

Hill Echoes

Bulletin of Rotary Club of Thane Hills

Issue # 8 - February 2023

RI President: Jennifer Jones

Club President: Jayaram Mendon

Club Secretary: Samir Limaye

DG: Kailash Jethani

Triumph Run for the Triumphant ones!



Carnival on the ground



President's Message

Rotary Pranam to All Hillers...

The New Year has begun with new hope and energy, we move towards our goals with passion. Things are visible with more clarity now. Over the last six months, I realized that projects and meetings play the primary role in improving the strength of the club. Leaders must know their own strengths and weaknesses as well as their team members and do not waste their time becoming experts on every detail of the business. Instead they identify the strengths of their teammates and work with them on assignments accordingly. Individuals take ownership of these duties thus freeing up time for the leaders to think about the big picture. RCTH is blessed to have a series of such leaders in waiting. Triumph Run is one such example. The flawless show from Hillers. A confidence builder to a new team as they learn to rely on each other. This is the most important leadership quality because if your team does not trust you or vice versa you have more chances of failures.

In the month of January we have completed 6 new projects in which Triumph Run has seen the maximum participation. Hillers got engaged in Gaimukh Beach Cleaning with the Ocean Network team. SAEVUS Quiz has seen approximately 80 teams participate. This is the highest number since its inception. Hillers came forward in saving a 90 days old baby named Seetakumari. Similar case was with Mrs. Rashmi Ghosalkar where Urgent surgery was required to save her life. The Blood Donation drive held at Korum Mall was covered by media.

New E-Waste Facility, Check Dams, Toilet Blocks and Autism Center all are in the advanced stages. Month of February will see most of the results. We have been assigned by Rotary Club of Calgary as auditor for project on sex workers which will be executed by Kshamata NGO.

DISCON of Dist 3141 is on 4th & 5th February. Around 34 Hillers have booked for the Event which is highest for any club in Dist 3141.

I hope to see more and more participation from Hillers in our future endeavors.

As always keep Rocking Hillers.....

Jayaram Mendon



Editorial

Friends, January was perhaps busiest month with so many projects. Eight projects to be precise, apart from so many under way. The project with most involvement was obviously Triumph run. This year the project assumed gigantic proportions. The huge response was because of change in format, also because of our efforts to get maximum participation.

The gathering of about fifteen hundred was handled so very well only because of years of experience and very meticulous planning, combined with love and dedication of Hillers over the whole tiring day. Such projects with huge team efforts build better bond among us Rotarians and strengthen our club and most importantly, elevate us as humans. That's how we become better every year as sensitive humans, we evolve. The U tube video on Triumph run gives glimpses of the project for those who missed it. I forwarded the video to all my contacts and there were so many messages appreciating our efforts.

Triumph run was also very well covered in print and digital media. The whole day was so absorbing the District Governor couldn't move away for full day. He also commented that only Hillers could pull off such a gigantic project and in style.

There were other projects in January like Saevus quiz, Plastic waste collection, blood donation camp, creek clean up drive with Ocean Network Clean up India Pvt Ltd. Apart from these, in medical projects, we helped a three month old baby with expenses for complicated surgery to save her, carried out free cataract surgeries and financial help for another patient needing surgery. All in a matter of one month!

In this process of implementing community projects, we are strengthening our club through building new connections, bonds, skills and teams, among new and old Rotarians. While the project like Eco quiz has been going on for past over five years with teams and processes in place, the environmental awareness program among school children is new and is taking shape thanks to team lead by R/Ann Radhika. This project needs continuous efforts with close contact with so many schools. When it comes to ongoing projects, we already have expertise and well oiled machinery ready for projects like blood bank, toilets for tribals, building of check dams, "mission for vision" and any medical project. The list will only grow.

Our reputation is growing because of our work and one proof is PE Harshad Divekar was called as chief guest in Kamalini Karnabadhir Vidyalaya for Republic Day celebrations. Rtn Pawan and Satish accompanied him.

February is World Understanding Month that requires involvement with exchange programs and peace scholarship. This is the focus area of Rotary International and most important. World peace is the only goal of Rotary. Many of us are not aware that Rotary was part of the team and process in the formation of UNO after second world war.

Peace scholarship area is one thing we have not touched so far. The details of the program are given in an article from Rotary International. With our capabilities I am sure we will be successful in this area as well.

Rajesh Salaskar

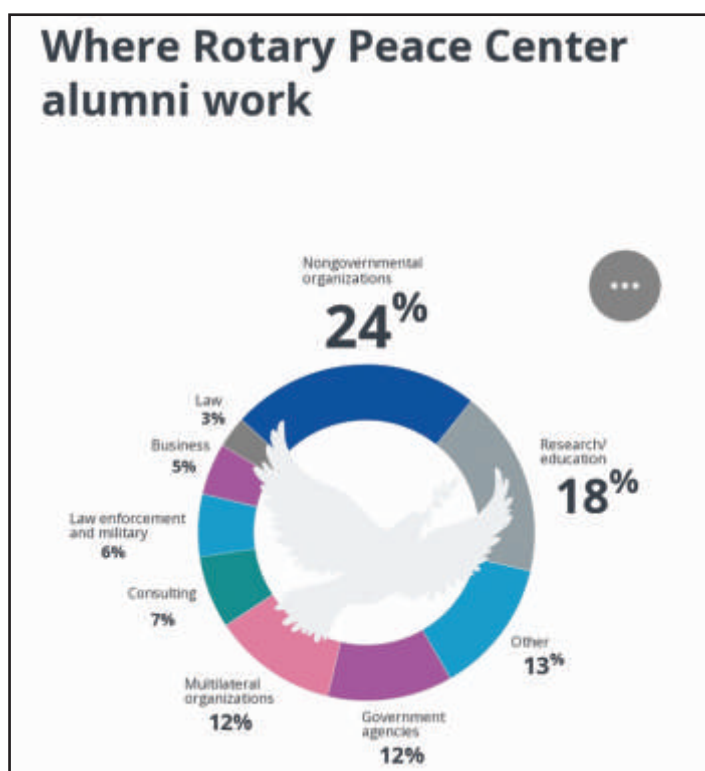
International Peace Scholarship

Each year, Rotary awards fully funded fellowships for dedicated leaders from around the world to study at one of our peace centers.

Through academic training, practice, and global networking opportunities, the Rotary Peace Centers program develops the capacity of peace and development professionals to become effective catalysts for peace. The fellowships cover tuition and fees, room and board, round-trip transportation, and internship and field-study expenses.

Since the program began in 2002, the Rotary Peace Centers have trained more than 1,600 fellows who now work in over 140 countries. Many serve as leaders in governments; NGOs; education and research institutions; peacekeeping and law enforcement agencies; and international organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank.

Our fellowships



The Rotary Peace Fellowship is designed for leaders with work experience in peace and development. Our fellows are committed to community and international service and the pursuit of peace. Each year, The Rotary Foundation awards up to 50 fellowships for master's degrees and up to 40 for certificate studies at premier universities.

Choose the program that's right for you

Master's degree programs

Accepted candidates study peace and development issues with research-informed teaching and a diverse student body. The programs last 15 to 24 months and include a two- to three-month field study, which participants design themselves.

Professional development certificate program

During the one-year blended learning program, experienced peace and development professionals with diverse backgrounds gain practical skills to promote peace within their communities and across the globe. Fellows complete field studies and design and carry out a social change initiative. This program is intended for working professionals. Fellows earn a post-graduate diploma upon completion of the program.

Application timeline

We are now accepting Rotary Peace Fellowship applications for the 2024-25 academic year. Candidates have until 15 May to submit applications to The Foundation. Rotary endorsers must submit endorsements to The Foundation by 1 July. Find endorsement instructions at rotary.org/endorsepeacefellows.

Our approach

We see peace not as an abstract concept but as a living, dynamic expression of human development. Peace building is a cornerstone of our mission as a humanitarian service organization and is one of Rotary's areas of focus - the channels of activity through which our members make their mark on the world. Our programs, grants and fellowships focus on creating environments where peace can be built and maintained. Rotary believes that if concerned citizens work together to create peace locally, lasting change can happen globally.

Rotary Theme 2023-24: Create Hope in the World



RI President-elect R. Gordon R. McNally calls for Rotary to create hope in the world by working for peace and mental well-being. He urges members to engage in tough conversations and earn the trust that's necessary to realize these values.

Medical Project

This is the story of a 3 month old child, Seetakumari, admitted with complaints of noisy breathing and failure to thrive. The baby was 2.2 kg, hadn't put on any weight in 2 and half months after birth, and was vomiting after feeds.

We kept the baby on IV fluids and after thorough investigation found that she had laryngotracheomalacia (a condition in which the windpipe and its branches have weak cartilages which collapse during breathing), and severe gastro esophageal reflux (GERD). After ensuring the baby survived the initial stormy period we were able to ensure a weight gain upto 2.7 kg after almost one month of diligent, watchful treatment.

The baby was kept in Pediatric ICU at Mahavir Jain Hospital, where the charges there are reasonable, but the parents of the baby had exhausted their meager resources and were reaching out for help.



The expenses, including medicines, were about one lakh, (which is nothing compared to the kind of ICU care, investigations, and medicines given to the baby over one month!) of which they were able to pay Rs. 50000.

I requested President Jayaram if we can do something for this child. He immediately responded by saying that some money, brought by PP Nilesh Puranik was available. He told me he would seek the consent of the BOD for disbursement of the funds.

True to his promise, he ensured that Rs. 50000 was transferred into the Mahavir Jain account!!

I must tell you that the parents of the child, Seetakumari, were overwhelmed and had tears in their eyes when the baby was discharged in a healthy state.


Deeply in gratitude to my dear friends of RCTH in general and Jayaram and BOD in particular!!



The blessings of the Almighty... and of the parents of Seetakumari. Will always be with us!! You can see the difference after treatment.

PP Dr Suhas Kulkarni

FEBRUARY IS





PEACE AND CONFLICT PREVENTION/RESOLUTION MONTH

"Imagine all the people living life in peace..."

John Lennon

Rotary



www.rotary.org

Triumph Run for the Triumphant ones!

Triumph Run, an annual signature event of Rotary Club of Thane Hills is close to every Hiller's heart. Started in 2000 by PP K S Ranganathan and then Club Secretary Ravi Iyer, this annual event has gathered momentum and become bigger and better with each passing year.

It started as a sporting event for special children, changed its shape to a Carnival on the ground, and then moved indoors as a Fun Carnival. While it changed the way it was conducted, the spirit always remained the same.

This year, the Club President Jayaram Mendon and Club Secretary Samir Limaye decided to be ambitious and hold both the sporting events and the Carnival in the outdoor location. The task of managing the event was given to the President Nominee Harshad Divekar. And as we all know, ***"When the going gets tough, the Hillers get going."***

Harshad rose to the challenge and formed his core team comprising veterans who brought in the experience and motivation and a lot of new Hillers who brought in innovative ideas and fresh energy.

Harshad continued the process in his typical meticulous manner and ensured that each major task was assigned to a team leader, who in turn formed his/her team to deliver what was expected.

Different teams like School Co-ordination, Sponsorship, Food, Gifts and Trophies, Venue, Entertainment Zone, Fun Zone, Sports, Transportation, Registration were given charge and each one of them delivered what was expected of them.

The school co-ordination team did a fantastic job and could muster the highest number of registrations till date. When a day before the event, final numbers were compiled, we were looking at a crowd of 1500 plus. It was a huge crowd to be managed in a span of 4-5 hours. But who better than Hillers to manage it efficiently!

On the D-day on 22 January 2023, more than 125 Hillers including Anns and Annets assembled at Holy Cross School grounds and took over their duties. In fact, a lot of them were also there the previous day to ensure that the venue was ready and gifts were packed.

By 8:00 a.m., the students, their teachers and parents started pouring in and the entire ground was a beehive of activity. All Hillers were seen at their best doing their assigned task with super-efficiency. In flat 75 minutes, all the registration, under Vikram

Mane's supervision was done, breakfast completed and the students were ready for a March Past.

With the band playing, the enthusiastic children led by a Hiller carrying the school name placard marched with unparalleled gusto and energy. They reached the front of the stage where stood the Chief Guest District Governor Kailash Jethani, First lady Darshana Jethani and all the Past Presidents of RCTH. After the National Anthem, more than 1000 balloons were released covering the sky with blue, red, green and pink hues.

While Sucheta Rege and Ravi Iyer took charge of their respective sports tracks, Pawan Adnani and Prashant Ojha ensured that all the games in the FUN Zone were set to be enjoyed by the children.

Sujit Gawayi with his team was belting out the latest Bollywood numbers to entertain children, whereas Ruby Khurana and Anil Joshi ensured that the food was being readied for a crowd of 1500 people.

The sporting events lasted for more than two and a half hours where we saw more than 800 special children overcome their challenges to race and win against all odds. The fun zone gave an opportunity not only to children but also to their parents and teachers to stop worrying for those few hours and live in the present by savouring every moment. The children, their teachers and specially Hillers took over the dance floor.

We also had a special guest Varun Sawant, who is a first person with autism in India to have run full marathons. He, in his message told the gathering that we, special children need not stop ourselves due to any limitation and need to get all opportunities to do well in our professions and life.

The programme ended with prize distribution for all the winners of sporting events. The prizes were handed over by DG Kailash Jethani, PDG Dr Ashes Ganguly and many other Hillers. While the winners got medals and the schools won The 'Winner', 'Runner Up' and 'Maximum Participation' trophies, each child was presented with beautiful gifts.

While the event may have lasted for just five hours, the memories of it will linger for ever. And as I always say, "If you attend Triumph Run event once, you are hooked and you wait for the next one to come."



So, enjoy the beautiful pictures till we meet our special friends once again in the year 2024!

Sunil Gwalani









Plastic waste reduction: certificate presentation-second phase

The 'Interschool Plastic Waste Collection Contest' initiated by RCTH in partnership with Samarth Bharat Vyaspeeth is going great guns.

During the second phase of collections in the months of November and December 2022, there has been an unprecedented response. A whopping 1.126 tonnes of plastic waste was collected by 24 schools in Thane city. This inspite of two vacations, sports days, annual days and Christmas celebrations.

The anti-plastic fever is catching up and this spells doom for plastic. The future citizens of the country are slowly but surely gearing up to understand the importance of plastic recycling. They are preparing to spread awareness in the local community too.

The results of the second phase of the Interschool Plastic Waste Collection Contest is as follows:

1st position: Smt. Sulochanadevi Singhania School, Thane. The school collected an incredible 429.915 kg

2nd position: Dnyan Ganga Education Trust's degree college of Arts, Commerce & Science. This institution collected an astonishing 354.2 kg

3rd position: Little Flower High School. The school gave 123.5 kg
First Consolation prize: C. P. Goenka International School. The school collected 47.454 kg

Our motto is to minimise the littering of plastic and convert it into useful things by the process of recycling; we can pat ourselves as we are on the right track!



Anns Manjiri and Radhika in Dnyan Ganga auditorium



Dnyan Ganga College second prize



C. P. Goenka International School: first consolation prize



Little Flower High School: third prize



Smt. Sulochanadevi Singhania School: First Prize



Prez. Jayaram Mendon addressing the students at Singhania



Singhania School certificate presentation



With NSS students of Dnyan Ganga College who contributed to the plastic waste collection

Gaimukh creek cleaning project

In the year 2021-22, we were supported by Ocean Network Express (India) P. Ltd. (ONE) for construction of one check dam at Murbad through their CSR initiative. Seeing the successful and structured



implementation, they approached us for conducting an employee engagement event, predominantly an activity related to sea or beach, as this is closer to their core business of shipping. It is



pertinent to mention here that our member Kapil Barve works with this company and was instrumental in getting the CSR funding from his company.



We then approached TMC and Maritime Board to seek the required permission to conduct creek cleaning activity at Gaimukh creek.

This location is unique in the sense that a large part of the same is well built up with concrete and a part adjacent to the same is unprepared land being used for dumping the garbage by the locals.

On 21st January, 2023, 190 ONE employees gathered in the morning for creek cleaning activity. We formed 3 groups viz *chowpati* cleaning, outside road and the rough land portion. We organised all the material required for garbage collection viz brooms, garbage bags, excavation material and safety materials like hand gloves and masks. The employees were quite enthusiastic



in collection of garbage scattered all over the place. The company leadership participated in the event throughout. The current MD Mr. Masaki Osawa and Dy. Country Head Mr. Masahiro Sakikubo personally participated in the cleaning activity. This was an example of leading from the front. Especially Mr. Osawa San showed such a commitment that he was going at most inaccessible and even unhygienic spots for collection of dry garbage. He wouldn't stop for anyone to accompany him and was all over showing the sincerity towards the work undertaken. Really a learning for all of us!!



The team collected more than 700 Kgs of garbage on the day and after the cleaning activity, the site was really looking very clean.

This was first in kind event for RC Thane Hills where we helped one Corporate to conduct an employee engagement event and the event was successful due to pre-planning and whole hearted participation by Hillers throughout the event. The cleaning material was organised by Rtn Yashpal and he also provided us his team of 10 members to support the cleaning activity. We organised packed



breakfast and lunch for the participants which was co-ordinated by Ruby and Pawan. The backdrop was designed by Shirish in his unique style. The liasoning for permissions was done by President Jayram and Vijay Shetty. Nilesh Puranik organised the excavation tools. Sujit Uchil co-ordinated and organised for buses for ONE



Important to note that we conducted this event together with our signature event of Triumph Run which was scheduled the very next day and the event was flawless.

Friends, this event gave us an experience of organising an event for a corporate who work in very structured way. Also, this event will



employees. The event was attended by many Hillers viz President Jayram, Samir Limaye, Sunil Gwalani, Govind Khetan, Yashpal



make our connection with ONE much stronger and we can look to build this relationship on a sustainable basis for supporting our



Mewati, Varsha Likhite, Nilesh Pitale, Gururaj Agnihotri, Ruby, Shailesh Mulye, Ramesh Sator and Shirish Songadkar. Special mention must be made of First Lady Shubha and Ann Anita Mewati, who were present through out the event and supported actively. Of course, Kapil was present representing ONE as well as RCTH. Ann Aditi organised for transportation of collected garbage to a garbage processing facility, so that the collected garbage could be treated in safe manner.



forthcoming projects. After the event, we received a very positive feedback on our event organisation from many of the participants.



PP Nilesh Likhite

Blood Donation Camp at Korum Mall

Rotarians rose to the need of blood donation for Triumph Blood Bank on 29th January.



74th Republic Day celebrations

PE Harshad Divekar was the chief guest accompanied by Rtn Pavan Adnani and Rtn Satish Shetty at Kamalini Karnabadhri (special school) Vidyalaya Thane east. Program included flag

hoisting, felicitation and awards for the students.

This reflects the goodwill we build because of our work.



February 2023 Calendar

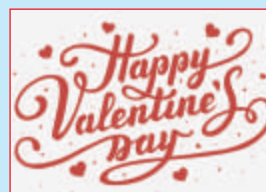
2nd Feb - Club Meeting

4th and 5th Feb - DISCON



8th Feb - Guest speaker Dr Mayuresh Warke

16th Feb - Club Meeting with Valentine Day celebration



23rd Feb - Panel discussion with past Presidents

'Save Wildlife'... message of the Saevus Ecoachiever Quiz

It is said that the continued existence of wildlife is very important to the survival of Mankind. However, sadly, the man - animal conflict has taken ugly proportions. The wildlife which makes this Earth a beautiful and wholesome planet, is quickly getting depleted and this is a huge concern for us.

A great personality once said, "The wildlife and its habitat cannot speak, so we must and we will." We are now left with the task of



shouldering the humongous task of conserving wildlife and more importantly, spreading awareness among people especially the future citizens so that the precious wildlife of the globe continues to thrive.

Saevus, the organisation which runs wildlife magazine in the country has been successfully sensitizing school children through its annual nationwide Saevus Ecoachiever quiz. This one of its kind quiz focuses on wild life, biodiversity and ecology. This was the eighth edition of the quiz , the last two being online ones due to the pandemic. This year, the Saevus quiz was back with a bang with renewed vigour. The Rotary clubs in various cities have been



assisting Saevus in reaching the quiz to the students.

The Thane city round of the Saevus Ecoachiever quiz was organised on 7th Jan 2023. The venue was the auditorium of Smt. Sulochanadevi

Singhania School, Thane. About 70 teams (3 students each) from 29 schools from Thane, Mulund, Bhandup, Navi Mumbai and Powai comprising students from 5th,6th and 7th grades battled it out to seal a berth in the National finals of the quiz. RCTH joined hands with Saevus to organize the event, as in the previous editions.

The day's programme commenced with the National Anthem and the introduction of RCTH. The Club President Jayaram Mendon in



his brief speech highlighted the important projects undertaken by RCTH like the Thalassemia blood bank, Interschool plastic waste collection contest, Virtual eye project, check dam construction in remote areas etc. The role of the quiz in shaping school kids into citizens who care for wildlife and its conservation was highlighted.

A written test was conducted as the elimination round and top six teams made it to next round. This being the most exciting aspect of the programme, caught the attention of the 500 plus audience which comprised the participating students from various schools, teachers, parents and Rotary club members. There were six rounds which included audio visual round, multiple choice questions, rapid fire round, fill in the blanks, animal fictional characters etc. The quizmaster Rajiv D'Silva, maintained the momentum till the end.



There were numerous questions for the audience and prizes too, for them. It was a hard fought contest and kept the audience riveted to their seats.

The quiz came to an end, winners were announced and prizes were awarded at the hands of Guest of Honour, Past Rotary International Director Ashok Mahajan. All the participating children were given

certificates and the teachers were presented with certificates in appreciation of their efforts in mentoring their students. DAV Public School, Thane was the winner and was



selected to enter the finals of the quiz. Smt. Sulochanadevi Singhania School, Thane was the first runner up team while Sri Sri Ravishankar Vidyalaya, Mulund was the second runner up team.

All the members of the teams who qualified for the final round were also given a copy of the famous primatologist Jane Goodall's book 'The Book of Hope'.

The collaborative efforts of Saevus and the Rotary Club of Thane Hills proved to be successful in stimulating young minds to learn and know more about wildlife and appreciate their role in shaping our civilization. The increased participation of schools in this kind of an awareness programme spoke volumes of the enhanced interest of educational institutions in giving the students the right kind of exposure in their formative years.



Radhika Padmanabhan

Inner Wheel Club Projects

We had quite a few activities and projects in January.

Adarsh School - Water cooler was provided for drinking water requirements of students. Books were donated for students.



Blood Sugar check up and Lipid profile camp at Manpada Slum on 17th January. There were thirty eight beneficiaries.



Cataract surgeries for senior citizens at Wavikar Hospital

Two midday meals at Wakdi old age

Participation in Triumph Run



Christmas celebrations at Swayam School



Mala Sachdev