



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

My committee joins me in wishing everyone a happy Nourooz- May the New Year herald peace, happiness, prosperity and good health in all your lives.

At the beginning of the year, we made a statement that the committee had started planning with gusto and enthusiasm towards what we hoped would be a balanced mix of Religious, Cultural, Multi-cultural and fun events for 2007-2008. From what has been achieved so far, all I can say is that each and everyone on the committee have had their hands full in organizing them. They are all "tasked out". There is nothing more gratifying than to have a hard working team on board who strives to bring about a genuine sense of togetherness and harmony within the community.

The revival of children's religious class was a top priority on the committee's agenda. Zenobia Mistry has kick started the children's class and we are hopeful that the humble beginnings for this project will have a sustainable future. We realize that adult religiosity is also an integral part of the association's objective and we are looking at bridging that gap between children's needs and adult needs. Unless we get sufficient information and feedback from community, we are not in a position to formulate a particular strategy.

Our Dasturjis have indicated that the idea of having more than one Jashan in a year is excellent and it is in keeping with the aim of fostering and re-kindling the fervor in our religion while also meeting our religious objectives.

There has been a healthy exchange and sharing of ideas between the Presidents of ZAWA, ZANZ (New Zealand), AZA and ZAV. We all shared with each other, the spirit of Nourooz and the festivities that followed. We forwarded our ideas on fun events like the famous Car Rally and treasure hunt. ZAV plans to steal that idea with a Bawaji twist of hiding food in the treasure hunt. We hope to continue this strong bond with each other.

In addition to the events organization, there is also an intensity which comes by way of communicating with our sister associations on matters like new migrants, helping out individuals, replying to assorted queries and networking with each other.

We would also like to thank the dynamic and enthusiastic sub-committee consisting of Shalayne and Jimmy Ghaswala, Homyar and Porous Randeria, for their time, effort and support in hosting events like Car Rally treasure hunt and Quiz Night. I have always maintained that an entertainment sub-committee adds to the dynamics of the association.

Our WA youth returned from the 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, pleased with their deep contribution towards entertainment and dedicating all their time and effort towards assisting the organizers. From all accounts I have received from the youth and other's, the congress had a lasting impression on all youth, creating long lasting friendships, and having a good time amidst an atmosphere of fun and frivolity.

The committee is in the process of finalizing the charities for the year. It was proposed that we should try and hold on to some of the donations till the end of the year in the event of an emergency of an individual nature or a natural calamity, requiring immediate funds.

We have also submitted an advert in Mumbai publications about ZAWA's website. ZAWA can help introduce Zoroastrians migrating, visiting or students to the Perth community and direct them towards relevant Government organizations for further assistance and guidance.

I am happy to inform you that we have received a humble grant from the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) for the Pateti Navroze function on 23 August. We are hopeful that Healthway whose vision of a healthy Western Australia will also support us for the event. Together we will all share and enjoy the New-year in style and tradition.

Jehangir Mehta - ZAWA committee

ZAWA COMMITTEE: Chairperson – *Jehangir Mehta*, Vice Chairperson – *Villie Mistry*, Secretary - *Kuky Wadia*, Treasurer – *Cornelia Irani*, Committee Members – *Persis Shroff*, *Persis Billimoria* & *Pervez Mistry*, Website & Newsletter – *Behram Cooper*

FUTURE ZAWA ACTIVITIES

18 May 2008	Childrens Religious class and Humbandagi
01 June 2008	Dae Mahino Jashan
12 July 2008	Charity Event Quiz and Chaat Night
23 Aug 2008	Pateti Navroze function
10 Sept 2008	Dina Mcintyre- Gatha Exponent- down under visit
21 Sept 2008	ZAWA AGM
22 June 2008	Childrens Religious class and Humbandagi

A Humble Request to the Perth Community

We humbly request the community to inform the committee members or e-mail admin@zawa.asn.au if you are unable to attend a function due to urgent/important reasons. This mainly

applies to events where the monies are collected on the day or at the door. We would like to avoid wastage of ZAWA funds and food due to expenditure not being optimized into decent profits. These profits after all are destined for charities in India for the poor and economically disadvantaged. There is also considerable time and effort involved in cooking and preparation by the committee members. Thank you.

SENIOR CITIZEN REQUIREMENTS

We have appointed Persis Billimoria (Northern suburbs) and Vil Mistry (Southern suburbs) as point of contact for senior citizens needs. Seniors may contact them or email admin for transport and other needs if required.

Behram Ghista's Motivational and Philosophical Talk to the Community

Submitted by Kuky Wadia

On Sunday 10 Feb 08, ZAWA members were given the opportunity to hear Behram Ghista speak at a workshop for ZAWA members.

Behram is the founder and chairman of the Nembutsu Centre in India and he is a sole yoga and meditation teacher. The subject of the talk was "Trusting in Abundance" and about 30 members attended at the residence of Vil Mistry

Behram's assistant Sherry introduced him at the start of the workshop and gave the gathered crowd a brief overview of his accomplishments, what he stands for and his life's work to date. Behram's website (<http://www.nembutsu.org/>) informs us that "We are often attracted to anything that glitters in this world and yet, remain unfulfilled and disappointed, regardless of our consistent indulgence in the same. When we rely on anything external in order to feel positive about ourselves, we should be well aware that we are in a race without a finish line. It helps immensely to trust in and explore the magnificent possibilities within us in each moment, as it is this very moment ~ regardless of its outer appearance ~ which allows us entry into our true nature, whereby "abundance is scooped from abundance and yet, abundance remains." A flourishing life, therefore, is not based on worldly trophies and possessions. Instead, it is experienced through living in a manner that exalts the Great Spirit within all things."

The talk was interesting and invigorating and there were two way inter-action between Behram and his audience. Our members asked many questions and there was some lively debate too. The lasting message from the evening was that "abundance is not about having more, but making the most of what you have".

At the end of the talk, members were offered the opportunity to have one-on-one consults with Behram. The evening concluded with a potluck dinner generously supplied by all those who attended.

Our warm thanks to Behram for giving ZAWA members the opportunity to hear his views and share his knowledge. Also, to Arooza Irani, who was instrumental in arranging this talk FREE for ZAWA members and to Vil Mistry, for so kindly hosting the talk and dinner at her residence.

Mehergan Jashan 2 March 2008

We would like to thank our priests Ervad Aspi Madan and Ervad Pashin Madan for their time and reverence in performing the Jashan at the AAA hall. We would also like to thank the community for their generous donation of \$356 which was collected on the day and will be set aside for various charities to be decided. Jashan was followed by everyone sharing their food. A day that resonated with the energy of Meher Yazad- love, friendship and a happy feeling.

Mehergan or Jashn-e-Mehergan is a Zoroastrian and Iranian festival celebrated in honour of Mithra or Mehr, the divinity of covenant and hence of interpersonal relationships such as friendship, affection and love. Mehergan is celebrated on the day of the year when the day name and month name are same. In the Zoroastrian calendar, the 16th day of the month and the 7th month of the year are dedicated to Mithra/Mehr and are respectively named Mehr roj and Mehr Mahino or month. It is also this day that Fereydun became victorious over Zohak and confined him to Mount Damavand.

The 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress

A once in a lifetime experience! by ZAWA Youth

Zoroastrian Youth from all over the globe graced Australian shores for the 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress held in Ballarat, Victoria. Approximately three hundred delegates from Iran, India, Pakistan, Canada, USA, UK, New Zealand and of course Australia attended the weeklong event held December 27th 2007 to January 3rd 2008. The congress provided an opportunity for young Zoroastrians to meet, and learn about their religion and culture, while forming new and valuable friendships.

After everyone had settled into their accommodation at Ballarat University, the Congress kicked off with the inaugural Jashan. Delegates gathered into the main auditorium for the ceremony, and Ervards from all over the world performed the prayers. The Jashan was the largest of its kind ever performed in the southern hemisphere.



Youth posing near the fabulous decorations on the Fancy Dress night

The international affair continued with the evening's showcase representing Australia, 'The Entertainment Extravaganza', opened with Farita Khambatta's beautiful song 'The Light', the official theme song of the Congress. Expressing the value of unity and faith, 'The Light' received a rousing applause of approval from the audience.

The performances continued into the night with delegates showcasing their talents with an act from their homeland. Sydney's Kobad Bhavnagri and Yuhan Reporter cleverly tied together the acts from various countries using the congress theme 'Back to the Future'. Their comical skits had the audience in stitches! Behind the scenes Zyus Khambatta and Zahan Mistry kept the technical side of the evening running smoothly and seamlessly.

The key note address, presented by Khojeste Mistree teed off the following day's activities. His enlightening speech covered the importance and relevance of a value system based on Zoroastrian teachings. Following further talks, the floor was opened up for all to ask questions regarding religion and customs.

During the course of the Congress other learned speakers including Er. Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia, Prof. Dr. James Russell and Firoza Punthakey Mistree presented on a number of different Zoroastrian related topics. Youth speakers also presented on a variety of religious and cultural subjects on a daily basis.



Perth youth with Carl from the US.

Now where there are Parsees, there's good food, and the Congress was no exception! Keeping it fresh, Chef Farhad Billimoria and his team, Jimmy Daruwalla, Nargish Bhathawalla along with some kind volunteers helped feed the hungry masses a tasty lunch and dinner over the course of the week. Among the favourite meals were the Laganu Bhonu, a traditional Xmas feast and a delicious Aussie BBQ!

The 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress 2007-2008 was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, friendships were made and good times were shared. Delegates got to experience Australia and learn more about their religion and culture. Canada, the destination of the 5th WZYC in 2011 is going to have a very hard time topping Australia - and we wouldn't want it any other way!



Hard working Perth volunteers with Superstar Chef Farhad Billimoria.

Among one of our unique attractions of the Congress was the 'Zoro Expo' showcasing Zoroastrian religion, history, art and culture. The expo was open to the general public and drew big crowds including the local news and media who were interested in knowing more about our religion and culture.

Each evening, entertainment was provided and the dining hall was transformed into a spectacular new scene that did not go un-noticed! The Entertainment Sub-committee, Delara Mistry, Farita Khambatta, Shalayne Ghaswala, Farzana Pestonji and Monaz Wadia (of Sydney) spent hours each day decorating and co-ordinating all the major social events. The themes included, a Bush Dance evening, Logies Night (New Year's Eve event), a traditional Lagan-nu Bhonu dinner and the Persian/Fancy Dress evening. Delegates enjoyed each scene, taking picture upon picture

against the rich backdrops provided. Without the help of family, friends and other kind delegates who lent a helping hand it would have been an impossible task, so thank you to all! International delegates got a real taste of Australia during the day trips to the animal sanctuary and Ballarat's famous Sovereign Hill. The animal sanctuary provided an opportunity to get up close and personal with 'Matilda the Koala' in a photo opportunity, enjoy the wildlife and even hand feed the freely roaming wallabies and kangaroos whose hunger seemed to never cease. The fun continued for all at Sovereign Hill, where youth were able to pan for gold, enjoy a horse and carriage ride around a simulated 1850's town, take an underground mine tour and observe a spectacular sound and light show - Son et Lumiere. Over course of the week the activities continued – the girls used their creative flair in the womens' Parsi Rangoli competition, while men battled it out in an 'Iron Chef' style cooking competition where contestants had select ingredients and 30 minutes to prepare a dish to impress the judging panel. Out of over 40-odd contestants WA's golden boy, Zyus Khambatta, took out one of the top three prizes with his delicious stuffed chicken breast with stir fried vegetables. Boomerang painting, a presentation on throwing boomerangs and a trip to the beach were among the other activities on offer to entertain all. The New Year's Eve event, 'Logies Night', was a spectacular success! Delegates dressed to impress walked down the red carpet in style. Some took so many pictures of themselves you'd think they were real celebrities! In typical Logies fashion, awards were presented to a select few young Zoroastrians in recognition of their various achievements. Farita was among the recipients winning an award of excellence in recognition of her musical achievements.



Youth painting boomerangs on Bush Dance night, Parsi girls concentrating on creating their Rangoli masterpiece

Over the course of the evening the audience was entertained by Kobad Bhavnagri's slick cabaret performance, accompanied by Yuhan Reporter on the clarinet. Farita performed her new song, 'Soniya', to a delighted audience with dancers Delara, Shalayne, Farzana, Zeelnaaz Parabia and Anahita Kanga-Parabia adding to the entertainment factor. The DJ took it from there and everyone partied into the early hours of the morning.

We asked delegates "What did you enjoy most about the Congress?" Here is what they had to say:

"I enjoyed the fact that I met so many Parsi people from all over the world and also made some good friends. I enjoyed the lagan-nu food and saving the best for last all the evening activities were fantastic and loads of fun." - **Zeelnaaz Parabia, Perth.**

"I loved the discos, enjoyed the short trips around Ballarat and made heaps of friends." – **Karishma Bhanja, Perth.**

"It was good to meet fellow Zoros from across the globe. Good to know that there were so many youth that were proud of our religion." - **Behzad Irani, Perth.**

"I made a lot of new friends, but would have liked more sporting activities" – **Jamsheed Bhanja, Perth.**

"The Congress was great because it gave us the opportunity to meet and make fantastic friends from all over the world, under the same roof." - **Arzan Pestonji, Perth.**

"I think the Logie's night was great!" - **Parshana Batha, Melbourne.**

ZAWA Youth were involved in various fundraising activities to raise money towards our travel expenses to attend the 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Ballarat. Activities included selling raffle tickets and selling yummy snacks at the ZAWA events. From September 2006 to December 2007, we raised a total of \$1088.85 which was distributed amongst the 10 Perth Youth who contributed towards the fundraising events. Thanks to all the individuals who supported us. Special shout out to Shernavaz Cooper for donating her time and raw materials to make some goodies for us to sell on more than one occasion, even though she did not benefit directly from the profit share. Thank you very much.

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Results of Community Survey conducted by Cawas Mistry for his College Assignment

Eleven responses were received to the questionnaire. Participants answered 10 questions, based on the Likert scale. The Zoroastrian community in Perth is small, numbering at about **180-200** people. The population is a mix in terms of age and gender, which can be partly explained by Zoroastrian migration to Australia dating from the 1950s

Some interesting patterns/trends emerged from the participants' answers:

- 73% of respondents indicated that settling in Perth was 'Relatively easy' or 'Easy'.
- Employment (55%), Senior citizens' needs (45%), and Housing (36%) were the most practical needs relevant to Perth Zoroastrians.
- Although 36% thought the Zoroastrian community was 'Capable' of meeting all of their needs, 54% indicated either 'Unsure' (27%) or 'Partially capable' (27%).
- 45% thought Perth life met cultural and religious needs 'Well enough', and 45% were 'Unsure'.
- 72% felt they experienced prejudice/discrimination either 'Rarely' (36%) or 'Never' (36%).
- 82% thought other Australians to be 'Very ignorant' of Zoroastrians and/or other migrants from Asia.
- The key future concerns were 'Possible decline of religious/cultural values' (91%), Optimum care and recreation for elderly members (64%).

Responses, although very useful to our research, constituted a small amount of data. Therefore, the responses served to provide some indication, but no 'clear picture', of the Perth Zoroastrian community.

Nourooz Celebrations

by Zenobia Pavri

Any function, to be deemed a success, needs to be meticulously organized. Getting a great venue at the right price, setting a menu for dinner followed by shopping, preparation, cooking etc., choosing music for popular taste, selling dinner tickets, raffles – its endless! One only had to look at the happy faces all around the Len Packham Reserve Clubrooms, to know that all the hard work had paid off! The venue was well-chosen and perfect for the night.

Great music welcomed ZAWA members and friends as they streamed into the venue. Guitarist/crooner, Rodney Dickinson has a good voice and his energy in keeping up the flow of songs and music was catching. ZAWA's chairman, Jehangir Mehta, kicked off the nite with a short speech mainly to announce that money collected would be donated to deserving charities. People were urged to buy raffle tickets – the winner of 1st Prize going to Behram Cooper – ZAWA's resident photographer, presented to him by our senior member Mrs Irandokht Ardesherian. Many little gifts were handed out to beaming kids who were certainly not shy in receiving them.

Candles were lit at each table to observe 'EARTH HOUR' and as the music played, kids, couples and individuals danced and clapped to the rhythm. Others at tables enjoyed their drinks and nibbles. It was great to see quite a few seniors, teens, young adults and little babies having an equally good time.

Then came the delicious spread everyone was waiting for. A huge bowl of cachumber, rotlis, gajjar/mewa achaar, sas-ni-machhi, tarkari-pur-eeda, murghi-na-curry/chawal and kulfi for dessert. The food was absolutely delicious – cooked to perfection, well heated and served graciously. There was plenty for seconds and what was left over was quickly bought up for a very reasonable price. As this is usually the most time-consuming, effort-demanding and back-breaking of all, ZAWA, on behalf of everybody would especially like to acknowledge and thank Persis Billimoria, Persis Shroff, the two chefs par excellence, Cornelia Irani, Kuky Wadia, Villie Mistry, Pervez Mistry and all those others who had a hand in the catering and/or organising. Thanks also to Tom Brenon, for a great job in helping our ladies in the kitchen with all his hard work.

It was late when cars pulled out to drive home. ZAWA had once again pulled off another excellent NOUROOZ NITE filled with fun and laughter! BRAVO!!!

The photos can be viewed on <http://www.zawa.asn.au> under the Activities menu.

We have submitted this article to the Fezana Journal. Brief reports of all the wonderful Nourooz celebrations around the World will form part of the colour collage in the Summer issue of the Fezana Journal.

Dina McIntyre's Visit To Australia Down Under

Dina will be visiting Perth from 10th Sept to 17 September as part of her Australia visit which includes Sydney and Melbourne. ZAWA in tandem with ZAV and AZA will share the internal costs of domestic flights. She is paying for her own international fare. Details of the seminars will be announced later. Murdoch University head sociology lecturer Farida Tilbury is trying to organize a seminar at the University with academics attending from both Murdoch and UWA.

Dina G. McIntyre, is a Zoroastrian who was born in India and came to the United States to attend college. She has practiced law in the United States since 1964. Prior to her retirement she was a member of the bar of all federal and state courts in Pennsylvania, as well as the United States Supreme Court. She has been a student of the teachings of Zarathushtra since the early 1980s, and was the Editor of a 12 lesson course on the Gathas called An Introduction to the Gathas of Zarathushtra, which she distributed world-wide in 1989-90. She has lectured on the teachings of Zarathushtra at various conferences and seminars in the United States, Canada, England, India, South America, and at the World Parliament of Religions in 1993. Her writings on the teachings of Zarathushtra have appeared in various Zoroastrian Journals and websites including her talk at the Stanford University in April 2007.

As a committee we will continue to invite speakers from left, right, traditional, orthodox, religious, academic and other views. We all have our differing religious ideologies and differences. Only through choice do we have freedom. Freedom looks at each individual, not as an enemy because he or she thinks differently and not to give us the right to tell him he is wrong. Freedom understands the value of each individual difference. Your intellect must study your present state and work toward true freedom. We are therefore committed to providing a religious debate and discussion based on intellect, respect and dignity. Dina respect's every person's right to practice religion in whatever way they think is true.

ZAWA Car Rally And Treasure Hunt

Submitted by Homyar Randeria



Parking Ranger – Jehangir Mehta

The Inaugural ZAWA Car Rally was held on Sunday 20 April 2008. A bleak and wet Sunday morning was soon brightened by eleven teams checking in a good half hour before their required arrival times at the car park behind the AAA hall. After much excitement and friendly banter amongst the speed demons, the instructions were read out by the Chief Warden, Shalayne. After grabbing their first clues to the next destination, families and friends furiously beavered away in their cars to break the Da Vinci code that would send them to the home of the Warriors - the WACA. This cunning clue helped spread out the teams enough to stagger their arrivals at the WACA car park. Jimmy and Phyrooza, the wardens there, flagged in arriving cars better than air traffic controllers at Heathrow on a busy day and bid them farewell soon after teams cracked the code to take them to Wireless Hill. The Hill base saw another twist with the traffic-inspector-lookalike-warden Jehangir instructing the teams checking in to go look for his co-warden Porus, who was perched amongst the clouds on one of the WWII communication towers with a bird's eye view of the unfolding theatre below. The teams were given a short questionnaire as well, that would help them appreciate the historical importance of this significant but little known location and then another mumble-jumble clue to send them hurtling, albeit within speed limits to Monument Hill Memorial

Fremantle. This Hill saw teams answer questions on the various conflicts that the place commemorated as well as taking group photos on an actual WWII torpedo!! After a quick info session on landmarks around the spot, it was bombs away to James Oval UWA where a drive-by clue sent them scurrying to the magnificent glass and steel Lottery West Federation Walkway bridge at Kings Park. Teams were asked to take a team photo with the Swan River, the metropolis and the inviting Swan Brewery in the background. This was the last base and teams congregated under a gazebo overlooking a rainbow that seemed to form a bridge of light over the glistening Swan river below. The catering committee kicked into gear and soon yummy chicken rolls and other savouries were devoured by young and old alike. After furious calculations, the winners were announced and only four points separated the first three teams. But on a day like this, full of laughter and excitement, everyone was a winner. So, well done to the families with little children, women pilots with only overseas guests and kids as navigators, and all who participated to make this event a success and maybe a regular fixture on the ZAWA activity calendar. Zoom zoom!!



First Prize Winners – The Fitter Team

MEMBERS' CORNER

ZAWA- New member:

Cyrus Tabak and Keshwar Postmaster - welcome on board and hope you share the joys with the association.

Navjote Mubarak:

Congratulations to Kerfehgar Mistry son of Pervez and Zenobia Mistry for his Navjote on 25 Dec 2007 in Udwada.

Appreciation:

Shernavaz Cooper has donated three stainless steel containers which will form part of the Jashan implements belonging to the association.

Rest in Peace:

Mrs Gool Patel mother of Zarine Patell passed away on 10 April 2008 in Navsari. She was 91.

Special Thanks To Our Sponsors for ZAWA NIGHT OCT 2007

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Statistics of Decline

Dinyar Patel Ph.D. candidate, Harvard University

- ❖ The Parsi population's height: 114,890 in 1940, in undivided India Current population in India 69,000.
- ❖ There are perhaps 10-15,000 in North America and another 5,000 in Europe/Australia. That still puts Parsis at, at most, 90,000, indicating a rather significant drop over a short period of 60 years.
- ❖ My knowledge of the Iranian Zoroastrians is much less certain, but I believe that there are, at most, 15,000 abroad and 10-15,000 remaining in Iran. The Iranian government and various other sources have, occasionally, erroneously reported population figures for Zoroastrians as high as 150,000.
- ❖ Intermarriage rates for Bombay are now around 33%, and 50% and above in the rest of India and abroad; these figures can be seen from issues of Parsiana. If current policy of excluding children of just one Parsi parent continues, we will have in a few decades an equal (and equally small) population of Parsis and those who are partially

accepted as Parsis/Zoroastrians, never raised as such, or simply have given up.

These statistics also neglect to factor in the problem of high rates of Parsis who never marry or those who marry and never have children. It is, indeed, supremely ironic that in a religion where our texts and traditions clearly place great emphasis on marriage and having children, that a significant portion of our population avoids both.

Manmohan Singh, various other elements of the Government of India – including Gujarat CM Narendra Modi, have all expressed concern at our rapidly dropping numbers and our inability to come together to address the problem.

This is an issue that should really unite liberals and conservatives. Even if we can't come to a full accord on the issue of intermarriage, we should at least agree to STRONGLY encourage marriage and having children. We really are perched on the edge of extinction, folks, and it could happen sooner than we imagine.

India's Parsees - Slow Breeders

Apr 17th 2008 | DELHI
From *The Economist* print edition

Adherents of an ancient faith worry about its disappearance.

TWO of India's biggest business clans—Tata and Godrej—are Parsees, descendants of Zoroastrians, who fled the Muslim invasion of Persia for India more than 1,000 years ago. But well though some of its members have done, the Parsee community is dwindling. At the time of the 2001 census India had fewer than 70,000 Parsees, a 40% drop since 1941. Since then, the decline has accelerated. A survey suggests that only 99 Parsees were born in the year to August 2007, compared with 223 in 2001.

The community's very success has played a part in its shrinkage. Young Parsees tend to put off marriage until they have established careers, "leaving time for two children only, if that," says Mehroo Bengalee, a Parsee member of the government's National Commission for Minorities. Emigration is another factor: like many prosperous Indians, Parsees tend to go to university

overseas, and stay there. But most important is the large number of women who marry non-Parsees. Their children are not recognised as Parsees.

The Parsee community, concentrated around Mumbai, is trying to push up the birth rate. New Parsee-only fertility centres are being built. Young Parsees are given lectures about the benefits of early breeding. Girls and boys are brought together at youth camps, in an effort to encourage inter-Parsee marriage.

Many Parsee women, meanwhile, complain that the one change that could stem the decline will never come. They would like the concession that allows men in mixed marriages to bring their children up as Parsees to be extended to them. "My brother's children are recognised as Parsees; mine are not," says Shireen Vakil-Miller who, like her brother, married "outside". The effect on the Parsee population of her hometown, Delhi, is dramatic. When she arrived in 1991, there were thought to be 800 Parsees in the capital. Today, that number has fallen by half.

Children's Religious Class

A Humble Beginning And A Hope For Revival

A religious class for children aged four to twelve on Sunday 27 April at the Noranda Family centre heralded a new and a humble beginning in passing on some of the basic values and teaching of our Zoroastrian religion. The feedback received from children and their parent's indicates to us that the class needs to be continued on a consistent basis. The venue is ideal for children's needs as well as Adult prayer session and Adult discussion on select topics. Nine year old Parina Randeria's message (below) has touched our hearts and mind - their eagerness and interest in the class, is a catalyst for us in advancing and revolutionizing the way we conduct our monthly prayer and religious activities. Our gratitude to Zenobia Mistry for her time and patience with the children.

Religious Classes

On Sunday 27 April 2008, Junior Parsi Kids took part in religious classes. The classes were held at the Noranda Family center.

Mrs. Zenobia Mistry was happy to teach the kids, alone. They started at 11:05 till 1:45. The kids learnt about how Ahura

Mazda came to the world and sent

Zarathushtra to earth and how Zarathushtra went looking for the meaning of truth.

The kids had two breaks. One for morning tea, and the other for lunch. They also did a bit of note taking and had great questions.

After the classes were over, the kids got excited to go outside and play. The kids really enjoyed themselves and so did all the parents. The next lessons will be taught on, Sunday, 18th of May. See you there!!!

by Parina Randeria.