

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello Southerners,

A good day to all of you. I am typing this message on Tamil New Year's Day. Wishing you all a very healthy, and happy year filled with abundance.

The month of March began with SETS in Trivandrum. Three of us from our Club attended - Sridharan as part of the SETS organizing committee, Parasuraman as our club Secretary-Elect, and I as Regional Secretary-Elect for the year 2024-25. It was a very informational and fun trip where we cultivated several friendships. One such friendship led to our Sunday lunch outing to Aavin at the end of the month. Anand, the Secretary Elect for RC Millenium who works in Aavin facilitated the visit and personally took us through the entire process of milk packaging. The Annettes who were present that day were quite wide-eyed with all that they learned about how milk came to our dining table every day. I was quite tickled that the cow was never mentioned at any point.

We had 2 interesting weekly meetings. Dr. Meera Ragavan spoke to us on balancing work and home life and many of us could relate to what she had to say. Our club director for DEI, Shyamala Jayaprakash invited Naval officer Captain Arvind Shankar to talk about closing the gender gap in the maritime industry. It was a joint meeting with RC of Adyar, was informational and well attended. We even had 9 Interact students attend from Asan School.

The board meeting at the Presidency Club had a good turnout. It was decided to have the Ramakrishna Raja Award function on 14th May. Parvathy of Aspire Foundation will be the awardee this year.

On 8th March (Women's Day), RCMS along with Geo Foundation picked out 10 women who were affected by the Michaung cyclone and each received a Thallu Vandis to conduct their business with – cooking and selling food,

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A 'NICE' AND ENLIGHTENING VISIT TO AAVIN



It was a bright and sweltering Sunday morning on 31st March when a group of Southerners embarked on a journey to a factory that has been supplying morning milk to Chennai for generations. This factory is none other than that of Aavin Nice, a household name in Tamil Nadu.

Every day, we receive packets of milk at our doorstep. But have you ever wondered about the journey of this milk from the factory to your home?

The excitement was palpable when Anand from RC Millenium, also our guide that morning, introduced us to the process and history of Aavin. The neatness and efficiency of the factory were commendable, instilling in us a sense of confidence in the safety of Aavin's milk.

Our excitement peaked when we witnessed milk being packed and transported automatically via a conveyor belt. Amidst the summer heat, the Annettes relished the cool atmosphere inside the finished storage warehouse, where the temperature is maintained at around 4 degrees Celsius.

The visit concluded with a quiz, and the Annettes were quick to answer the questions and win a prize. The reward? A visit to a nearby Aavin parlour! What a delightful end to an enlightening day!

PP Rtn M C Srikanth

PUSHCARTS TO PROSPERITY

On the occasion of International Women's Day, our Club sponsored 10 'Thallu Vandis' (pushcarts) that will help street vendors to improve their livelihood. This was done as part of the project organised by Rotary District 3232. Here is a picture of a vendor, before and after she received the 'Thallu Vandi'. Truly a project that empowers women. Our president Bina Boaz participated in the event to hand over the carts to the beneficiaries.



KATTUR LEARNING CENTRE ACHIEVES A NEW MILESTONE



Our Club's Community Learning Centre in Kattur village in Thirupporur block got a shot in the arm as another batch of women who underwent the training programme in tailoring and sewing was completed in March. The women proved their prowess by displaying the dresses stitched by them. They have also learned to make shopping bags. It is the 12th year since the Centre was started during the Presidentship of Rtn. Seshadri under the flagship 'Happy Village' project of our District during the RY 2012-13.

NIGHT STUDY CLASSES FOR PCKG SCHOOL STUDENTS

In the run-up to the public exams, our Club facilitated special after-school night study classes for over 800 students of Class 10, 11 and 12 of PCKG Govt School in Kodambakkam, Chennai, where our Club already conducts an 'Education Development Programme'. These classes are conducted by the school teachers who spend extra hours to give special attention to students considered slow learners in Tamil & Science subjects. As an added incentive to ensure their attendance, the students were provided a nutritious dinner sponsored by our club.



R RAJA MEMORIAL AWARD TO BE PRESENTED

The 3rd PDG Ramakrishna Raja Memorial Award for Excellence will be presented to ASPIRE FOUNDATION, on 14th May. **Ms P N Parvathy**, Co-Founder, will receive the award on behalf of the foundation which works towards supporting poor rural students to complete their school education. Prof. V Kamakoti (Director – IIT Madras) and India Sudar (NGO) are the earlier recipients of this award instituted in the year 2022.



SETS 2024 – A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

The Secretaries Elect Training Programme 2024 (SETS 24) was an experience beyond my expectations. It was an unforgettable journey that I embarked on last month to Trivandrum, and it was nothing short of an edutainment extravaganza. As a newcomer to the world of Rotary, it served as a great eye-opener. The opportunity to learn about the guiding principles of Rotary and the various avenues through which we serve society was truly awe-inspiring.

The event was well-planned and meticulously executed, from our departure at Chennai Central

Station to our delightful stay at the resort. The cultural activities in the evening and the quality time spent with the District office bearers added to the richness of the experience. The return journey after three days was just as smooth.

I must express my appreciation for the level of planning and execution that went into this program. I never imagined a training program could be this enriching. My heartfelt thanks to the entire organising team for this wonderful experience."

Rtn K Parasuraman

(Secretary-Elect 2024-25)



RAINWATER HARVESTING PROJECT INAUGURATED

On 20th March, DG Ravi Raman inaugurated a rainwater harvesting project at Lady Willingdon School in Triplicane. It is a



global grant project with contributions from 7 clubs in the district including RCMS. Wells will be dug in 14 schools in Chennai and the entire surrounding areas of these schools will benefit from the project.

VISIT TO AYODHYA



RC Connemara and RC Legends organised a spiritual trip to Ayodhya over 3 days from 8th to 10th March. Rtn Janaki Raman along with her spouse Mr Raman, and Rtn Shyamala accompanied the group. Ms Padmini w/o Late Chandrasekhar, past president of RCMS was also a part of the group. According to Rtn Janaki, all the Rotarians, Anns and Annettes thoroughly enjoyed the well-organised tour while making new friends and bonding with other Rotarians.

SPEAKER MEETINGS IN MARCH



Date : 5th March, 2024
 Speaker : Dr Meera Ragavan
 Topic : Ensuring work-life balance



Date : 19th March, 2024
 Speaker : Capt Arvind Shankar
 Topic : Women in the seafaring industry

SOUTHERNERS MAKING WAVES

Three Southerners were in the news last month for their individual achievements.



Ann Kala Balasundaram received the FICCI FLO's Women Achievers Award 2024 from the Governor of TN, Hon. R N Ravi at a glittering event in Chennai. Kala is the Founder of ALERT, a not-for-profit organisation working towards bettering the Emergency response ecosystem.



Annette Jagadeesh, son of Rtn A Sridharan and Ann Raji was promoted to a Partner in the prestigious CA firm Price Water Cooper (PWC), wef 1st April.



Rtn Sheila Sriprakash, The Founder and Chief Architect of Shilpa Architects was named among the Top 5 design Legends in India at the prestigious Architects and Interiors India event held in Mumbai in March.

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vending fruits and vegetables... RCMS paid Rs.2.7 lakh for the 10 carts.

On the 15th, Rs.30,000 was given to PCKG school towards feeding the children who were preparing for their board exams and needed to stay in school for special classes late into the evening.

Five of us Southerners visited Kattur on the 16th to review the tailoring unit and the tuition classes. Both are flourishing. The ladies from the village who are learning to use the sewing machines in the community centre have come a long way. In just 4 short months they have learned to make their own clothes. The sewing teacher has also taught them to weave sturdy plastic bags.

A rainwater harvesting project was inaugurated on 20th March at Lady Willingdon School by DG Ravi Raman. It is a joint project by several clubs including ours which was initiated last year. But the Global Grant came through only this year, hence the delay in getting it started. The wells will be dug in 14 schools and the entire surrounding area will benefit from the project. RCMS contribution – Rs.1 lakh.

The remaining days in March were spent preparing the report for GOV. Ann Chitra Elumperiyar was remarkable in the time (25 hours) and expertise that she volunteered towards this end. Boy, am I glad that the GOV is done with!

Until next time, take care.

Yours in Rotary,

Bina Boaz

With Best Compliments from

A WELL WISHER

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