



Issue # 09 : March 2024



HILLECHOES

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

Gordon McInally
RI President, RY 2023-24

Milind Kulkarni
Dist. Governor, RY 2023-24

Govind Khetan
Club President, RY 2023-24

Dr. Anagha Karkhanis
Club Secretary, RY 2023-24



March : Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Month



Govind Khetan
Club President



My Dear Hillers,

Greetings!

The month of February started off on a wonderful note with Rotary Youth Exchange students - Diane Le Gall from France and Ana Mendes from Brazil -joining us during the very first weekly meeting for the month. The two young ambassadors of cultural exchange enthralled us with visuals and chronicles from their home countries peppered with lovely insights into their respective cultures, festivals, and traditions.

It is a matter of pride for us that the two RYE students – Diane and Ana - are being hosted in India by two of our own Hillers.

Discon 2024 saw great opportunities of networking and thought provoking and inspirational addresses by a galaxy of eminent speakers including,

Deepak Kesarkar – Cabinet Minister for Education – Govt of Maharashtra

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

Dr. Vinay Sahastrabuddhe – President of Indian Council for Culture and

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

Between the Covers - An innovative program for school students of Standards 8th and 9th was held on Feb 10 to inculcate and foster the habit and joy of reading among children. The 'Read and Review Book Competition' saw the participation of students from 12 different schools.

It was a joy and pleasure to watch the unbridled enthusiasm and creativity of the school children who competed for excellence in expressing their thought processes and learnings through audio-visual media and intelligent props. PP Sucheta Rege won accolades and hearts for putting together this event, supported by a committed team of Hillers, Anns, Annas and Annets!

Friends, 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 progressing very well and the next couple of months will see execution of this initiative at designated schools in our community.

I look forward to the weeks and months ahead with a lot of expectation and hope and am counting on your enthusiastic participation in our endeavours to do good for those who need our love, affection, and support.

We have so much to achieve as a closely bound family of Go-givers.

Let us create beautiful memories, together!



Dr. Anagha Karkhanis
Club Secretary



March marks a significant period in the Rotary calendar as it is designated as the Rotary Month of Water, Hygiene and Sanitation. This month provides an opportunity for Rotarians worldwide to focus on addressing the critical issues surrounding access to clean water, sanitation facilities and hygiene education. By shining a light on these fundamental aspects of human health and well-being, Rotary clubs around the globe strive to make a tangible impact in improving living conditions and reducing the spread of disease in communities.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. Dr V. Subramanian Autism Centre 16th Annual Day - March 2, 2024:

Join us in celebrating the 16th Annual Day of the Dr V. Subramanian Autism Centre at Marathi Sahitya Sanskriti and Kala Mandal, Navi Mumbai. This event serves as a platform to raise awareness and support for individuals and families affected by autism, highlighting the importance of inclusivity and understanding.

2. National Immunization Day (Polio) - March 3, 2024:

On March 3rd, Rotarians unite in support of National Immunization Day for Polio. This crucial initiative aims to vaccinate children against polio, bringing us one step closer to eradicating this debilitating disease from the world. Let us stand united in the fight against polio, ensuring every child receives the life-saving vaccines they deserve.

3. Namō Nari Shakti - International Women's Day Celebration with Vocational Excellence - March 7, 2024:

In honour of International Women's Day, we will celebrate the exceptional achievements of women from various streams in our community at Kuvega. Join us as we recognize and felicitate women who have demonstrated outstanding vocational excellence, inspiring us all with their remarkable contributions.

4. PETS SETS TETS - March 10, 2024:

Our club, the Rotary Club of Thane Hills, is proud to host the Presidents-Elect Training Seminar (PETS), Secretaries-Elect Training Seminar (SETS), and Treasurers-Elect Training Seminar (TETS) on March 10th at Satkar Residency. This event is a cornerstone of leadership development within Rotary, providing invaluable training and guidance to our incoming club leaders.

Thoughtful Thursdays:

In addition to these significant events, our weekly "Thoughtful Thursdays" meetings will continue to offer engaging speakers and thought-provoking discussions. We urge all members to actively participate in these meetings, which promise to provide valuable opportunities for learning, networking and fellowship.

As we embark on this month dedicated to water, hygiene, and sanitation, let us reaffirm our commitment to Rotary's principles of service above self. Together, let us work towards creating a world where every individual has access to clean water and sanitation facilities, ensuring a healthier and more prosperous future for all.

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 on every New Moon Day at Yogi Hills, Mulund. This drive was organised on 9th February, 2024 (Friday) for this month. Rotarian Pawan Adnani brought together 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, Prashant Ojha, Nilesh Pitale, Vishal Wadhvani 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 10.00 a.m.

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan



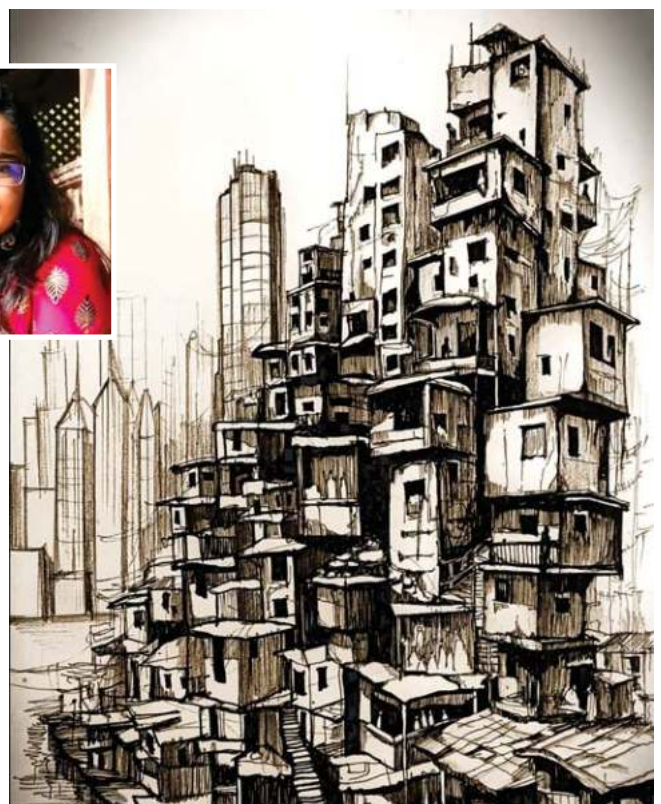
"FUTURE HEIGHTS: A CLASS DIVIDE"

In a future city, tall and bright,
 Glass skyscrapers touch the light.
 Rich and gleaming, reaching high,
 A world of privilege against the sky.
 Yet close beside, in the shadows cast,
 Humble slums cling, holding fast.
 A stark divide, in urban sprawl,
 Two worlds collide, standing tall.

Ishika Ghosh

Final Year (Vth yr.) -B.Arch.

Sir J. J. College of Architecture



MIND AND AURA: AN INTERESTING TALK!

Thursday, 8 th February 2024 opened the vistas of the ' beyond the visible'.

An intuitive and insightful talk on MIND AND AURA by the Guest Speaker, Rtn. Saanjyot Gore in our weekly club meeting was just spot on, helping us dive into the inner realms of our being.

Our esteemed speaker wears many hats. Apart from being a counsellor and a mind Power expert, she juggles vastu, reiki, graphology and aura reading as well.

The speaker opened her speech by opening us up to our 'MINDS'... gently leading us to the conscious and unconscious levels of the mind.

She magnified the effects of visualization, affirmations, and mental programming to invoke miracles, both intrinsically and extrinsically.

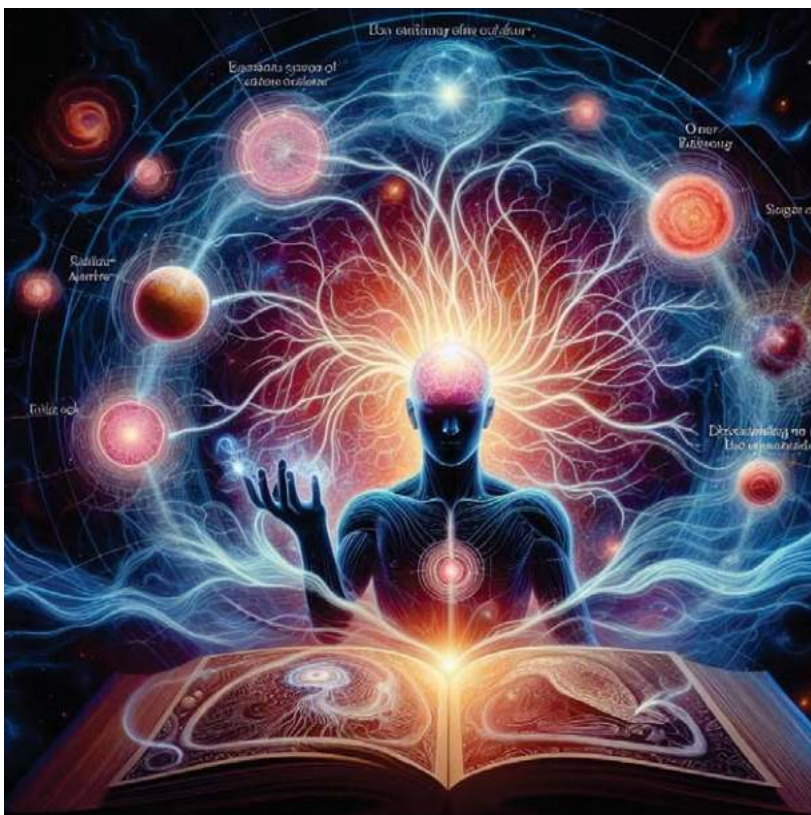
She then zeroed in on our AURA and extrapolated it to the states of mind - the alpha, beta, theta, delta, and gamma.

She shed light on the plethora of subtle and gross energies that govern our life and explained the difference between an unbalanced sura and a well aligned one.

The talk concluded with an impactful Q and A session which left the audience enthralled.

All in all, the mindful session could be aptly summed up as 'an inward journey into the deep recesses of our psyche.'

Latha Sanjay



ANTARIKSH: EK KANOONI KISSA

Space is something that has been a part of our everyday life, especially in this modern world. It exists in almost everything we do today. Our general perception of space is limited to watching rocket launches and astronauts going to space, but it is much larger than that. From sending emails, to video-calling our friends and loved ones halfway across the world, space has made everything possible.

Earlier, space activity was largely carried out by states. But around the end of the end of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century, private companies started engaging in space activity. However, the laws governing space have been enacted way back in the 1970s. Those laws have not been amended ever since.

To understand space activity, we first need to understand space. Space is generally anything that is outside planet Earth. But the question that arises is where does Earth end and Space begin? This is important because when it comes to airspace (within Earth), countries have the right to exercise their sovereignty over their airspace, while space is open for exploration to everyone. But unfortunately, that question still remains to be answered. Next, to define a space object, we have the Functionalist Approach and the Spatialist Approach. The Functionalist Approach says that an object must be treated as a space object if it 'intends' to perform a space activity. The limitation of this approach is that if there is an object within Earth and performs a space activity, it would demand that the object be treated as a space object. For e.g. High Altitude Platform Station (HAPS / pseudo sats). The Spatialist Approach says that any object above a particular altitude must be treated as a space object. The drawback this approach is facing is the lack of determination of the vertical delimitation point between Earth and Space. Nevertheless, space activities are carried.

Humankind, since the 1950s have come a long way in space exploration. From Sputnik 1 to SpaceX rockets, things have evolved in this domain. After the launch of Sputnik 1, the United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) was formed to regulate space activities. Subsequently, the United Nations Committee for Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) was formed under the UNOOSA to promote peaceful use of outer space. The UNCOPUOS drafted and enacted the Outer Space Treaty in 1967. Subsequently, many other space treaties were enacted, taking its premise from the Outer Space Treaty. But as mentioned earlier, the laws governing space have not evolved. Many jurists argue that the current set of laws maintain a delicate balance. But there has been a call for amendment of the laws to cater to the current needs of the industry.

To conclude, we can say that while it is necessary to maintain the balance, new binding space laws and guidelines must be enacted to ensure proper and sustainable use of space by private players. International cooperation by countries in this regard through domestic legislation will play a big role in ensuring the same.

By Shubhamay Dutta (Guest Speaker)



In the vibrant Thursday meeting of February 29, 2024, at the Rotary Club of Thane Hills, the esteemed speaker, Rtn. Jaspreet Kaur, from RC NM Industrial Area, captivated our attention with her insightful talk on 'Occasions and Dressing.' With expertise honed through coaching in soft skills, advising on personal branding and training at prestigious business schools, she illuminated the intricacies of dressing for impact and success.

Jaspreet delved into the significance of colour choices for various occasions, unravelling the psychology behind each hue and its impact on perception. She enlightened us on the subtle yet powerful influence of prints on garments, guiding us to choose patterns that resonate with our personal style and the context of the event.

In an engaging and interactive session, she shared invaluable advice tailored for both men and women, discussing details from shoes to the overall ensemble. Emphasizing the importance of appropriateness, she navigated us through the realm of dressing etiquette, ensuring that we grasp the essence of dressing impeccably for every setting.

Members of the audience relished the opportunity to glean from her wealth of knowledge and expertise. Her meticulous attention to detail and comprehensive approach left an indelible mark, empowering us to make informed sartorial decisions and exude confidence in any scenario.

Dr. Anagha Karkhanis



Book reading is an essential skill that not only enhances knowledge but also improves critical thinking, vocabulary, and concentration.

In recent years, it has become evident that many students have developed an aversion to reading books due to numerous reasons. To overcome these challenges and to inculcate the healthy habit of not only reading but also to develop critical thinking in students in their formative years, a sincere effort was made by the Rotary Club of Thane Hills by organizing the innovative Inter-school competition - 'Between the Covers'. The event surpassed everyone's expectations and turned out to be a great success.

This unique Interschool contest was organised in the Federation House auditorium in Thane on 10th February, 2024. Twelve reputed schools from Thane, Navi Mumbai and Mumbai took part in the competition. Each of the participating schools was given a book as per the sole discretion of the Rotary Club of Thane Hills. The schools had to form a group of 7 to 8 students and work on the book review under the guidance of a mentor teacher from their school. Each school was assigned a different book; most of the books were motivational. This was intended to involuntarily instil good values in the students as they read their book in detail. Each school was allocated half an hour for the presentation.

On the day of the event, the schools put their best foot forward.

They began their presentation by giving their book title, a few details of the author and a synopsis of the assigned book. Subsequently, the main matter contained in the book was presented in a unique manner by each school. While some teams used PPT, some others resorted to panel discussion / interview / enactment / narration. After a quick summarisation of the book in the end, the participants had to field questions posed by the three judges.

The students gave 100% justice to the above criteria and this unique competition became extraordinary. The out of the box ideas and the creativity of the students could be clearly seen the audience the presentations were absolutely superb, and the competition was very close.

The following schools were awarded for their remarkable presentations.

Winners - C P Goenka International School, Thane

1st Runner up - Sulochanadevi Singhania School, Thane



2nd Runner up – Pawar Public School, Chandivali

All the participants and the respective school mentors received participation certificates and mementoes.

The judges of the competition, Mr. Alope Palsikar, Ms. Annie Soni, and Ms. Deepti Sharma were very pleased with the creative presentations, the students' confidence, and the knowledge and authenticity while answering their questions .

Eminent author Lata Gwalani, the honourable Chief Guest for the event , was mesmerised by not only the reading and grasping prowess of the children but also impressed by their interpretation, crystal clear presentation, and communication capabilities. As an author, Lata was thrilled to know that amongst the participants, there were students who read a whopping 200 books in a year. The author and writer in her was super inspired by the young audience and her words in, turn, inspired them.

Any event is a Teamwork and not a one-man show. An efficient group of Hillers was working round the clock before and during the event to ensure the smooth execution of the programme.

This is the first edition of this innovative competition. The seeds of organizing this innovative competition were germinated when I was invited as a Judge to a similar competition organized by R C New Kalyan . When I mentioned it to President Govind, he gave me a green signal, without any apprehension. A Big 'Thank You' to President Govind and Club Secretary Dr. Anagha Karkhanis. I hope and wish this competition shapes into one of the signature projects of the RCTH.

PP SUCHETA REGE - Event Convener



The picture before you has a lovely story behind it ...

We were traveling back from Goa after attending a wedding. We were waiting to board the Vande Bharat train at Thivim. On the platform, we happened to meet Sachi, PP Shirish Songadkar's daughter, with her friend Riya.

She told me that they had purchased tickets for Thane in the same train. But there was a problem; they were waitlisted and unlikely to get seats!

We enquired and realised that their tickets would get cancelled and their money would be refunded.

So what do we do? We had the following options:

1. Forget the train, get into a bus to Thane
2. Board the train, pay the TT for the tickets and penalties, if any.

We were constantly in touch with Shirish and soon, we decided on the latter.

The girls boarded the train with us. The train was fully booked, the seats were very comfortable, but where do the girls sit, even if the TT agreed to let them travel?

Here comes the welcome twist in the tale! As we were debating where to accommodate the children, a dapper gentleman in a black T shirt remarked, "You don't have tickets? Two of our friends had to cancel their journey in the last minute due a death in the family; you can be seated in their place!!"

We couldn't believe our ears! We asked him again, "Are you sure?"

"Yes," he replied. He quickly added, "They will go waste anyways. We didn't have the time to cancel the tickets, and in any case we'd not get anything as it is a last minute cancellation!"

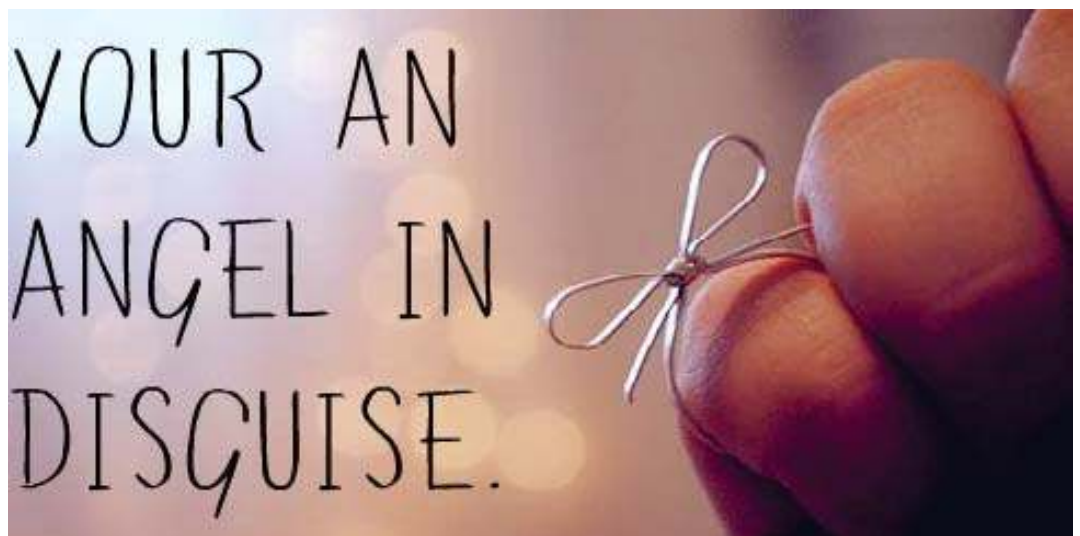
Thanking him profusely and heaving a sigh of relief, the girls settled in their seats!!

Now comes the best part; the couple refused to take the money for the tickets!

Now isn't that a fantastic story? And don't you agree that the cheerful Parsi couple (Farhad Engineer and his pretty wife Jeroze) were angels in disguise for Sachi and Riya?



Dr. Suhas Kulkarni





BOOKED FOR LIFE



Rooh by Manav Kaul

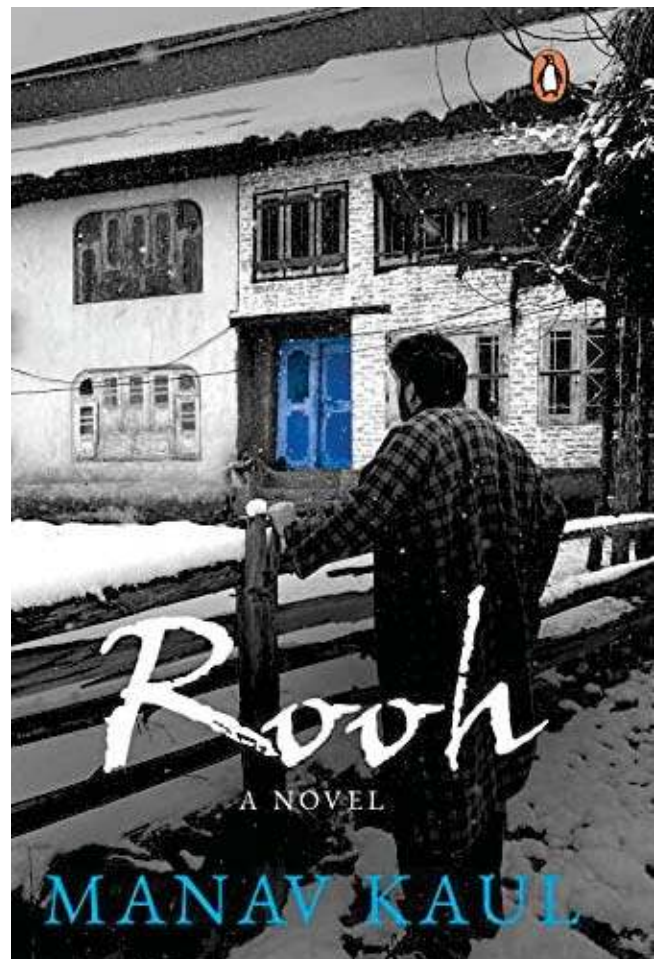
Rooh is small part travelogue big part memoir. It is the depiction of Manav's return to his homeland Kashmir, both physically and metaphorically, 30 years after his family was forced to leave. The writing is beautiful. The journey is layered thickly, so there is a lot of peeling off that happens along the journey.

The narration by Luke Kenny is much wanting. The last few words of sentences are almost eaten up. But, once I focused more, I actually began to lose myself in the story. It was like listening to an intimate diary entry of a traveler seeking his past in the present.

I have not been to Kashmir, but I have heard, read and seen a lot about the place. Listening to *Rooh*, made the heart of Kashmir and the way of life there come alive for me. Why I call it small part travelogue is that there are no mesmerising descriptions of the luxuriant valleys and lakes of Kashmir, no paeans being sung to the snow-drenched beauty. Instead, what *Rooh* does is introduce me to the fragrance of Kashmir, the emotional fragility of the people that the author comes into contact with. Almost everyone he meets seems to be nursing a broken heart behind the façade of everyday living. There is a constant seeking in their eyes, in their tonality, in everything. The author rues that this is not the Kashmir he left behind, nor is it the Kashmir of the people who stayed back. The Kashmir he knew has remained locked in childhood memories.

Rooh is an ode to memory. It raises memory and puts it on a pedestal, almost creating a monument out of it.

Ann Lata Gwalani



BUILDING CULTURAL BRIDGES:

It is a pleasure to introduce myself as Diane Le Gall, an exchange student from France. I arrived in India at the end of August 2023 along with Ana Sofia from Brazil, as a part of the Rotary Youth Exchange Programme (RYE). We have completed 6 months in India now. We both stay in Thane, but with different families.

For my part, I stayed the 5 first months with Amit and Chaitali Vadnere, from the Rotary Club of Thane Premium. Recently I, shifted to stay with Sucheta and Sunil Rege, from Rotary Club of Thane Hills.

Ana, at first, stayed with Hemali Shah. Hemali is the Avenue Chair of RYE District 3142. She takes care of us and organizes everything for us. Subsequently, Ana is staying with Namrata Shrivastava to date and soon, she will be shifted to Dr. Amit and Dr. Anagha Karkhanis from RC Thane Hills.

We are thankful to RCTH President Govind who invited us to one of the RCTH weekly club meetings for the presentation depicting ourselves and our respective countries. We both introduced the club members to the culture, the traditional food, and what characterized our country. We also discussed our new life in India, what we like/don't like, and our experience as exchange students.

This was a very rich and productive experience for both Ana and me. The members of RCTH welcomed us and they were very curious and eager to know about our culture, and our experience in India. It was a joyous moment for me and Ana.

Ana and I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to President Govind, Club Secretary Dr. Anagha and all the members of the Rotary Club of Thane Hills.

Diane Le Gall

rotary
youth
exchange



Anand Palwankar

Mr. Anand Palwankar, the spouse of Hiller Asawari Palwankar, is a name to reckon with, in the field of music. He is one of the musicians who has kept the golden era of Indian music alive...for thousands of music lovers. He has carved a niche for himself in the world of music by giving 'cut to cut' renditions of old classics and latest chartbusters alike.

Anand had a deep passion for music right from his childhood. He entered the profession of music by giving performances as a freelance singer with many music groups. He learnt to play the keyboard by merely observing other keyboard players and went on to become a full-fledged keyboard player cum singer, which is rare.

Anand is a versatile singer who belts out popular numbers of yesteryear singers like Saigal to the contemporary ones. He has performed with legendary artistes like Talat Mehmood and Manna Dey in Holland. He is fortunate enough to have been blessed by music legends like Naushad, Javed Akhtar, Kalyanji- Anandji, Shammi Kapoor and many other luminaries. He has received appreciation for his talents from popular artistes like Viju Shah, Sanjivani Belande, Shaan, Amit Kumar besides others.

Anand Palwankar has performed across India in various states. He has also performed across the globe in the U.K., U.S.A., Belgium, Spain, Hong Kong, Singapore, Egypt, Dubai, Muscat... well, the list is a long one. Anand also does Concept / Theme concerts for Corporates and MNCs. He has been doing and keeps doing shows for the Hinduja Family Group, Sahara Parivar (at Amby Valley), Ambuja Cements, IADC, V-Trans besides other corporate groups. He also enthral people through Celebrity Nights, Sangeet Sandhya, Dandiya Nites and many other such events.

Anand has the unique distinction of playing four keyboards simultaneously on the stage. Besides being the only artiste to play the keyboard and sing at the same time, he also knows the lyrics of 40,000 Hindi film songs byheart. Isn't that incredible? To describe Anand as a music encyclopaedia is not an exaggeration, at all.

No wonder, for his unique capabilities, Anand Palwankar's name has been recommended to the Limca Book of World Records. Dear Anand, we wish and hope that your name finds itself in this coveted list very soon.

The Hiller family certainly admires the multitude of musical talents and skills you possess. RCTH wishes you the very best for all your future events and programmes!

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan



Sai Sukhathankar - Fitness, a way of life!!

Sai Sukhathankar, the spouse of Hiller Anuradha Sukhathankar, has combined his profession and passion perfectly.

Sai embarked on his flying career in 2004 and since then, has been travelling the world very frequently, traversing the global skies. But fitness has remained a passion for him since his teenage years. Today, he is a highly driven fitness enthusiast who motivates people to lead an active lifestyle with his workouts... when he is not flying. Fortunately for Sai, due to his rigorous fitness regime, he doesn't suffer from jetlag resulting from his hectic flying hours. He enjoys working out at various gyms across the globe.

Sai is trained as an ISSA (International Sports Science Association) Certified fitness trainer and has done the Pilates certificate course, too. He studied nutrition to guide people to 'eat healthy and live healthy'. He believes in 'functional fitness' which is a type of fitness regime that supports our everyday life. It includes movements such as walking, squatting, lunging, bending and core which we use in our day to day activities. Functional fitness helps us to improve our muscle memory, posture and balance, increase mobility and reduce risk of injury.

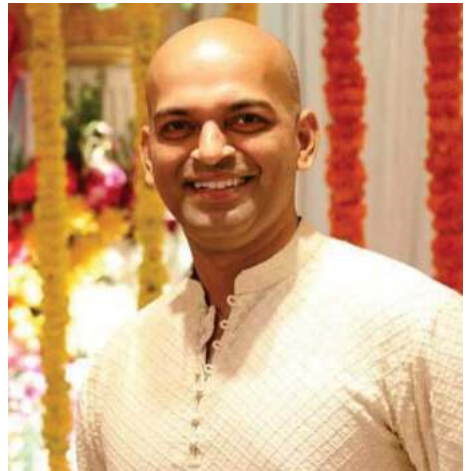
Sai enjoys his workout sessions as much as flying. He is very pleased that he has been very fortunate to have people who try and accommodate his sporadic flying schedule to get guided by him.

Besides, Sai has been a pillar of support to his wife Anuradha in helping her start her own Fitness career.

It isn't easy to glide among the skies on a given day and mentor people the next day for physical fitness at the ground level.

Sai, hats off to you for this active lifestyle of yours. The Hiller family is proud of you and wishes you success in all your ventures!

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan





Oh! Those deep, permanent scars!

Brutal aftermath of the World Wars,
Devastation, death and mourning,
Troubles galore in the world burning!
The catastrophic project 'Manhattan'
Evil designs of minds ever so rotten...
To crush, pulverise and annihilate,
And spread just contempt and hate.

Nagasaki and Hiroshima off the map,
Entire planet in a vicious death trap.
The infamous 'Fat man' n 'Little boy'
Deadly atom bombs, dear, no toy!!
Monstrous clouds of radioactive dust,
A deadly vortex above Earth's crust.
Thousands mercilessly eliminated,
Worst human disaster culminated.

Seemed like a truly hopeless case,
And certainly, the end of human race!
But relief came through League of Nations,
later the much-needed United Nations,
It seemed for a while all hunky dory,
But sadly soon, it was the same old story.

Cold war, Vietnam strife, Korean conflict,
Cuban crisis, Algerian war, Indo China rift,
One behind another in quick succession,
Harmony giving way to sheer aggression.
Conferences, Treaties, Accords, Pact,
Amity and armistice all failing to impact.

The Iraq Iran war saw the Gulf blazing,
Indo China wars saw boundaries shaking.
The deadly Syria, Gaza and Libyan wars,
stole the limelight o'er mission to Mars!
Man, needless to say, his own enemy,
Very epitome of notoriety and infamy.

Friends, Is it getting any better today?
Than the scenario that was yesterday?
Even a diehard optimist would agree.
Situation bleak and grim, you can see!
Brotherhood, camaraderie and trust,
Fidelity, love n concern all put to rust
Ongoing battles bet Russia n Ukraine,
Armies with only hatred in their vein.
A war of egos for Zelensky and Putin,
Battlefield a part of their daily routine.
Kyiv truly battered, bruised, ripped apart,
Lakhs wounded, no count of souls depart.

Israel Palestine conflict never ending,
The Hamas attacks truly terrorizing!
People in the Gaza strip and West Bank
Live among fears, bullet and the tank!

The Red Sea really living up to its colour.
Houthi attacks making ships shudder.
We can clearly say - stay East or West,
Surely middle of the world not the best!

It's time world leaders go for a resolution,
To the issue of wars, a peaceful solution.
Bring calm and succour to pained mind,
Coax all mortals to soon unite and bind.
The key is perfect compassion n truce,
For arms and weapons, a firm refuse!

Meetings, dialogues, love and empathy,
Life on Earth a sweet, joyous symphony.
Love builds bridges, hate begets hate,
It's in our hands, don't blame it on fate!
Even it means compromise and bend,
To ensure wars need to urgently end.
Man must pledge to display fine culture,
Together, must strive for a golden future!

Ann Radhika Padmanabhan