

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hi Southerners,

An exciting Rotary year is nearing its end for me as President of the Rotary Club of Madras South. It has been quite a ride with loads of highs. Looking back, I can see a whole lot of personal growth and awakening and I truly have to thank Rotary and all of

you for that blessing.

During the month of May 2024, I started working on a Global Grant project ... just when I thought I would be winding down! VHS required a couple of machines in the Ophthalmology Department – a Microscope and a Biometer. DG Ravi Raman, Shobana Ravi Raman, M C Srikanth, VHS, and I worked on it and got the paperwork uploaded by the first week of June. We will have to wait and see if it is approved. Fingers crossed.

On 14th May we had our Ramakrishna Raja Awards function. It was wonderful to have Parvathy receive the award this year on behalf of Aspire Foundation for its thoughtful and impactful service to society. Past RID Venkatesh was the Chief Guest and we were honoured to have PDG Sridhar, Chari, and District Secretary Rajagopal grace the occasion.

Our weekly speaker on 21st May was Poochi Venkat who gave an excellent presentation on insects in Chennai. Who would have thought that we lived amongst such exotic creatures?

On 24th May, Shyamala and I left for Singapore to attend our first Rotary International Convention. We returned on the 30th. More about the Convention in the following page.

Some of my favourite moments this past year:

Our visits to Amir Mahal and AVM Heritage Museum. It was great to have Annettes join us and enjoy the outing. 'Sunday lunch meeting' was a new concept introduced this year and the turnout for all our Sunday meetings was excellent.

I loved the camaraderie and the family fellowship in these gatherings.

Onam saw us come together in Sujeesh and Sunita's beach house. Almost everyone took part in some aspect of the celebration or the other – dance, pookalam, singing, food ... The laughter, the chatter, the joy was so palpable and beautiful. The Christmas party outdoors at Green Meadows was another fun event with a whole lot of games, singing, and happiness.

Our outstation trip was one more wonderful moment when new friendships were forged in God's own country – Athirapalli.

We had many marvelous projects with hundreds of beneficiaries. Some of the very heartwarming ones are:

Kanmani Project - where patients with Retinopathy who were going blind, were treated for free with medicines or surgeries in VHS. In all, 29 were given the gift of sight and this project was very close to my heart. I have been unable to find a non-Trust related sponsor for this project and very reluctantly had to let it go from RCMS. However, I did find a Trust to sponsor the patients directly without involving RCMS.

Caring for Little Hearts continued its awesome service of giving a fresh lease of life to little ones with damaged hearts. We have crossed 550 surgeries and still counting.

Our collective response to the floods in Dec 2023 was phenomenal! On so many fronts we were able to help - funds, food, raincoats, clothes, footwear, ... to ease the chaos in many of our beneficiaries' lives. Three cheers to Southerners!

Our Student Scholarship Program sponsored by Acsys (V Shankar) has been another big hit this year bringing relief to many parents and making it possible for 100s of students to continue to study in decent schools despite being unable

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RI CONVENTION 2024 IN SINGAPORE – ICING ON MY CAKE!



Truly a statement of grandeur and quite an experience to taste the magnitude of Rotary. The opening and closing ceremonies of the Convention were nothing short of spectacular, with fabulous regional dances, singing to soothe your soul and very rejuvenating Rotary-related speeches.



The reach of Rotary is unimaginable. It was mind-boggling to see and hear about all that's happening with Rotary around the world ... some very beautiful and impactful projects.

The 'House of Friendship' was our favourite place to hang out, where we had a chance to exchange flags with fellow Rotarians from other parts of the world and get to know more about how other Rotary clubs functioned. Everyone was so warm and friendly. Felt proud to be a Rotarian, like I belonged to some elite group of special people.

It was Shyamala's and my first experience of a Convention, and I was particularly happy to attend it when I was still President.

Bina Boaz

....Continued from President's Message

to pay the school fee. The ANEW project where we sponsor nurses is yet another heartwarming project where we enable women to stand on their own two feet. We even had Annette Siddharth Rajendran sponsor one of the nurses by collecting funds from friends and relatives. How is that for Rotary setting an example for the youngsters? The nurses' stories of where they were and where they are, now that they were certified nurses were truly heartening.

Kattur (Happy Village), PCKG, and our Spoken English classes are all projects that will have far-reaching effects and will speak for themselves as the years go by. Nothing like feeding those in need, and the Annadhanam that we do at East Eden year after year is equally a blessing to them and us who facilitate it.

I LOVE WHAT WE DO!

Thanks for the opportunity to serve. Couldn't have done it without all of your love, support, and encouragement. A special thanks to my team of enlightened souls (Narayanan, Elumperiyar, Sathya, Rajan Babu, Magdoom, Sibi, R.Srikanth, M C Srikanth, Madhu, Saravanan, Janaki, Seshadri, Ajit, Bowmick, Anu, Ashok, BB Vengatesh, Chitra, ...) including my advisors PDG Natarajan Nagoji, Rtn.Sridharan, Rtn.Shyamala and trainer Rtn.Renjit Joseph.

Looking forward to many more years as a Rotarian and a Southerner. Love you guys.

Yours in Rotary,

Bina Boaz

We meet on Tuesdays at 6.30 pm at Hotel Savera

3RD RAMAKRISHNA RAJA MEMORIAL AWARD PRESENTED

ASPIRE FOUNDATION, a non-profit initiative, founded in 2005, received the 3rd Ramakrishna Raja Memorial Award for Excellence at a simple function in Hotel Savera on 14th May 2024. The award was instituted in 2022 in memory of PDG Rtn Ramakrishna Raja, a veteran Charter member of RCMS, who passed away in 2020.

The award recognised Aspire Foundation's support to poor rural students from economically backward rural families to complete their school education in the Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu. P N Parvathy, co-founder, received the memento and citation on behalf of the Foundation.



In her keynote address, Parvathy presented to the audience the impressive journey of Aspire Foundation which began with just 16 students and has grown to over 600 today. The chief guest, PRID A S Venkatesh and DG Ravi Raman also spoke about their association with PDG Raja, while Ms Geetha Raja, representing her family reminisced about her father.



IMPACTFUL JOURNEY OF CFLH PROJECT

During our visit to Soorya Hospital on 18th May, Rtn Saravanan and I interacted with patients and their families. We encountered a 4-year-old girl (Rakshana) in the ICU who had undergone a complex open bypass surgery, and her parents were thankful for the financial support

received. Another patient, (Jayasri) a 12-year-old girl, was excited to return to school after her recovery, with her family expressing gratitude towards the Rotarians and RCMS. A third young patient was awaiting surgery, and we offered support and reassurance to her parents. Following our visit, we learned that her surgery was successful and the patient was discharged.

Engaging with these patients and witnessing their journey towards healing brings immense joy and reinforces the value of RCMS's impactful projects like the 'Caring for Little Hearts'.

Rtn R Srikanth

PCKG SCHOOL PROJECT REVIEW

On 15th May, the PCKG School project team provided an overview of the RCMS-supported project to the new Headmaster. Following this six 9th grade students showcased the PowerPoint projects they had prepared as part of their computer instruction class. PP Rtn Renjit Joseph represented RCMS at the meeting.



SPEAKER MEETING IN MAY



Date : 21st May, 2024

Speaker : Mr Poochi Venkat

Topic : Biodiversity and micro-life

THE CHANGE AGENTS OF VYASARPADI



Vyasarpadi brings images of drug addicts, goondas, and slums to the minds of Chennaiavasis. From this slush has blossomed an organization called 'Vyasai Thozhargal' and its sister organisation 'Dr. Ambedkar Pagutharivu Padasalai'. Their single-point agenda is to improve the educational standard of Vyasarpadi youngsters. The morning and evening tuition classes run by them have been a success and the school pass percentages have gone up. They have been active and running for over ten years against all odds, though local politicians and other vested interests have been troubling them. As education brings in awareness and challenges their authority. The usual story, whenever deprived classes try to come out of their shackles.

Rtn Srikanth identified them in 2021 and then onwards RCMS has been supporting them in many ways like computer lab, flood relief, etc. To improve their confidence and employment opportunities we also started English-speaking classes for the students as well as the teachers. The courses are going well.

Rtn Renjit Joseph



AWARD FOR 'THE SOUTHERNER'

For the past several years, the Rotary Club of Madras Metro has been conducting the Annual Bulletin Awards to identify and recognize excellence in the bulletins published by several Rotary clubs in our District. An eminent panel of jury members shortlisted around 10 bulletins out of over 140 published by various clubs on certain pre-determined parameters. The final five winners were presented the awards at a function held at the Taj Coromandel Hotel on 10th May. RCMS received the runner-up award (jointly with R C Adyar) for clubs with more than 50 members. This recognition has been possible thanks to the unstinted support of our president, secretary, contributors, and sponsors in the current and past years. Thank you.

Rtn K NARAYANAN will be installed as the 65th President of The Rotary Club of Madras South for the RY 2024-25 at The Madras Cricket Club on 24 th June 2024. DGE N S Saravanan will be the chief guest. Southerners are requested to be present in large numbers to cheer and welcome the incoming president and his team.

STAY BLESSED

BJNA BOAZ

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The Southerner is published by Rotary Club of Madras South for private circulation and is Printed by Multicraft (2431 0419)