in the photo above. **We also celebrated 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Katie and Dinyar Dinshaw!**



**L to R: Goolu Baria, Dara Sagar, Shirin & Jimmy Jagos, Freny Sagar, Jo Ann, Aspi & Yasmin Sarkari, Keki Shroff, Katie Dinshaw, Naju Shroff, Dinyar Dinshaw, Noshir Baria and You know who, and Dinshaws cutting cake!**

## **DIRECTORY & ADDRESS CHANGES**

- **Cherag & Parinaz Irani:** have relocated to New Jersey. We wish them well in their new location and all the best in life up north.
- **Goolu & Noshir Baria:** have relocated from Connecticut and bought a home in Sun City Center, FL. Let us welcome them with open arms and doors. They have already signed up as ZAF Members! Noshir has worked for 43 years for Pfizer Company and has travelled all over the world for them. Their address: 1217 Jasmine Creek Ct., Sun City Center, FL. 33573. Home Phone: 813-633-8935

## **ARTICLES OF INTEREST**

**56th National Film Awards announced** by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. **Soon** Taraporevalla's film 'Little Zizou' (English, Gujarati) was adjudged the **Best Film on Family values**.

**World Zoroastrian Congress (Dubai, December 27 – 31, 2009), by Ervad Soli P. Dastur**

750+ Parsis, Iranis and Zarathushtris gathered in a huge Crown Plaza Hotel Hall in Dubai, December 27 – 31, 2009, to attend the World Zoroastrian Congress (WZC)! What a spectacle! There were genuine Sheiks, and a Lord and a Dastoorji, and there were some fake Sheiks also! There was a “Khushali-nu-Jashan” in Dubai! There was a wonderful opening ceremony with our Dastoorji Khurshed Dastoor from Udwada leading a group of Mobeds from India, Iran, Dubai, and USA! And what a spectacular Closing Ceremony with turning over the newly designed WZC lamp trophy from Dubai Congress Chair Meher Bhesania to the next WZC Chair BPP President Dinshaw Mehta of Mumbai! For all 4 days, delegates were treated to 3 sumptuous buffet meals! Since no religious discussions and controversial issues were allowed to be discussed, the conference presentations were mainly on topics of community subjects relating to Entrepreneurship, Youth involvement, Health of the community, support systems for our aged, etc. The presentations by the youth groups from different regions of the world were quite impressive in terms of the YLEP (Youth Leadership Enhancement Program) when youths from different regions presented their efforts to help the youth in their regions. Our own Rohinton Rivetna was awarded the Outstanding Zarathushti Award and Sooni Taraporevala the Performing Arts & Literature Awards, among others. Our own Roshan Rivetna summarized the WZC contributions as follows: “But alongside the glitz and glamour of the Congress, the days were packed with networking and business opportunities (WZCC), serious deliberations on community issues and development of several legacy programs, among them: YLEP, the Youth Leadership Enhancement Program for developing the next generation of Zarathushti leaders; "Vision 2010" developing a blueprint and goals for the community; and formalizing of the "Coming Together Roundtable", the world regional leadership forum. Elected leaders of all four major regions consensually agreed to assume ownership of the CTR. Previously elusive for many years, this "coming together" of the regional leadership at a common forum for dialogue and action, is certainly a watershed moment for the world Zarathushti community, and a legacy of no small proportions for the Dubai Congress.”



**The Lord, the Dastoorji and the Sheikh! Sooni with Lord Karan Billimoria! A fake Sheikh with you know who!**

**In the first Photo on the left: Lord Karan Billimoria, CBE DL, Dastoorji Khurshed Dastoor Kaikobad Dastoor of Udwada, and His Highness Sheikh Hasher Maktoum Juma Al Maktoum, Director of Information, Dubai, UAE.**



**Khushali-nu-Jashan in Dubai! Dastoorji Khurshed with Mobeds at the Opening and the Closing Ceremonies!**



Coming Together Roundtable with Ervad Soli Dastur leading in a Prayer!

750+ in the meeting hall!

**FEZANA Naurooz Prayer Book** by *Ervad Soli P. Dastur*

**Hamā Anjuman Prayers for Naurooz In English, Farsi and Gujarati**

During his term, Past FEZANA President Rustom Kevala gathered a Naurooz Celebration Committee to coordinate 2007 Naurooz Celebrations among FEZANA Member Associations. One project was to create a common Naurooz Prayer for 20 or so minutes and Ervad Soli P. Dastur was given that project. Soli consulted Dastoorjis, Mobeds, and Scholars from India, Iran, and North America and assembled eight prayers for this project. This book is the culmination of these efforts, and may be a first ever book with prayers in English, Farsi and Gujarati with interpretation. The front and back covers of the book are presented below. The book will be distributed in time for this year’s Naurooz Celebrations to all FEZANA Associations and NA Mobeds. This is a humble effort to bring all our Zarathushti Groups together in a common prayer environment. Please note that the prayers in this book can be used for any Hum Bandagi. It would be very appropriate to use some prayers from this book as a Hum Bandagi during our March 20th Naurooz Celebration.



20 copies are available with Jahan Daruwala and will be also available at the Navroze function. A minimum contribution of \$5 or any additional generous donation to FEZANA will be sincerely appreciated to defray the cost of printing this book.

**United Nations: An Invitation to Participate**

Zarathushtis worldwide interested in participating in activities at the United Nations, internationally, regionally, or locally are requested to contact Co-Chairs of FEZANA’s UN-NGO (non-government organizations) committee:

- Afreed Mistry, Toronto, Canada [afreed.mistry@gmail.com](mailto:afreed.mistry@gmail.com),
- Homi Gandhi, Metropolitan New York, [homidgandhi@gmail.com](mailto:homidgandhi@gmail.com),
- Behram Pastakia, Metropolitan Washington DC [bpastakia@aol.com](mailto:bpastakia@aol.com),

with a copy of their curriculum vitae and a letter of intent stating how they see themselves promoting the mission and vision of the United Nations in civil society.

## **Visitor Visa (B1/B2)**

*Editorial: Many of us are often faced with the need for proper information and guidance regarding foreign persons wanting to enter USA either for pleasure or for short term business purposes who need a non immigrant visa. The article below is reproduced from the AIA newsletter (September-2009), with permission of the Association of Indians in America (AIA), Florida Chapter, and the author BhavaniNirmal, Esq.*

Foreign nationals who desire to enter USA either for pleasure or for short term business purposes need a non-immigrant visa. This article primarily focuses on obtaining B1/B2 visas for Asian Indians. Though the US Embassy or the Consulates in India may grant these visas for a period up to 10 years, the actual authorized stay of visitors is determined by US Immigration, Customs and Enforcement Officers (USICE) at the entry point into the USA from three months to six months and is recorded in the I-94 issued at that time. The white I-94 card must be safely kept and attached to the passport. Further extensions may be obtained through an application to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services if there are good and valid reasons. Neither B1 nor B2 visa gives you authorization to work in USA.

B1 visa which is popularly called tourist visa can be used not just to visit family and friends and go to places of tourist interest but can also be used for a variety of purposes such as attending conferences or conventions of social or cultural or fraternal organization, receiving medical treatment and as personal/domestic employees under certain conditions. Earlier, students were allowed to come on visitor visa on a scouting expedition and then change to a student visa but this is no longer allowed and F1 student visa must be obtained through the US Consulate in their country of residence.

It is mandatory for those intending to visit USA to provide to the US Consulate the following: with the Application:

1. A valid Indian passport which is current for the period of intended visit
2. One photograph meeting the requirements of a US Passport
3. DS -156 Non Immigrant Visa Application Form in original
4. DS-157 supplemental non immigrant visa Application Form in original
5. Visa fee and service charge to be paid in Advance at participating HDFC bank prior to taking a visa appointment at the US Consulate

### **A. Tourists (B1 Visa)**

The applicants must also have the following:

1. Original birth certificate. If it is not available, must obtain a no entry certificate from the registering authority having jurisdiction over the birth place and an affidavit from relatives who have knowledge of the birth.
2. Evidence to show sufficient ties to India as proof that the visit is purely temporary and they intend to return to India such as employment letter, family ties or similar binding obligations.
3. Establishing the purpose of visit such as a wedding or graduation invitation of a close relative .or evidence of participation in a group tour.
4. Proof of Funds to meet the expenses for stay in USA or an invitation letter from a relative or friend who makes a serious invitation and commitment to host the visitor and meet all expenses of board and lodging and internal travel expenses and supports it with Form I-134 Affidavit of Support.

### **B. Business Travelers (B2 Visa)**

If your company is sponsoring your visit for business purposes please have the following:

1. A letter from your Employer indication the duration and purpose of your visit
2. Proof that the employer is defraying the expenses of your visit, tax returns of the Company , audited financial reports, brochures, advertisement to prove the bona fide of the company and its purpose in sending you abroad.
3. If you are attending a Conference or Seminar, proof of registration to attend.

### **C. Travelers for Medical Treatment (B1 Visa)**

Please have the following:

1. A signed statement or letter from a doctor or medical facility that is accepting you as a patient for medical treatment indicating the nature of illness and treatment, cost of treatment etc.
2. Documentation to show how the costs will be met with proof of fund availability in US to pay the costs by oneself such as bank statements.
3. If a sponsor is meeting the cost, proof of ties with sponsor and sponsor's ability to meet the costs, such as tax returns, employment letter, bank statements etc.

### **D. Interview**

Generally the Interviewing officer starts with the presumption that your intention is not to return to India. Particularly, if you are young it will be difficult for you to prove strong ties to your home country. Proof of property ownership, Family commitments such as you are taking care of your elderly parents, you have traveled abroad earlier and particularly to USA and not overstayed, you have a long term employment history in India , a leave sanction letter from your employer, a no objection letter if you are a government employee, leaving your spouse and children in India are some of the evidence that can overcome the presumption by the interviewing officer regarding the intention.

1. Do not be tripped by trick questions by the interviewing officer such as would you still return to India if you hit the Jackpot at the Casino or you get a very lucrative job offer in USA. This is known to happen.
2. Arrive early and be confident and answer the questions looking straight into the officer's eyes.
3. Wear formal attire and wish the officer appropriately.
4. Do not be argumentative and be polite. If you do not understand a question, say so and ask the officer to repeat the question.
5. Arrange your documents neatly so that you do not fumble and be professional.

#### **E. Visa issuance and Refusal**

1. When you have the visa stamped, check it thoroughly for any typographical errors in your name, date of birth, passport number etc. and have them corrected at the Visa issuing office. Such uncorrected mistakes will come to haunt you later.
2. If for any reason the visa is refused, please do not despair. You can always reapply but before doing so, please carefully analyze the reasons for rejection and try to overcome those.
3. If the refusal is under Section 221(g), it is generally because of a missing document or evidence and you will be advised accordingly. While you may need fill a new visa application form, a new visa fee is not required if you renew your request within a year with the missing document or evidence. They will advise you to drop the application in a drop box or request you to come for an appointment.
4. Beware! You should be truthful in filling out the visa application. If you have willfully misrepresented material facts or submit forged or counterfeit documents, you may be barred permanently from entering on a non immigrant or immigrant visa.

The above is only a general overview of the process and each consulate has its own procedural requirements and they may change or update these requirements from time to time. So please get the updates from the website of the concerned consulates before you proceed with your visa application. Consult with an Immigration Attorney if you have doubts or concerns.

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*\*The contributor is Bhavani Nirmal Esq. who has been practicing immigration law since 1994 in Miami, Florida. She is an alumna of the Florida International University and University of Miami School of Law. She is a member of the Florida Bar and a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. She can be contacted at [bonnie605@yahoo.com](mailto:bonnie605@yahoo.com).*



<i>President</i> Jahanbux Daruwala <i>V.P.</i> Burjis Shroff <i>Secretary</i> Kersi Munshi <i>Treasurer</i> Zersis Minocher <i>Member-at-Large</i> Soli Dastur Nina Deboo Arnavaz Irani Jimmy Major Dustyn Shroff
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**2010 Calendar of Events**

- **Z Club: Childrens' activities**
  - Sunday March 7 at Khushroo Daruwalla's house at 2 pm; and
  - Sunday March 14 at Pauli and Kashmiri Bhadha's house at 2 pm.
  
- **Next ZAF Board Meeting:** February 25, 2010
- **Navroze function:** March 20, (Miramar hall – same as last yr.)
- **FEZANA – AGM:** April 23-25, (Toronto)
- **ZAF Annual Picnic & AGM:** April 18, (Sunday), (South-County Regional Park, West of Boca Raton)
- **XV North American Zoroastrian Congress, Houston, TX, December 29-2010 to Jan-1-2011**

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**Kersi Munshi, Secretary**  
**The Zoroastrian Association of Florida**  
**9830-Bay Leaf Court, Parkland, FL 33076-4445**

**Stamp**