

# The Lighthouse

Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Madras - India



President:  
Rtn. S. Gunashekar

President Elect:  
Rtn. Nandita Krishnan

Immediate Past President  
Rtn. George B. Cherian

Secretary:  
Rtn. Dr. Arulmozhi Varman

Assistant Secretary:  
Rtn. Sathiararam Ram

District: 3230 | Inaugurated: 10-05-1929 | Chartered: 19-07-1929 | Charter No.: 3186 | Club No.: 15860

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www.rotaryclubofmadras.in

## From the President's Desk

### The Joy of Giving!



"Give and Thou shalt receive" says the Bible. "They who give have all things; they who withhold have nothing" is an old Hindu saying.

"For it is in giving that we receive" said St. Francis of Assisi. "Give till it hurts and then give some more" is a quote from Mother Teresa, echoed by Rtn. PDG. J.B. Kamdar.

The noble act of giving ignites young minds, fills hearts with love and hope, and brings a smile to people who are marginalized & lonely. In effect, the simple act of giving or sharing touches lives.

Giving is not restricted to money and material possessions. Here is an old Arab quote that illustrates, "If you have much, give of your wealth; if you have little, give of your heart". A quote from Kahlil Gibran drives home this point: "You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."

Giving is second nature to Rotarians! Rotary across the world, through thousands of programmes, has touched and transformed lives. Over 1.20 million Rotarians have pledged their support to eradicate the deadly scourge of Polio from the earth.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation continue to support Rotary's fight against Polio. Donors across the world contribute significantly to other causes, including Health, Humanity and Hunger. Rotarians express their support to various programmes by becoming "Paul Harris Fellows", "Major Donors" or "Benefactors". By making a monetary contribution, Rotarians endorse Rotary Foundation's initiatives in developing countries, where intervention is absolutely necessary.

This is Rotary Foundation Month. Rotary Club of Madras has, till date, contributed nearly US \$ 925,000 to the Rotary Foundation. Guess what! We have received nearly US \$ 2,000,000 for various community service projects of our Club from the Foundation!! Clearly, our donations to Rotary Foundation come back in good measure to support our ongoing and new community service programmes.

Here is an opportunity to open your hearts and your purse strings! Contribute handsomely to the Rotary Foundation! To know how your contributions will make a difference, call Rtn. P. Suresh, Chairman - Rotary Foundation.

Cheers and have a great week ahead!

## History of Diwali... Festival of Lights



Mr. C. R. Paramasivam, former Rotarian of RCM and Founder of SMILE - a voluntary organization addressed the Club on the significance of Diwali.

Diwali brings together the families, friends and relatives. This festival of Diwali is celebrated all over the world and across several religions.

Hindus celebrate it for the destruction of a demon called Narakasura who was destroyed by Krishna. In northern India the same Diwali is celebrated to symbolize the return of Lord Ram from Lanka to Ayodhya. In Karnataka it symbolizes the destruction of Maha Bali. In many parts of the country Diwali is also celebrated for the birth of Goddess Lakshmi. The Jains celebrate Diwali as the day on which Mahaveer the founder of Jainism attained Moksha. The Sikhs celebrate Diwali as the day of release of one of their Gurus who was imprisoned.

The Speaker articulated the difference between history and mythology and opined that the stories always had some inner message or moral - something that will contribute to the harmony of the society.

Diwali is celebrated for several reasons. Probably there is more than a common thread for why people across cultures celebrate around the same time.

Diwali falls in the last week of Oct or 1st week of Nov. Halloween is also celebrated in the West around this time and symbolizes the victory of good over evil. Halloween is celebrated in



the western world where they follow the solar calendar and here in Asia we follow the lunar calendar and therefore the dates differ.

The Speaker concluded by pointing out both the scientific rationale behind celebrating Diwali as well as the spiritual aspects. He gave examples of the use of crackers and lamps to keep the wildlife at bay as Diwali symbolized the beginning of winter. Also the Speaker believed that the Ozone concentration in the atmosphere increases during the period which contributes to the welfare of mankind. He mused that even with the absence of gadgets like microscopes or telescopes, the ancestors really knew a lot of things by mere observation. They however coated most facts in a religious capsule so that people could follow it with discipline and lead to a harmonious society.

**NOVEMBER**  
**THE ROTARY**  
**FOUNDATION**  
**MONTH**



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# A matter of minutes



SGt-at-Arms Rtn.V.V.Mohindra collared President S.Gunashekar who called to order the joint meeting of Rotary Club of Madras and Rotary Club of Chennai Towers, followed by a silent invocation.

The minutes of 2nd Nov'10 meeting was duly confirmed.

support boys. He thanked the Inner Wheel Club and Mrs. Jayashree Mittal for the 100 shirts and also first lady Ann. Padmavathy for coordinating the shirts.

On behalf of Rtn. Kumaran, RC Thiruvannamiyur, President referred to a program called 'Born to Win' and the brochures for the same are available.

and thanked Pres. Rajei for her club's contribution of Rs.10,000.

The program covers 250 school children participating from over 130 schools. 8 clubs are hosting this particular event. All Rotarians with family are welcome.

President informed that our Rtn. M. Balasubramanian (Award Committee Chair) and Rtn. PP. Indra Subramanyam (Assistant Governor & Additional Secretary) represent us at the District.

President Rajie Vijay Sarathy, RC Chennai Towers gave an overview about her club and its activities.

- Rotary Club of Chennai Towers is a 12 year old Club, started in 1998, currently with 43 members
- Two major projects – One being the SAVE HEART SAVE CHILD program to fund heart surgeries for children, which was started last year; Second project GIVE LIGHT – for the visually impaired educates & supports them to improve their quality of life including distribution of Braille study kits & CD players etc.
- Ongoing project – Tailoring unit at Poondi to train many women and help them stand on their own with a vocation
- This year they had a coffee morning fund raiser where many women in Rotary enjoyed this fun fund raiser
- VOICE OF DISTRICT 3230 – their Signature event started last year which attracted active participation from RCM members
- Happy & honoured to mention that this is the first time in 12 years that they have a joint meeting with RCM – they look up to RCM and it's a learning curve to all, by just observing the activities & events of RCM
- RC Chennai Towers has a high tea meeting on Thursdays at Hotel Accord at 7 p.m and requested RCM members to attend
- RC Chennai Towers is looking forward to continue the trend that has started this year by this joint meeting and hoped to continue the same in the years to come
- Thanked Pres. Gunashekar and all members of RCM for the opportunity of a joint meeting
- Pres. Rajie presented their club's roster to Pres. Guna & PP. Indra Subramanyam.

Secretary Dr. Arulmozhi Varman announced that the next meeting on 16th Nov'10 will be at the same venue.

Rtn. Vivek Harinarain IAS retd., introduced the Guest Speaker Mr. C. R. Paramasivam. Mr. C. R. Paramasivam gave a talk on 'Significance of Diwali' followed by an interesting Q & A session.

President Gunashekar presented a memento to the speaker on behalf of RCM. Rtn. Deepika of RC Chennai Towers proposed the vote of thanks.

The meeting was then declared closed.



## Joint Meeting – Rotary Club of Madras & Rotary Club of Chennai Towers

Rtn. Neeraj Sharma welcomed visiting Rotarians including President Rajie Vijay Sarathy & Secy Shreelekha Indrajit and members of RC Chennai Towers. President welcomed guests introduced by members and members of the Probus Club.

President welcomed the Chief Guest of the afternoon Mr. C. N. Paramasivam. President handed over a memento to the Bridging Presidents Rtn. Malcolm Joseph, RC Guindy, and Rtn. S.N. Subbarayan, RC Kanchipuram who had come on invitation.

Both Presidents extended birthday and anniversary wishes to Rotarians & Anns who were celebrating this week and the cake was cut amidst applause.

Rtn. Vivek Harinarain IAS retd., Director, Vocational Service informed members that the visit to Chennai Port Trust has been re-scheduled later this month due to unavoidable circumstances.

President announced that the total amount collected for the loans & scholarship program is Rs.4,12,400 and thanked Rtn. A. Namasivayam for the same.

President informed members that we have received shirts and firecrackers for the in home

President Rajie of RC Chennai Towers informed members that on

- 10th Nov'10, their club will be distributing Braille study kit to the visually impaired at the Government school for the blind, Ponnammallee – DGE Raja Seenivasan has agreed to be the Chief Guest. She requested all to attend the program.
- On 14th Nov – will be participating in the School into Smiles project
- On 28th Nov – a joint cricket fellowship called the BBC – Beer, Briyani, Cricket will be held

Rtn. PP. N.K. Gopinath informed about the contribution of 2000 dollars from lady Gwendolyn Sieck Mathews to our Club. Our Club had sponsored her in 1950, to US for her under graduate course. As a mark of gratitude she has remembered after 60 years hence - and has wished that her contribution to be used for the water projects of RCM. She revived her contact through our new web site.

IPP. George B. Cherian on behalf of the School into Smiles Committee and the district said that on the Children's Day, there will be a cultural program by the finalists at Anna Adarsh School. This event is successfully conducted for the third year and acknowledged the support of RCM of Rs.25,000

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# Club activities roundup

## A very big thanks

The twenty seven families supported by us under our In Home Support Program had a great celebration of Diwali. Thanks to the generous donation from Rtn. Moosa Ahmed, all the 32 children were given clothes of good quality. Their mothers received a saree each and their fathers were given a Dhotie each. Their grand parents if living with them were also clothed appropriately. Moreover, each member of the family was given a towel and each family a torch light.

They have written a sincere thank you note which will be passed on to the large hearted Rotarian and his Anne Bilkis. From the Society funds, food hampers were distributed and it was heartening to learn that every family shared the supplied provisions with their neighbors who perhaps were more disadvantaged. Their expenses on fire crackers were minimal and all of them helped each other to clean up their neighborhood the day after. Our 'mothers' and children were ready with their 'first aid kits' to treat any one with cuts or burns.

Both at Selaiyur and Gummidipoondi, 50 boys could not go home for a variety of reasons. They were given an attractive 'T' shirt each and were entertained to a very special lunch with sweets and savories kindly donated by Rtn. N. R. Gupta. I am truly grateful to both of them for their thoughtfulness.

~ Rtn. P.P. Christopher Devapragasam

## VISIT TO THE CHENNAI PORT - POSTPONED

Dear Friends,

As announced last Tuesday due to certain completely unavoidable reasons and important logistic requirements the proposed visit to Chennai Port Trust on 13th November has been postponed. The revised date will be informed shortly.

Apologies to those who had responded positively but, look forward to the visit towards the end of November 2010.

With best wishes,  
Vivek Harinarain  
(vivekharinarain@everonn.com)

## Snippets from the past

◆ RTN. RITA CHAUDHURI

### WOMEN POWER

Our District 3230 has the distinction of having one of the first woman District Governors outside of Canada and USA – Rtn. Rekha Shetty was District Governor in 1999 – 2000.

Women however were first formally admitted to Rotary only as recent as 1988-89 and that after a decree from the U.S. Supreme Court. The same year Rtn. Meena Dadha became the first woman to join the Rotary Club of Madras. Rtn. Sudha Umashankar became the first woman to serve as Secretary of our Club.

Today, out of a total of 220 members, we have 19 women members. Rtn. Indra Subramanyam was our club's First Woman President. And Rtn. Nandita Krishnan is our President Elect.

## Building Bridges for Long Term!

About 200 kms south of Chennai, nestled in the hills is Tiruvannamalai. Pilgrims through the temple and Ramana Sree Ashram looking for peace and tranquility. Once a year, a "Deepam" is lit with tons of ghee and more than 1.6 million people converge to witness this spectacle. Incidentally, this year,



"Deepam" is on 21st November 2010.

The cool weather is in direct contrast to the warm welcome we received at Tiruvannamalai, thanks to Rtn. President Sathianathan and Rtn. Er. S. Sivasankaran, Hon. Secretary, Rotary Club of Tiruvannamalai.

Rtn. Dr. Arulmozhi Varman, Hon. Secretary of our Club, Spouse Uma, Rtn. Venkhat Ramani, Spouse Mallika, Paddhu and I were warmly welcomed to the Joint Meeting of Rotary Club of Tiruvannamalai and our Club on Sunday, 31st October 2010.

Being Vocational Services Month, "Vocational Excellence Awards" were bestowed on deserving teachers, drivers, conductors, firemen and workers from the corporation. Rtn. Praveen Mehra – District Chair – Interact, was the Chief Guest, and Rtn. N.S. Mani from Gudiyattam was the Guest of Honour for the Family

Participation part.

Young students from Interact Club of Sishya Matriculation Hr. Sec. School, Tiruvannamalai, performed dances and enthralled the audience. Rtn. District Governor Elect was also present on this occasion.

I have conveyed greetings and good wishes on behalf of our Club and also assured support in programmes covering education and nutritious supplement schemes for deserving students. Rtn. Dr. Arulmozhi Varman discussed enlarging the scope of eye camps being undertaken by the Vision Foundation. Rtn. Venkhat celebrated his birthday with all of us at the Joint Meeting!!

The Meeting was followed by Fellowship & Dinner. With the Joint Meeting behind us, we reached Chennai at 1.30 a.m., ready to take on the next task!!

~ Rtn. President Gunashekar

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**Rtn. Dr. H. Krishna Hande**

Sometimes you stumble across proponents of the feminist ideal in the most unexpected of circumstances. I found one during my chat with Rtn. Krishna Hande, head of Hande Hospital, plastic surgeon, specialist in cosmetic surgery.

Rtn. Hande explains the difference between the two – plastic surgery which is the umbrella term referring to reconstructive surgery, and cosmetic surgery, the same process, but for purely aesthetic reasons. Krishna specialises in procedures like liposuction, abdominoplasty, hair transplants, and such. 'We transplant individual hairs now, not clumps, so it looks natural, not like transplanted rows of paddy,' he says.

His wife Indira, whom he met while studying medicine in Madras Medical College, is an anaesthetist, and runs Hande Hospital, a 50-bed hospital in Shenoy Nagar.

'She's my right hand, she takes my problems off my back, and allows me to do my job without distraction. My life would simply not function without her,' he admits with remarkable frankness.

The family is very actively involved in sports, tennis being the favourite. In fact his son Siddharth who studies environmental sciences in Australia, even played for India at one time.

Medicine was a natural choice for Krishna who as a child spent time with his doctor father in his clinic. He thinks the respect with which doctors were looked upon was probably an influencing factor.

Dr. H.V. Hande had a far deeper influence on Krishna too. As health minister for Tamilnadu, he was instrumental in working with Rtn. Krish Chitale to bring the Polio Plus programme to life. He also introduced Krishna to the Rotary. Krishna talks of Rotary organised vaccination drives that took him, a medical student, to remote villages. He became a Rotarian in 1992.

Krishna, who describes himself as a person who, regardless of obstacles, will pursue something till he gets it, says he doesn't bother about the distant future, just takes every day as it comes. I would add that he is also super-cautious – he actually asked to check my conversation notes!

As he walks away at the end of our chat, he stops, turns around with a smile and says, 'You know, the first time I really noticed Indira was when she took part in a table tennis tournament in college and defeated the reigning champion – the men's champion. Unforgettable!'

Here's to strong, spirited women, and to the uncommon men who value them!

~ Rtn. Mahitha Suresh

**Rotary Foundation Contribution**

We acknowledge with thanks the following TRF contributions:

- |                                 |   |                                |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Rtn. President S. Gunashekar | <b>Amount in USD</b>  | <b>Towards</b>                 |
|                                 | 8000 USD  | Rtn.S.Gunashekar – Major Donor |
|                                 | 1000 USD  | Dushyanth Gunashekar – PHF     |
|                                 | 1000 USD  | Harshavardhan Gunashekar – PHF |
| 2. Rtn. Rajendran Sabanayagam   | has contributed 1000 USD towards Rotary Foundation. He has nominated his wife Ann Renuka Sabanayagam for the PHF. |                                |
|                                 | ~ Rtn. P. Suresh, Director - TRF  |                                |

**Birthday**

18th Nov  
Rtn. Dr. Vasanthi Vasudev  
20th Nov  
Spouse : G. Ishwar Prasad (Rtn. Srilatha)  
21st Nov  
Ann. Susan Isaac (Rtn. Capt. Shibu Isaac)

**Wedding Anniversary**

Rtn. R. Vasudevan - 22nd Nov  
Ann. Vidya  
Rtn. Anil Saraogi - 22nd Nov  
Ann. Manisha  
Rtn. Jayshree Sridhar - 18th Nov  
Spouse : Dr. K. Sridhar

**Sunshine**

Rtn. A. Namasivayam - Rs.8111  
Rtn. M. Balachandar - Rs.1000  
PP. Paul K. Jacob - Rs.12,000 (BTS)  
Rtn. Sandhya Sridhar - Rs.1000  
Rtn. Dr. Srinath Yeshwanth - Rs.12,000 (BTS)

**Donation for RCM Projects**  
Rotary Club of Chennai Towers - Rs.5000

**ROTARY QUOTE**

"Man has affinity for his fellowman, regardless of race, creed, or politics, and the greater the variety, the more the zest. All friendliness needs is a sporting chance; it will take care of itself in any company." — A Road I Have Travelled, THE ROTARIAN, February 1934

**OBITUARY**

With deep regret we announce the sad demise of Rtn. A. Sankara Narayanan's mother Mrs. Alamelu. Our heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

Rtn. Sathiam Ram, Rtn. Rita Chaudhuri, Rtn. Mahitha Suresh, Rtn. Sandhya Sridhar, Ann. Padmavathy Gunashekar, Ann. Soundarya Ramji, Ann. Tanuja Paul, Ann. Sujata Tarakesan, Mr. P S Sridharan

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**Forth-coming events**



Weekly meeting 1:00 pm Tue Nov 16, 2010 at the Taj Connemara, **Speaker:** Mr. Sriram will speak to us on 'Brand Building & Retail Management'



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