

The Lighthouse

Rotary
Club of Madras



ISSUE 13

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2025

GLOBAL COLORS
SHARED CAUSE



SERVICE ABOVE SELF

BIRTHDAYS



Rtn Srinivas Garapati	23 rd September
Rtn Ravindran Ramachandran	23 rd September
Rtn N Prakash	25 th September
Rtn N Sukumar	27 th September
Rtn Ateeq Ur Rehman	27 th September
Mallika, Spouse of Rtn PP Venkhat Ramani A S	24 th September
Dr Shameeka Rao, Spouse of Rtn Dr Archith K Sridhar	24 th September
Meena, Spouse of Rtn Mohankumar Subramanyam	25 th September
Priyadarshini, Spouse of Rtn V Murali	25 th September

ANNIVERSARY



Rtn Rita Chaudhuri & Moloy Chaudhuri	27 th September
Rtn Bhatia N K & Amita Bhatia	29 th September
Rtn PDG Kamdar J B & Marlene J Kamdar	29 th September



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YATRTECHS

Rotary
Club of Madras



Rotary Club of Madras

14th Weekly Meeting



Topic:
**Revisiting the
idea of peace:**
Why is conflict the
normal and peace
the exception

Speaker:
Kirthi Jayakumar
Researcher and facilitator
working in the spaces of
tech geopolitics, women
peace and security, and
conflict transformation.

Tuesday, 30th September 2025 | 1.30 pm

Lunch : 12:30 - 1:30 pm at Hyatt Regency, Chennai.

Spouses are invited for this meeting

Rtn. Nikhil Raj

President

Rtn. Prasanna Rajagopalan

Honorary Secretary

Rtn. Rajesh Mani

Director - Club Service

Rtn. Mohit Bajaj

Chairperson - Programs Committee

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NAVCHETNA SHIBIR – A SYMPHONY OF BREATH, MIND, AND RENEWAL



In a world weighed down by stress and monotony, our Selaiyur campus came alive with a radiant burst of energy through the Navchetna Shibir, the celebrated Breath-Water-Sound program of The Art of Living Foundation. This wasn't merely a workshop, it was a festival of inner awakening, a confluence of body, mind, and spirit. Over 40 spirited women immersed themselves in this transformative two-day journey, embracing the wisdom of the five elements, the power of the breath, and the rhythm of life itself. The air was charged with positivity as participants discovered confidence, resilience, and a renewed sense of responsibility towards the community and environment.

Guides of Light – Mrs. Meenakshi and Mrs. Gandhimathi orchestrated the experience with

grace and brilliance. With their soulful blend of pranayama, yoga, meditation, and lifestyle insights, they held every participant spellbound, weaving lessons of cleanliness, mindfulness, and inner balance into an unforgettable tapestry.

The feedback? Nothing short of jubilant! Participants walked away glowing with gratitude, serenity, and empowerment. Such was the impact that a Part 2 of this enlightening saga is already on the horizon, ensuring even those bound by exam schedules can bask in its benefits.

Navchetna Shibir wasn't just an event, it was a movement, a collective inhalation of hope and an exhalation of stress. Truly, a renaissance of the spirit has begun at Selaiyur!

A DAY OF CARE, COURAGE & COMMITMENT

When Team Selaiyur dreams, they deliver big and the Cancer Screening Medical Camp was nothing short of a triumph on 17 Sept 25!

147 women walked in with hope, and walked out empowered with knowledge, screenings, and above all, the reassurance of care.

From the very first step, Site Manager Vimalleshwari and her ever-reliable assistant Rekha orchestrated the event like seasoned

maestros managing the buzz, ensuring the smooth flow of people, and keeping the energy high even as numbers soared far beyond expectation. Their efforts were strongly complemented by An. Deepti who initiated the workshop.

The day began with Dr. Sangeetha's inspiring 30-minute awareness session on the HPV vaccine, where every word struck a chord.



So powerful was her talk that a follow-up vaccination camp is already on the horizon.

The screening was thorough—blood tests, physical exams, PAP smears, and mammograms—no stone left unturned. And the star of the day? The Mammogram Bus—a marvel of innovation and compassion on wheels! With its four compact yet efficient sections (driver's cabin, lab, mammogram



suite, and pap-smear bed), it proved how healthcare can be mobile, accessible, and dignified.

What was planned to end at 2 pm stretched till 6 pm. Tired faces, yes but radiant smiles said it all. Each woman left knowing she mattered, and that preventive care is a shield against fear.



A round of applause to An. Deepti, the VS Hospital team, Dr. Sangeetha, and the Health Services Vertical of RCM, who together turned a vision into reality.



This was more than a camp. It was a celebration of women's health, community strength, and the Rotary spirit in action.



**- Rtn Dr Sharon Krishna Rau
Director – Vocational Services**

BOND WITH BREAKFAST – A MORNING OF MAGNIFICENT MUNCHING!

On a bright and bustling Saturday morning, 13 Sept 25, the legendary halls of the iconic New Woodlands Hotel were set ablaze not by fire, but by the roaring laughter and infectious energy of 30 spirited Rotarians, both sprightly Greens and seasoned sages.

Like clockwork, they descended at 8:00 am, armed with empty stomachs and overflowing enthusiasm. The tables groaned under the weight of South Indian breakfast royalty—fluffy idlis, crispy dosas, and piping-hot filter coffee all served with a side of sizzling camaraderie.



The conversations bubbled like a well-seasoned sambar, weaving threads of mentorship, mischief, and magic. Every plate became a canvas of culinary chaos, every laugh a note in the morning symphony of fellowship.

As the last morsel vanished, smiles lingered, memories were made, and everyone left with the undeniable truth: when Rotarians bond over breakfast, even Mondays seem jealous.



Here's to many more mornings of meaningful mischief and mouthwatering beginnings!

— PP Rtn Gunashekar



Rtn Sid Chandrasekar

FRESH FUEL

1. Think of a significant lesson you've learned in life that didn't come from a classroom, a mentor, or even a book. It might have come from a surprising person, an unexpected event, or even a moment of quiet reflection. What was that lesson, and how did it fundamentally change your perspective on something important?

A. My biggest lesson didn't come from a teacher, it came when I got detained and sent to 'open school.' At first, it felt like failure. But then I realized: failure isn't a dead end; it's just a different road. And detours? They've been my best teachers. They taught me to be curious, to look sideways, to improvise, which honestly, has been my superpower ever since. And it's the same instinct I carry into Rotary: when the straight road doesn't work, let's find a creative one.



2. Forget the typical "why Rotary." What's the story behind your decision to join the Rotary Club of Madras? Was it a lightbulb moment, a nudge from a friend, or a deep-seated desire to make a specific impact?

A. Why Rotary? Rotary was always in the family background music. My dad was a Rotarian. I even helped him draft the blood bank project report in the early 2000's. At the time I thought I was just typing paperwork but it went on to become a global grant that saved lives. Years later, my wife went and raised the bar with her 'Wings to Fly' project where kids from very humble backgrounds pitched business ideas and the winners got international exposure. That floored me. I realized Rotary wasn't just family legacy, it was a platform where my itch to do larger upskilling projects could actually find scale. And trust me, scale is addictive.

3. Every Rotarian has that "aha!" moment, that one experience that truly shifted their

perspective on what Rotary is capable of. Since becoming a part of RCM, what's been that most surprising, challenging, or deeply moving experience that's redefined Rotary for you?

A. My Rotary 'aha!' moment

I had two. The first was watching my dad's blood bank project transform from 'report pages' to real lives saved. It taught me that Rotary can quietly rewrite destinies. The second was noisier; standing at my wife's 'Wings to Fly' event, listening to kids from small backgrounds pitch ideas that could rival start-ups. One wanted low-cost water filters; another pitched a hyper-local delivery system. And then Rotary didn't just clap for them, it flew the winners abroad. That was my aha moment! Rotary isn't charity, it's a multiplier. It bends stories, rewires futures, and does things that no single individual or company could pull off alone.

FIRESIDE

A delightful afternoon unfolded at Sumit and Perna's beautiful home down ECR. Their house was a serene haven filled with plants and bathed in natural light. With open airy spaces, it instantly put everyone at ease. Quiet and peaceful, it was the perfect setting to unwind and socialize. Their calm and friendly dog, Choco, happily greeted guests and was always ready for a cuddle from all.

A poolside bar added to the relaxed vibe, where drinks flowed and conversations blossomed. The food was a true highlight. Starting with charcuterie boards,

the delicious Gujarati dish pathra, and flavourful podi idlis, there was something for everyone to enjoy. A wonderful spread of dishes made with homegrown vegetables, lovingly nurtured by Sumit's mother, included fresh salads, crispy vegetables, chole kulche, rice, and gravys. The meal ended on a sweet note with banana bread served with ice cream, along with other desserts. Our first fireside gathering, made special by generous hosts and a warm, welcoming group of people, was truly an afternoon to remember.



- Shameeka Rao, Spouse of Rtn Archith Sridhar

BEER, BENZ, AND BERLIN NIGHTS: ROTARY'S GERMAN ESCAPE



The International Rotary trip was a delightful mix of fun, excitement, great food, and wonderful bonding. We were a group of eighteen, who got to know one another more closely during our week together — a week filled with laughter, learning, and memorable experiences. Our journey began in Stuttgart, where we soaked in the charm of a quaint European town. And being in Germany, how could we resist the temptation to prematurely celebrate Oktoberfest? We spent an evening at a 391-year-old establishment — the iconic Paulaner — sampling a wide range of local beers. The food was hearty and authentically local, and even the vegetarians among us relished the fresh and flavourful produce.

The next day took us into the heart of nature — a visit to the famed Black Forest. We strolled along a treetop walkway that culminated in a long spiralling tower, offering a panoramic view of the forest canopy below. It was truly picturesque, and we found ourselves happily snapping countless photos to capture those serene, green vistas. A highlight of our trip was the visit to the renowned Mercedes-Benz factory, which gave us a deep appreciation for why Germans are celebrated for their precision, accuracy, and eye for detail. The factory floor ran like clockwork — even the workers' breaks were synchronized to perfection. With several car enthusiasts in our

group, our guide certainly had her hands full, patiently answering our many questions!

From there, we headed to Berlin, a city where history and modernity coexist beautifully. It was moving to stand before remnants of the Berlin Wall, once a stark divider of East and West, and to visit Checkpoint Charlie. A sombre moment awaited us at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, where we witnessed the chilling remnants of World War II and reflected on the unimaginable struggles faced by those imprisoned there. Balancing these powerful moments were the city's many architectural treasures — from the stunning Berlin Cathedral to the grandeur of Sanssouci Palace.



We also awakened our inner spies at the Berlin Spy Museum, where it quickly became clear that a few of our fellow Rotarians might just be contenders for the next James Bond title! Berlin's vibrant culture and nightlife did not disappoint. We enjoyed an evening at the Monkey Bar, a lively club overlooking the zoo, which offered breath-taking night views of the city. We soaked up some soulful local jazz at the Hat Bar, and — after a few amusing attempts — finally gained entry to an underground club showcasing what Berlin is best known for: its pulsating electronic music scene.



**-Rtn Shivkumar Eashwaran
Director - International Service**

TOUCHING TINY HEARTS IN THE UGANDAN COMMUNITY: GLOBAL GRANT PROJECT G2464269

Rotary Club of Madras along with its partners RC Kampala, Uganda Heart Institute and Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences are delighted to share the successful commencement of our Global Grant project touching the lives of scores of children with heart defects from Uganda. An initiative

strongly supported by DG Vinod Saraogi and ably executed by the world class paediatric cardiac program at Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences in Kochi this Global grant initiative aims to provide life saving cardiac surgery to these deserving children providing them with a new lease of life.



Members from Rotary Club of Madras including PP Ravi Sundaresan and Project Chair Rtn Dr Sangeetha Viswanathan visited the medical partner site to meet the first batch of young children who were fully recovered from their surgery and awaiting their flight home.

14-year-old Rahim Mwesigwa had undergone repair of his heart valve and his aunt spoke eloquently of the fears and apprehensions of their countrymen when travelling thousands of miles seeking life-saving care. They spoke of the kindness, care and compassion that they had received from the medical team at Amrita Hospital and expressed their heartfelt gratitude.

Samuel Okileng, a 1-year-old who had successfully undergone surgery for a 'hole in the heart' looked like any other toddler as he threw a tantrum when his mother tried to take the mobile phone away from him. It was heartening to know that he would now live a full life thanks to timely correction of his heart defect.

Nankisa Saherish, a 2-year-old who was born a 'blue baby' has successfully undergone corrective surgery and is now able to play with the other children and enjoy her childhood again. Her mother could hardly contain her emotions when she was asked to say a few words about her experience.

On the very day of our visit Dr Brijesh the chief surgeon had just successfully completed surgery on Daniel Mackenzie, a 5-year-old Ugandan child with a heart problem that should have been corrected during infancy. Daniel arrived at Amrita Hospital in a very critical condition with an oxygen level of just 50% but thanks to the incredible team at Amrita Hospital he will hopefully go on to live a long and healthy life. The hospital had arranged a

farewell party for the three children returning to Uganda and we were fortunate to participate. We distributed the gifts that we had taken along and our hearts were filled with joy as their faces lit up on receiving this small token of our love.

We at Rotary Club of Madras look forward to further collaboration with RC Kampala, Uganda Heart Institute and Amrita Hospital on this noble mission to save lives and bring smiles to these innocent faces.



- Rtn Dr Sangeetha Viswanathan
Project Chair

FLAG EXCHANGE

With Rtn Frank of Rotary Club of Berlin International. Flags were exchanged and Rotary projects discussed.

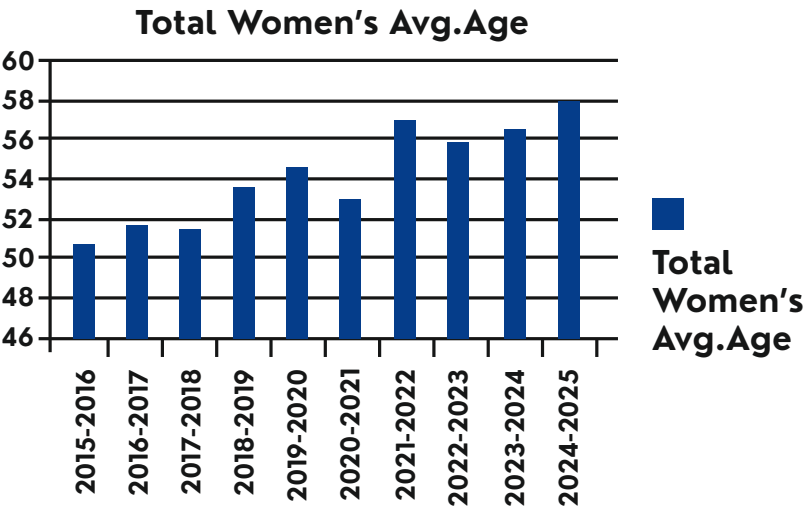


President Nikhil Raj had the pleasure of meeting with Rtn Prof Jan Brzozowski, Past President of the Rotary Club Krakow, a club of 30 members which was formed in 1934 but was shut from 1944 to 1989 due to communism in the country. The city of Krakow has 5 clubs of similar sizes and they do a few projects together. A brief of our Club was shared. He was truly amazed by the size of our Club and the magnitude of our projects. President Nikhil raj promised to send details of our Centenary celebrations and invited him to attend.



ILLUMINATING THE PATH: THE EVOLVING JOURNEY OF WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY

YEARS	TOTAL WOMEN'S AVG. AGE
2015-2016	50.67
2016-2017	51.67
2017-2018	51.58
2018-2019	53.42
2019-2020	54.51
2020-2021	53.11
2021-2022	57.07
2022-2023	55.86
2023-2024	56.83
2024-2025	57.93



We are always keen to delve into the details that paint a fuller picture of our vibrant community. Our latest data insights offer a particularly illuminating look at the evolving demographic of women within our ranks.

Examining the average age of our women members from 2015-2016 to the projected figures for 2024-2025 reveals a fascinating trend. Starting at an average of 50.67 years in 2015-2016, we observe a general upward trajectory, reaching a projected 57.93 years by 2024-2025. While there are slight fluctuations, the overall pattern indicates that the women in our community are, on an average, maturing gracefully within our fold.

This isn't merely a statistic; it tells a story of enduring engagement and a growing depth of life experience among the women who are part of RCM. It suggests that women are not only joining but also staying, contributing, and thriving within our community over many years. This rise in average age speaks of the sustained value and comfort they find here, making our community a constant in their evolving lives.

This trend offers us a wonderful opportunity to consider how best we can cater to the interests and needs of this maturing group. It invites us to create content, events, and initiatives that resonate with their rich experiences, their accumulated wisdom, and their continuing journey. Whether it's through sharing inspiring life stories, offering programs that embrace different life stages, or fostering connections that span generations, we have the chance to deepen the sense of belonging for every woman in our community.

The steadfast presence and growing maturity of the women in our Club are truly a source of strength and inspiration. They are the heartbeats that keep us shining brightly, illuminating paths for all.

The Gentle Tide of Years

A gentle tide, the years now softly flow,
For women's spirits, in our cherished glow.
From fifty's dawn, a promise in their eyes,
To near sixty, 'neath a faithful sky.
Each year a wisdom, tenderly unfurled,
A vibrant chapter, in this busy world.
They walk with grace, through sunshine and through rain,
Leaving footprints of beauty, easing every pain.
The Community holds them, steadfast and so true,
As memories blossom, forever fresh and new.
Their presence deepens, enriching every day,
Guiding spirits forward, along life's winding way.
Oh, the strength of women, a quiet, flowing stream,
Fulfilling purposes, living out each dream.
In every heart that beats, a story softly told,
More precious than silver, more precious than gold.



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