



Issue # 08 - February 2024



HILLECHOES

Club Bulletin of Rotary Club of Thane Hills, RI District 3142

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February: Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month



Govind Khetan
Club President



My Dear Hillers,

Greetings !

The first month of the new year 2024 started off on a promising note with a new wave of excitement and new objectives to accomplish. Thank you very much for the energy and resounding all-round participation in our initiatives.

Sustainability is the delicate and fragile balance between the environment, equity, and economy. Sustainable practices support ecological, human, and economic health and vitality. Sustainability presumes that resources are finite, and should be used conservatively and wisely with a view to long-term priorities and consequences of the ways in which resources are used. In simplest terms, sustainability is all about our children and our grandchildren, and the world we will leave them.

All these concepts were highlighted to great effect during yet another edition of our signature project, Saevus Quiz on 13th Jan this year. Eager and enthusiastic schoolchildren for 83 schools competed to underline the importance of Sustainable processes and behaviour. It was a joy to watch these young minds grasp the importance and inevitability of concern for the environment.

BizQuest 2024 again brought in the best of intellect from the Corporate world into a contest to test their knowledge and understanding of all aspects of business – Products, Positioning, Pricing and Promotion. The participants and the audience had a wonderful day mesmerized by the brilliance of our ace quiz master, Rtn Sunil Gwalani as he probed, provoked and challenged all present.

At the second District Seminar held on 20th Jan, I had the proud privilege to receive two citations on behalf of Rotary Club of Thane Hills. The 'Shat Pratishat' citation for 100 % member retention in the first six months of the Excellent Year and the 'Hum Se Badh Kar Kaun' citation for adding 15 new members in the Excellent Year so far.

EmpowHer, our ambitious project for providing free HPV vaccination to schoolgirls in the age group of 9 – 14 years for the prevention of Cervical Cancer is being rolled out for the benefit of those who need this the most.

Friends, as the year 2024 unfolds, there is so much to look forward to. There are a slew of large projects that we shall execute together as 'one team, one family' for the benefit and welfare of those that need us the most.

I look forward to the months ahead with hope, anticipation and tremendous positivity. We shall accomplish our goals together, to the fullest.

May we create wonderful memories!



Dr. Anagha Karkhanis
Club Secretary



Dear Hillers,

Welcome to February, a month dedicated to peace building and conflict prevention, where our Rotary Club of Thane Hills continues its mission of fostering understanding and harmony within our community and beyond. As we embark on this journey, I am delighted to share with you the exciting events lined up for the month.

1st February: A World Unveiled with New Beginnings

At our weekly meeting on the 1st of February, we welcome Ana Mendes from the enchanting land of Brazil and Diane Le Gall from the picturesque boulevards of France. These two ambassadors of cultural exchange, part of our Rotary Youth Exchange program, will regale us with chronicles of their homelands and insights into their respective Rotary clubs and Interact clubs. This day promises to provide us with a unique cultural exchange opportunity.

Moreover, this meeting holds the special significance of new member induction, as we warmly welcome a fresh face into our Rotary family.

3rd and 4th February: The DISCON

Mark your calendars for the District Conference happening at the CIDCO Convention Centre, Navi Mumbai, on the 3rd and 4th of February. This event boasts an intriguing lineup of topics spanning defence, security, empowerment, leadership, management, finance, development, environment, health, culture, psychology, entertainment and sports. It is a rendezvous you would not want to miss, a chance to broaden your horizons and network with fellow torchbearers of change.

Prominent speakers lined up for DISCON 2024 include -

Shri Deepak Kesarkar – Cabinet Minister for Education – Government of Maharashtra

Captain Yogendra Singh Yadav – Param Vir Chakra Awardee of Kargil War fame

Dr. Vinay Sahastrabuddhe – President of Indian Council for Culture

Cmdr. Indu Prabha – First Lady Commodore on Submarine INS Amba

10th February: Between the Covers - A Literary Odyssey

Witness the Federation House aglow with the warmth of budding intellects, the air buzzing with anticipation as young minds eagerly delve into the world of books. On the 10th of February, we present 'Between the Covers' – an Inter-school Book Read-Review Competition. This is not just a mere competition; it is a journey to ignite the flames of curiosity and creativity in the hearts of students from 12 different schools. Led by PP Sucheta Rege, this event promises to be a symphony of ideas, a testament to the transformative power of literature.

Thoughtful Thursdays: Where Ideas Converge

It doesn't end there! Stay tuned for our Thoughtful Thursdays, where we have a further interesting lineup of topics and speakers for engaging discussions and insights.

So, as we step into the month of February, let us reaffirm our commitment to peace building and conflict prevention, both locally and globally. Together, let us continue to make a positive impact in our community and beyond.



Shrirang Date
Bulletin Editor



One of my friends recently returned from his dream vacation. He was very happy and enthusiastically describing and appreciating the scenic beauty of places he visited. At the end he asked me, "Which is the most beautiful sight, according to you?"

I said, "a person engrossed in his work is the most beautiful sight."

When someone is truly involved in his/her work... it may be painting, writing, singing, crafting or as mundane as house chores or office work, it is a sight to behold. The expression, the sincerity, the involvement in the act is natural and genuine. It brings happiness, fulfillment, and inner satisfaction when one does the job with complete awareness, taking care of minute details.

Similarly, I find Hillers are at their best when involved in Rotary activities. Be it community service or a club project or a family nite! They do it with dedication and enthusiasm. It starts with brainstorming, planning, job allocation and ends with flawless execution. It is like orchestrating a large group of musicians; each one is playing his/her part by striking the right note at the right time for the right duration. Nothing less, nothing more.

Friends, happy to share yet another edition of our Club Bulletin.

It covers a variety of articles and write ups. I'm sure you will enjoy reading the same.

Happy reading.



IMPACTING LIVES WITH CARE - CREATING HOPE

FOOD DONATION DRIVE FOR THE VISUALLY CHALLENGED:

The 'Help Blind Welfare Association' has been organising a food donation drive for the visually challenged people, every Amavasya at Yogi Hills, Mulund. This drive was organised on 11th January, 2024 (Thursday) for this month. Rotarian Pawan Adnani organised and led a group of Hillers who distributed chana dal, poha, sago and hair oil bottles to 1000 plus visually challenged people gathered at the venue.

President Govind, Rotarians Pawan Adnani, Satish Shetty, as well as Ann Radhika Padmanabhan and Ann Aneetha Shetty participated in the camp and volunteered at the venue from 7.30 a.m. to 10.15 a.m.

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan



FIRST PHASE OF INTERSCHOOL PLASTIC COLLECTION CONTEST (JULY 2023 – DECEMBER 2023)

The Interschool Plastic Waste Collection Contest which was launched last year by RCTH in collaboration with the N.G.O. Samarth Bharat Vyaspeeth, was continued this year, too.

The first phase of the Interschool Plastic Waste collection contest saw the following results:

First Prize: Smt. Sulochanadevi Singhanian High School, Thane: 575.84 kg

Second prize: Dnyan Ganga Education Trust's Degree College of Arts, Commerce & Science 484.2 kg

Third prize: Holy Cross Convent High School, Primary Section, Thane : 119.45 kg

In all, a total of 1,490.45 kg plastic waste was collected in 6 months from different schools.

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan



UNLOCKING FUNDS FOR A ROTARY CLUB: A TRANSFORMATIVE INITIATIVE UNVEILED

RCTH invited Hiller Narendra Rao as the speaker for the weekly meeting held in Thirani School on 11th January, 2024 (Thursday).

A glimpse into the speaker's session:

Major Initiative Unveiled: MOU Signing with RFL for Club Funds

The crux of the discussion revolved around the alliance between Rotary Clubs in India and RFL, presenting an unparalleled opportunity for Rotary Clubs to secure funds dedicated to transformative projects and initiatives. The significance of this initiative is underscored by its announcement at the Rotary Institute 2023 in the presence of the Rotary International President and other global Rotary leaders by both the Rotary International Directors T N Subramanian and Anirudh Roychowdhury.



The Concept Unveiled: Empowering Rotarians for Positive Change

The initiative empowers clubs to generate funds whenever a Rotarian or their reference purchases an insurance policy—be it health, general, motor, and more. For every lead closed through the Rotary platform, RFL pledges to contribute a portion of its revenue towards the Rotary Club. RFL ensures a seamless buying journey, dedicated rotary support, and efficient claim assistance.

Why RFL: Elevating Insurance with Excellence

RFL, holding an IRDAI license (Direct License no 567), is your trusted partner in insurance. As a licensed broker, they collaborate with all insurance companies, offering top-notch products. Their commitment to customer satisfaction is evident through "HAPPY BEES," an innovative tech for simplified claims.

The significant financial potential of this initiative could inject over Rs. 1,000 crores annually into Rotary Clubs across India. It's not just a fundraising initiative; it's a movement that can fuel our service projects and community initiatives on an unprecedented scale.

Narendra Rao urged our Rotary Club to appoint a designated individual, preferably a Board of Directors member, to facilitate seamless communication between the club and RFL.

For more information, please visit supportclubs.rotaryindia.org



The Guest Speaker for the weekly club meeting on 18th Jan, 2024 in Thirani hall was Rotarian Murlu Sundrani. Mr.Murlu is a certified 'Defensive Driving Coach'. Currently, he is involved in conducting many training programmes, seminars, workshops and awareness drives on defensive driving for corporates, schools, colleges, Rotary clubs and several other institutions.

The session on 'Defensive driving' by Rotarian Murali Sundarani was a great eye opener for the driving enthusiasts in RCTH. Murlu explained the importance of driving safely in a crisp and clear manner, thanks to the rigorous training imparted to him by Novartis. He presented relevant statistics regarding road accidents and the resulting causalities; these were indeed, alarming. The fact that the time saved by jumping signals is negligible as compared to the safety factor, was explained using the example of his daily travel from Thane to Churchgate.

The speaker also brought to focus the accidents caused by overtaking, drunken driving, speaking on cell phones while driving, bad road conditions besides other factors resulting from negligence on the part of the drivers. Factors like avoidance of usage of seatbelts in cars and helmets in the case of two wheelers contribute to casualties in case of accidents. Good maintenance of vehicles is a very important factor in ensuring an accident free travel.

The speaker Murlu Sundrani made ample use of images and videos to substantiate his points effectively. His talk engrossed the Hillers and set them thinking. In a nutshell, his presentation had an indelible and positive impact on the audience.

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan



A WOW EXPERIENCE - THE MAGIC OF YOGA

During our regular club meeting on 25th January 2024, our guest speaker was Ms. Kirti Polekar. She gave an interactive, educative and entertaining talk on the various types of yoga.

Kirti is a yoga enthusiast who has diligently studied and mastered the art and science of yoga. She has recently started a yoga centre called WOW CAFE at Hari Niwas.

She kept the Hillers spellbound with her talk. She started by showing pictures of celebrities like Sachin Tendulkar who are yoga enthusiasts.

She went on to show slides depicting the forms of yoga that she teaches at her centre, like power yoga, senior citizens gentle yoga, aerial yoga, etc.

She demonstrated how some simple props can help us perform some postures which would otherwise be difficult, especially for beginners. Chair yoga was another type she stressed upon, which can be done at any time even in the workplace!

All in all a wonderful session!

Dr. Suhas Kulkarni



RUNNING IS MORE FUN WITH FRIENDS: SOLARIS THANE MARATHON

The first edition of Solaris Thane Marathon was held on Sunday 14th January, 2024. The run/walk was organized for a noble cause - Raising awareness for Brain and Spine Illnesses. Hillers, Anns and Annets of from our club participated enthusiastically in various categories and used the opportunity to showcase the community development work we do through display of banners and posters along the route of the run.





BOOKED FOR LIFE



The Forest of Enchantments - Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

This is Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's portrayal of Sita's perspective of the Ramayana. The story is in Sita's voice. This aspect immediately warms up my heart. I settle in my most comfy chair with the book and a bunch of expectations as a woman.

The story begins with a strong statement. When Valmiki asks Sita to review the draft of the Ramayana that he has penned, she reads it and gives him a strong feedback:

"What occurred when I was alone in the darkness, under the sorrow tree, you don't know. You don't know my despair. You don't even know my exhilaration, how it felt—first in the forest and then in Ayodhya---when I was the most beloved woman in creation...you have not understood a woman's life, the heartbreak at the core of her joys, her unexpected alliances and desires, her negotiations where, in the hope of keeping one treasure safe, she must give up another."

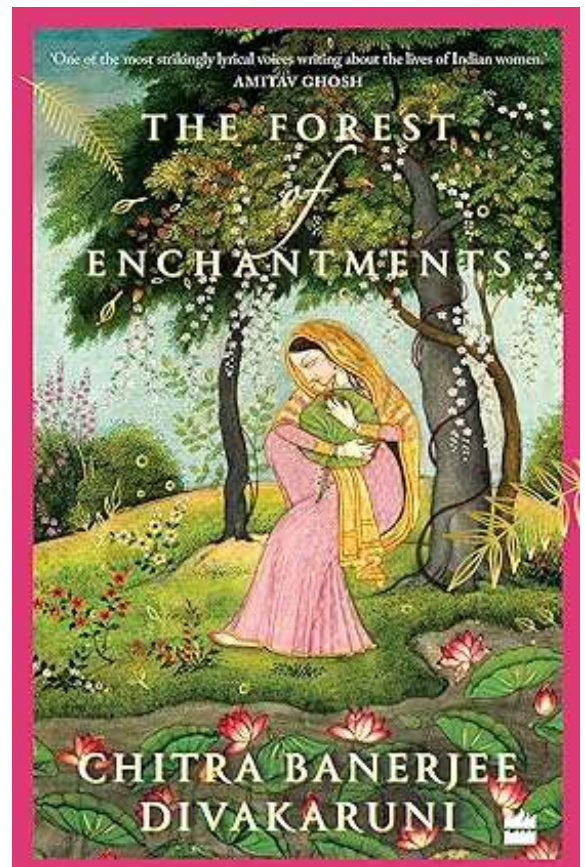
Valmiki realises his short-sightedness and hands over the draft and an inkpot to Sita and asks her to write the story. The colour of the ink is a bright red. Sita knows why red – "Of course, how else could I write my story except in the colour of menstruation and childbirth, the colour of the marriage mark that changes women's lives, the colour of the flowers of the Ashoka tree under which I had spent my years of captivity in the palace of the demon king?"

This disclosure sets the stage and the expectations for what is to unfold further.

The first half of the 350-odd pages of story fail to grip me. While this half presents to us Sita in her growing up years, it definitely does not delve into the depth of her character. The nuances are far too superficial and fail to keep me riveted. There are days at stretch when the book and its beautifully designed cover sit at my bedside, without making an attempt to lure me. I am disappointed, especially because the lingering memories of The Palace of Illusions keep surfacing. I cannot not but compare the merits of the two stories.

Not wanting to leave the book unfinished, I pick it up again. Only towards the last 70 pages do I begin to lose myself in the narrative. The parts where Sita is in Valmiki's ashram with her sons make a good attempt at capturing her feelings, her sense of self-esteem and her resolve. Until then, her self-talk left only a fleeting image of a strong-willed woman.

In terms of language and writing style, I have relished





much better writing in Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* and *Sister of my Heart*. And then there are some typos. I was shocked since the book is from the Harper Collins stable and one expects their editorial team to be sharp at their editing.

Despite this, there are gems scattered throughout.

"I don't agree with you that the private life must be sacrificed for the public one. And that is the final advice that I leave for my children: my dearest boys, balance duty with love. Trust me, it can be done."

"And that is why, O King Ram, I must reject your kind offer to allow me to prove my innocence again. Because this is one of those times when a woman must stand up and say, No more!"

Divakaruni tells a familiar story while deviating from the familiar path. This is a tough call in itself. Kudos to the author for taking up this challenge.

The Forest of Enchantments is definitely worth a read. Just that, it leaves you a tad unfulfilled, and wanting for more.

Ann Lata Gwalani



New Member Induction

Induction of a new member ... a healthy addition to RCTH

Hemant Kulkarni was inducted into the Hiller family during the weekly meeting on 11th Jan , 2024 in Thirani School hall. A microbiology professor for the last 35 years, he has been teaching in many colleges some of which include J. J. hospital, Symbiosis (Pune) and AIMS hospital, Dombivli. He has been involved in blood donation programs and has worked with cancer patients in the Tata cancer hospital.

He is happily married to Ashvini, an economics graduate who has worked in photography related industries. and is blessed with a daughter Nidhi, an engineering student.



KONGTHONG - THE WHISTLING VILLAGE OF MEGHALAYA!



While 'Bhalo Nam' (the legal name) and 'Dak Nam' (nick name used by family & friend) is a way of life for our friends from West Bengal, here in the East Khasi Hills region of Meghalaya, people have two distinct tunes as a part of their identity along with their name.

Situated at around 55 kms from the city of Shillong, Kongthong village is one of the unique villages of India. It was not the destination, the Kongthong village, but the journey to it was also such a splendid experience for us. Every minute of our drive was such a visual treat.



The last 20 km through the mountain ranges was simply breathtaking. The roads hug the mountainside as you drive through thick forest. If we were showed the photos of those mountains independently, we might not have believed the kind of a terrain that we drove through to reach Kongthong. We simply were immersed into the beauty around us, from range of green shades of trees to shades of white, badge, brown, and black of so many small and gigantic beautiful stones. A glance at the valley below from our car was both scary and beautiful!

Continued since centuries, with the birth of every child, the mother composes a new tune for her new born that is unique and distinct to him/her. These tunes, played through whistling or singing, have two versions - long and short. This tradition has helped them for generations to have long distance communication with each other. It helps the mother to 'call' her child in the forest and hilly area. The child too responds by singing / whistling.

With around 100 families, a population of seven hundred men and women, the Kongthong village has that many number of tunes that are sung/played every day, by women.

Several language researchers and tourism experts from across the world regularly visit the village to study the unique traditions of villagers that they still practice and is a way of their life.

When we were there, a batch of students from Shillong's North Eastern Hilly University pursuing their Masters, had come on a similar research tour.



Yet another interesting fact about Kongthong is the penetration of cooperative movement. The place where we stayed in Kongthong, known as 'Kongthong Traveller's Nest', is built and run by the 'Indigenous Agro Tourism Cooperative Society', a cooperative body of the Kongthong villagers. The GOI supports the village cooperative for their capital requirement and the villagers manage the day-to-day operations on their own.

Our stay in the hut too was first-of-its-kind. There was this open fire right inside the hut that helped us survive in that chilly weather. The hut was designed in a way that though there was a firewood burning inside, the complete hut was smoke free. The ceiling made of huge branches of betel-nut tree was a perfect outlet for the smoke. The flooring was made of solid wood. Only a small practical issue for us was having to go out, walk to the back side of the hut, for the toilet!

KONGTHONG - THE WHISTLING VILLAGE OF MEGHALAYA!



We were welcomed by a beautiful and smiling young girl Ms. Aijingshai Riahtam. with rice based round soft snack and hot Red tea. Rice and betel-nut are the main agricultural products that they cultivate.

The villagers have separate teams dedicated for various roles. One such team was sharing all about the history and culture of their village to us. There were 3-4 women who actually demonstrated how they call their kids in their respective tunes. And then hearing his mother, a young boy who was around somewhere immediately responded with a small tune too.

Pynshaiborlang Majaw and Ms. Aijingshai, the two youngsters who served us breakfast at the cottage, too sung to us their tunes that their respective mothers composed for them.

“We do not want more people to visit our village. This is not one of those ‘Tourist Spots’ that you go; we want people who are interested in understanding our culture and way of life to come, stay with us and create awareness about us when they go back to their town.” – Rothell Khongsit, a young gentleman in his mid-thirties, one of the forces behind this cooperative model, explained to us. “We are happy with what we have ... earning more money is not the aim that drives us. If more people come, our universe, our village may not able to accommodate and that might lead to disturbing our regular life, which we certainly do not wish for.” Rothell shared further.

We also roamed around the village and interacted with a few villagers. The tea shop, run by enterprising women serving us hot red tea with biscuits, was so cute that we ended up having two cups.

The sign of pipelines everywhere made us enquire about it. We were pleasantly surprised to know from villagers that each home is equipped with tap water, thanks to GOI’s Jal Jeevan Mission – ‘Har Ghar Jal’.

Meeting two youngsters, Rima and Punit, who were on their exploration tour on a two-wheeler, was a pleasant experience too. The duo, Rima, a Neuro-Physiotherapist and Punit, a versatile, well-known guitarist are traveling aficionados who love to explore places in an unconventional way, at their own pace. Their free spirit and enthusiasm was so contagious!

PS: On our way back, as we left Kongthong, our driver Willie was a bit confused as Yashodhara and I started singing some abstract tunes, it was the side effect of Kongthong on us as we attempted composing tunes for each other. (Don’t ask me to sing now)

- PP Atul Bhide

The above passage has been reproduced from PP Atul Bhide’s FB post with his permission. It is based on his recent trip to the alluring state of Meghalaya.



SAEVUS ECOACHEIVER QUIZ: A WONDERFUL GREEN INITIATIVE



“We don’t own the planet Earth; we belong to it. And we must share it with our wildlife”, said Steve Irwin, renowned Australian wildlife expert and conservationist.

With extensive deforestation, shrinking habitats, environmental pollution and mindless killing of wild animals, the wonderful fauna on Earth is dwindling very rapidly. It is our collective responsibility to conserve the wonderful wildlife today for its sustenance on our planet. The continued existence of wildlife and wilderness is of utmost importance as far as the quality of life of Man is concerned.

Saevus is well known for bringing forth India’s premier Nature and Wildlife magazine. The magazine comprises compelling stories and stunning photographs filled with adventure and the sheer thrill of connecting with Nature and Wildlife.

RCTH is known for its projects on sustainability such as tree plantation drives, construction of check dams, interschool plastic waste collection contest etc.

The Saevus Ecoachiever Quiz is a fruitful collaboration of these two like-minded organizations. The quiz focusses on wildlife, ecology, biodiversity and conservation.

This 7th edition of the Saevus Ecoachiever quiz saw 84 teams from 31 schools registering for the event which has been gaining tremendous popularity over the years.

The Quiz was divided into three parts; a.) Written round, b) Semi Final and c.) Final Round.

The quiz began with a written round from which 12 teams were shortlisted for the two Semifinals. Three toppers from each Semifinals were selected for the Finals.

After the written round, RCTH President Govind Khetan, Mrs. Revati Srinivasan (the Principal of the host school, Smt. Sulochanadevi Singhanian School, Thane) and Ms. Sree Nandee (CEO, Saevus) addressed the audience comprising students, teachers and parents from different schools across Thane, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Kalyan Districts.

After the exciting Semifinals, the Finals saw a variety of rounds namely text round, image round, MCQs, Audio visual round etc. The audience, comprising about 400 people, was kept riveted to their seats as the eminent and seasoned quizmaster Rajiv D’ Silva conducted the quiz in an extremely interesting and engaging manner.

After the Finals, the winners were declared. The schools winning the top honours were:

Winner: Smt. Sulochanadevi Singhanian School, Thane

First Runner up: C.P.Goenka International School, Thane

Second Runner up: D.A.V. Public School, Thane

Past Rotary International Director (PRID) Ashok Mahajan addressed the students and appreciated the students for their brilliant answers. Subsequently, he presented the awards to the winners. The Winning team, the First and Second Runner up teams received trophies, certificates and prizes. All the finalists received certificates for reaching the Finals.

Besides this, every student who participated in the Saevus Ecoachiever Quiz was given a participation certificate.



SAEVUS ECOACHEIVER QUIZ: A WONDERFUL GREEN INITIATIVE

In the words of the President of the Rotary Club of Thane Hills, Govind Khetan, "These students are advocates of a greener world; this quiz aims at moulding the students into ecologically sensitive citizens".

Samir Limaye, the convener of the event from RCTH opines, "Events like the Saevus Eco achiever Quiz are organized to make students responsible citizens so as to ensure a greener tomorrow".

"If conservation of wildlife goes wrong, nothing else will go right". With this in mind, the event was organized in a meticulous and professional manner. With the participation of more than 250 students and a large number of Teachers and Parents, this edition of the Saevus Ecoachiever Quiz was a resounding success.

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan



The second edition of the 'Biz Quest' was organised by RCTH at Federation House Hall, Thane on Saturday, 20th January 2024. The event was powered by Yes Bank as our title sponsor.

Like the last edition, this year's quiz too, was organised as an awareness vehicle and fund-raiser for a community project. This year's project is RCTH's 'Happy School' project at Sogaon village in Thane district.

Twenty-seven teams from various business houses and management institutes participated with great enthusiasm in the quiz.

The quiz was conducted by the seasoned quizzier and quiz master - Hiller Rtn Sunil Gwalani. There were five heats in all. While the top scoring team from each heat directly moved to the finals, the teams placed second in each heat competed in a Semi Final to seal a berth in the Finals.

The questions framed by the quizmaster kept the audience riveted to their seats. The rounds offered a good variety and the questions posed required a sound recall and presence of mind from the contestants. There were audio rounds, visual rounds, buzzer rounds, rapid fire rounds besides others. There were rounds with negative markings too. The questions were imaginatively woven around corporate houses, business leaders and many business and economy subjects.

After an interesting session of heats and semis, the best teams battled it out in the Finals. The Final was indeed engrossing and the following teams emerged victorious:

Winner: Fujitsu Consulting India Pvt. Ltd.

First Runner up: Wellingkar Institute of Management

Second Runner-up: Sanmour Consulting

The Chief Guest of the event was Mr. Bhalchandra Raorane, Chairman of the Federation of Industries of India. The introduction of the Chief Guest was done by the Club President Govind Khetan. The event was also graced by the Regional Head of Yes Bank, Mr. Satyajit Mohite.

Mr. Raorane addressed the audience comprising Rotarians, Anns and Rotaractors besides the participating teams.



At the end of the event, the Chief Guest presented the trophies and medals to the winning teams.

The second edition of the Biz Quest was a meticulously organised programme and turned out to be highly successful in bringing exceedingly bright minds together on a single platform.



WEBINAR: LET'S EMPOWER; BECAUSE SHE MATTERS



On the 26th of January 2024, the Rotary Club of Thane Hills took a significant step in the fight against cervical cancer by organizing a webinar titled 'Because She Matters' as part of their Project EmpowHer initiative. The esteemed speaker for the event was Dr Anagha Karkhanis, the Club Secretary of Rotary Club of Thane Hills and a renowned Gynaecologist.

The timing of the webinar was especially significant as January is designated by the World Health Organization as the month of Cervical Cancer awareness and prevention. The event attracted participation from Rotarians across the country, emphasizing the urgency and importance of addressing this critical health issue.

Dr Anagha presented a compelling PowerPoint presentation that shed light on the grim reality of this cancer of the neck of the womb commonly known as cervical cancer. In India, cervical cancer is a significant health concern, with approximately 1.3 lakh women diagnosed each year, making it the second most common cancer among women in the country. Shockingly, the associated mortality with cervical cancer in India is among the highest globally, with one woman succumbing to the disease every 8 minutes.

The gravity of these statistics underscores the need for immediate action and preventive measures. Dr Anagha highlighted that fortunately, cervical cancer is preventable through a multi-faceted approach involving education and awareness, screening, and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination.

HPV, a common virus affecting both males and females, is responsible for a staggering 99% of cervical cancers. Dr Anagha elaborated on the various types of HPV and their potential to cause diseases of the genital area, including warts, lesions, precancerous cells, as well as oral, vaginal, penile, and anal cancers. The primary mode of transmission is through intimate skin-to-skin or skin-to-mucosa contact, and alarmingly 80% of Indians are expected to have at least one HPV infection during their lifetime.

Unfortunately, there is currently no cure for HPV. Treatment of cervical cancer requires surgery to remove affected tissues, supplemented by radiation and/or chemotherapy depending on the stage of the disease. Dr Anagha emphasized the urgency of preventive measures, given the lack of a cure for HPV.

Aligning with the global strategy set by the World Health Organization, Project EmpowHer, initiated by the Triumph Foundation, focuses on preventing cervical cancer through HPV vaccination in young girls aged 9 to 14. The vision of the project is to empower a generation of healthy young women and achieve freedom from the preventable disease of cervical cancer. The HPV vaccination not only protects against cervical cancer but also guards against oral, vaginal, vulval, anal cancers, and genital warts.

Dr Anagha explained that the optimal time for HPV vaccination is before the age when the risk of infection is highest, that is the age of 15. So, the project aims to vaccinate girls aged 9 to 14 with a 2-dose schedule at 0 and 6 months. For women aged 15 and above, a 3-dose schedule at 0, 2, and 6 months is recommended.

During the question-and-answer session, Dr Anagha debunked myths and misconceptions surrounding the disease and its prevention. She emphasized the silent nature of HPV infections, often devoid of symptoms, with cancerous changes manifesting after prolonged periods, sometimes up to 20 years. Routine cervical screening, beginning from age 25 and continuing until the age of 65, was stressed for early detection and timely treatment to save lives.

In conclusion, the 'Because She Matters' webinar was not just an information-sharing session; it was a clarion call to action, urging communities to unite in the fight against cervical cancer. Through education, awareness, and vaccination, Project EmpowHer strives to create a future where cervical cancer is no longer a threat to the health and well-being of women. The Rotary Club of Thane Hills, through this initiative, has taken a giant stride towards a healthier and empowered society.

For more details, please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8S5jvw1jO4>



'You cannot do this subject, it's not your cup of tea, don't even try it.' Tears. Depression. Despondency.

'I know you're very talented atand just like you, this is a subject which I too don't like. I can understand why you don't like it. I have a suggestion; you could consider this other subject instead.....' Motivation, self-confidence, introspection and hope!

'This team is hopeless, lazy and inefficient' again detachment, sorrow, demotivation.

'Come on guys, I know you're much more capable than this. We should try a different approach if this isn't working. Regeneration of interest, challenge acceptance with fervour, hope!

'You're so late, you're going to be marked late and made to stand out of the classroom' Despair, shame.

'What's up dear, what happened? Dad late again? Or mum? Let us know how we can help you reach earlier.' Relief, respect, love, hope!

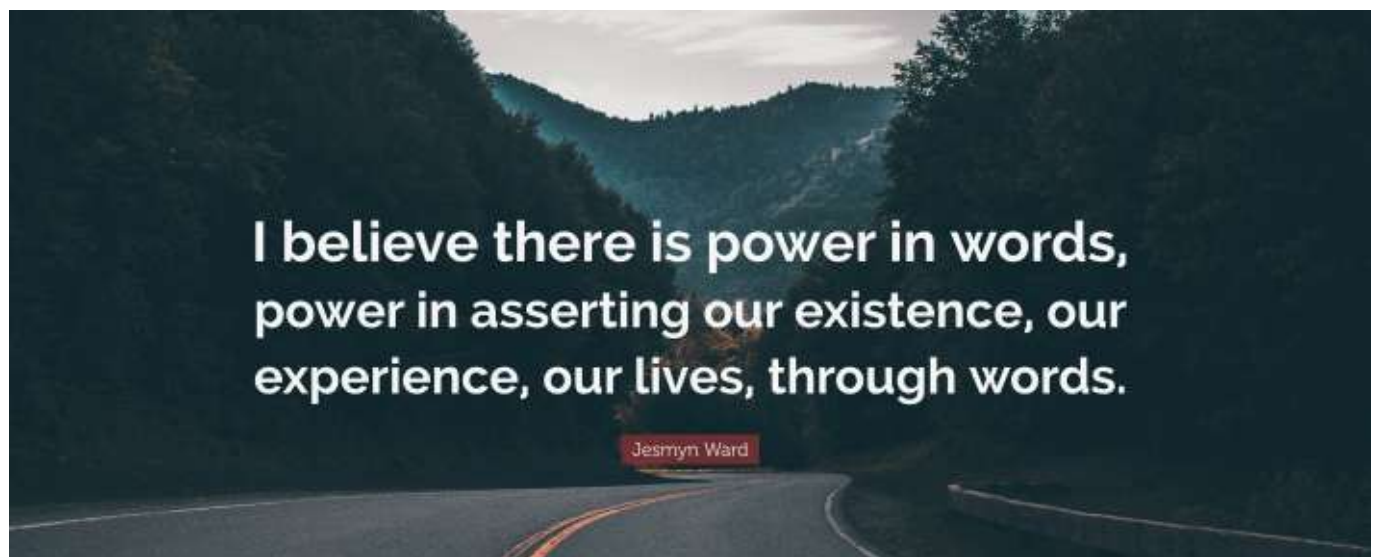
How many of us can generate hope? How many of us can manage to quell it? It all depends on the SEMANTICS of it. Hope makes life worth living. I have seen this happening, students' hopes being dashed to the ground, employee's motivation thrown out of the window...the death of HOPE!

You can infuse life with your words or you can suck it out!

The power of words and how you say them is not 'rocket science' . Can be cultivated. The narratives fed to us... 'She's like that, he's like that...etc' warrant a complacent acceptance of it from us. The onus lies with us to deny the narrative, diminish the person's stature and shut out the semantics and its tone. Serves to preserve the 'Me' within myself and be prevented from being 'mortar and pestled' to be fed to the 'know it alls' and chewed and spat out. Once you're free of the shackles of the narratives...you start living as 'yourself.'

The only semantics to be cared for, are the ones you speak to yourself, under no one's influence and no one's compulsions, with no pre fed narratives, full of love and care. Full of Hope!

Ann Sonalli Korrd



FLIGHT LIEUTENANT ROSHNI IYER ...

THE SKY IS THE LIMIT, INDEED!

Roshni Iyer, the daughter of PP Ravi Iyer and Ann Usha Iyer, selected a career which was off the beaten track. No prizes for guessing...

She underwent an extremely tough selection process; subsequently, she was trained at the Airforce Training Academy at Dundigal, Hyderabad. This training culminated at her selection for flying fighter planes and soon, she was designated 'Flying Officer'.

At Kalaikonda in West Bengal, she continued her training in the fighter plane 'Hawk'. Currently posted at Tezpur in Assam, she is being trained for the Russian fighter Sukoi-30. She successfully turned Flight Lieutenant in Dec 2023.

The Sukoi training is very rigorous and elaborate as it involves a twin seater. Initially, Roshni had to qualify for the back seat and then, the front cockpit. Learning the Russian engineering involves few hours of every day study. Roshni worked really hard and has successfully completed both, not surprisingly! She is now qualified for 'Operation Readiness' which is war readiness for the daytime. At this stage, her physical fitness is of top priority (as she has to pull Gforce during manoeuvres like in the film 'Top Gun'). Besides physical fitness, her mental fitness is also equally essential. Through diligent work and a steely resolve, Roshni is steadily climbing the ladder of success.

Roshni's remarkable progress in her career could be attributed to her sporting accomplishments in her school and college days. She is a two-time gold medallist in the 400 m hurdles at state Level (Maharashtra). She also won bronze medals twice in the State Level (Tamil Nadu). She has represented SRM university in the all India University Meet in 2019.

Roshni! The Hiller Family lauds your lofty accomplishments. Glide, soar and conquer the skies!

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan





We started as strangers, a diverse crew,
Bound by dreams, the old and the new.
Late-night studies, the coffee so strong,
Through every challenge, we strode along.

To the laughter, the tears, the years we've known,
In the records of friendship, our names are sown.

Last parties, late-night talks, and tears,
A mosaic of moments from our college years.

In the halls where laughter echoed bright,
Underneath the college's fading light.
The last year dawns, a bittersweet song,
A melody of friendship that's grown strong.



Annet Ishika Ghosh
Final Year (Vth yr.) - B.Arch.
Sir J. J. College of Architecture

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PARTICIPANTS?

1. What was the message / lesson that your students took home on the day of the Triumph games and carnival?

Ans: The message or lesson that students might take home from an event like the Triumph games and carnival is teamwork, sportsmanship, resilience, or simply the importance of enjoying oneself and participating in community events.

2. Could you observe a positive change in behaviour in your kids after that day?

Ans: There were positive changes in behaviour among students after the event. In future, they may exhibit increased interactions with people, good sportsmanship and motivation to participate in future events or activities.

3. For students who did not win a prize in the races, was it disappointing? Did they express it?

Ans: Some may express it openly, while others might internalize their feelings. It's essential to provide support and encouragement to all participants, emphasizing the value of participation and effort rather than just winning.

4. Was it an occasion for the kids and parents to relieve stress and enjoy thoroughly?

Ans: Events like these can indeed provide opportunities for both kids and parents to relieve stress and enjoy themselves. It's a chance for the community to come together, celebrate achievements, and have fun in a supportive environment.

5. Do you feel that such your students should be exposed to such events more often? Do you think that more social organisations should come forward with such programmes?

Ans: Exposing students to such events can have numerous benefits, including fostering social skills, promoting physical activity, and encouraging community engagement. More social organizations coming forward with similar programs can enhance these opportunities for students and contribute to their overall development.

Ms. Janki Purohit,

On behalf of S G Barve Marge Specialy Abled Children's School in Kurla West, we extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of our special event.

1. What was the message that your students took home on the day of Triumph Games and Carnival?

Ans: The students learnt the importance of teamwork and discipline.

2. Could you observe a positive change in behaviour in your kids after that day?

Ans: Children looked happy as they could learn in the form of games and dance.

3. For students who did not win a prize in the races, was it disappointing? Did they express it?

Ans: No... the kids were quite happy for their friends who received prizes.

4. Was it an occasion for the kids and parents to relieve stress and enjoy thoroughly?

Ans: Yes, totally

5. Do you feel that such your students should be exposed to such events more often? Do you think that more social organisations should come forward with such programmes?

Ans: Yes, this is a change they get from their routine. So, this is a much-needed thing. More such organisations should conduct these types of events.

Mrs. Darshana, MVR Shinde Marg BMC Special School

TRIUMPH RUN 2024



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PARTICIPANTS?

FEEDBACK OF TRIUMPH RUN 2024 FROM SCHOOLS

“S G BARVE MARGE SPECIALY ABLED CHILDREN’S SCHOOL KURLA Ke sabhi palak aur bacchon ke taraph se ROTARY CLUB OF THANE HILLS AND TRIUMPH FOUNDATION ,Sabhi 200 volunteers aur HOLY CROSS SCHOOL ko hum bohot bohot dhannyawaad kartey hain jinhon ney hamarey liye itna bada Fun aur entertainment program arrange kiya.

Program ke shuruwaat Parade se hui, then Rashtriya Geet gaaya, thoda introduction aur phir Program start hua .

Merry go round, Boat, Bike, painting, wool art, Angry bird game, Duck fire, hip hop, clown feeding, earthen pot making etc, sabhi games aur rides mey bachchon ney bohot enjoy kiya, Earthen pot making too amazing,

Sab sey achcha laga ki har bachchon ko har game mey gifts mil rahey the, jisse bachchey bohot kush ho rahey the. Haan ek aur Racing bhi bohot enjoy kiye.

Phir aatey hain Music section mein…Music and Songs performed by visually challenged students was amazing ,mind blowing, superb; children and parents were enjoying to the fullest .

Ab chalthey hain Food department mein,

Candyfloss, popcorn, Dahi bhalle, aloo tikki, pizza, pav bhaji … all food was delicious, mouth watering,served hygienic and fresh. Again thanks and God bless you and your family.”

from the parents of S. G. Barve School, Kurla

सर्वांनी खूप मजा केली, गेम, डान्स आणि खाण्याचा आनंद घेतला. तुम्ही चांगली संधी उपलब्ध करून दिली. सर्व मेम्बर्स चे आभार.

Mr. Datta Zate , Mr.Yogesh Rane from Adhar Sanstha, Badlapur

“Thank you so much Rotary club of Thane Hills and Triumph Foundation for today’s event, entertainment, and yummy food , gifts, kids enjoyed a lot. Very appreciable work…Thank you once again.”

Ms. Pournima,From Healing Touch Therapy Centre, Vikhroli, Tagore Nagar

“Thanks you Rotary club of Thane Hills and the Triumph foundation for the Triumph Games and carnival…the kids had a wonderful time. Thank you Rotary club of Thane Hills All students enjoyed. Very nice arrangements. Thank you for opportunity.”

From Ms. Meena Kshirsagar, Vishwas Centre, Thane

“Thank u so much Rotary Club of Thane Hills and Triumph Foundation for such a great event. Students enjoyed all the entertainment games, got prizes, had yummy food and got useful token gifts. Arrangement was very Nice… Our Volunteer Sonali ma’am was so kind and sweet with our students..Once again thank u”

Javheri Thanawala School for the Deaf ,Thane (W)

DEAR Sir & Madam,

Hats off to all Members of Rotary Club of Thane Hills & Triumph Foundation. Thank you so much for Beautiful, Wonderful and Superb arrangements (Events, Sports, Fun Games & Food) Parents, Teachers and all students enjoyed .Thank you

With Regards,

Vinayanand Shankarbhat Kallianpur.

SWAMI PARIJNANASHRAM EDUCATIONAL and VOCATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE HANDICAPPED.

Virar.



TRIUMPH RUN 2024

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PARTICIPANTS?

“Thanks to Rotary Thane Hills – triumph run for arranging such a beautiful program, covering all the faculties under this, students enjoyed a lot. Special thanks to Radhika madam, Shetty sir, Rege Madam.”

Ms Maya Kulkarni, Kamalini Special Schools

“Thank you so much Rotary Club of Thane Hills & Triumph Foundation for the Triumph games...all children enjoyed nice arrangements.”

Ms. Sucheta Dutta, Santosh Institute

“Thank you, so much Rotary club of Thane Hills and Triumph foundation, for organizing such a wonderful event. Our children parents and teachers enjoyed very much.”

Ms. Neeta Sawant, Unnati School of Hope Badlapur

“Thanks a lot...Rotary Club of Thane Hills... Our students enjoyed a lot with teachers also. Thanks to all team for guidance and support in Carnival festival and it great fun to our children... . Thank you very much.”

Ms. Geeta, PRAGATI ANDHA VIDYALAYA, BADLAPUR



ROTAL-2023: HILLERS CELEBRATE MUSIC & DANCE



ROTAL-2023: HILLERS CELEBRATE MUSIC & DANCE



ROTAL-2023: HILLERS CELEBRATE MUSIC & DANCE

