

DECEMBER EDITION, 2024

Rotary
Club of DEONAR
RID 3141



RODEO REACH

CLUB MAGAZINE OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF DEONAR



VOCATIONAL SERVICES EDITION

FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Dear Friends

December marks 6 months of the Rotary Year and a lot was achieved in this wonderful journey so far. Thanks to all our club members and readers for their continued support. The cover photo was taken during one of my visits to Maldunge where the villages were a great reminder of what Rotary could do and how Rotary helps reach the grassroot across these stratas of society.

December also marks two important milestones for most clubs. The first being that the President Elect announces his/her team in the AGM. The second being the announcement of the newest member in the leadership succession viz. The President Nominee. We have specials in this edition.

Weather being pleasant, December is more of a vacation in waiting for most club members and we were no exception. This is also a month when most relatives who are abroad, visit home. And thus, most had great busy schedule during the time.

However, Rodeos also worked on projects. And quite a few. We bring some of the coverage in this edition.

In this edition, we continue with some interesting articles. We are also thinking of changing the takt with an edition every 2 months instead of a monthly release. Would keep you posted on the developments.

And to sum it up, thanks all, once again, for your continued support. Hope you enjoy the edition as much as we did, when we worked for it. Have fun friends!

Yours in Rotary Service
Nick a.k.a. Dr. Leopard
Editor

On behalf of the Magazine Team:
Gunjan Jain Devadatta Chandgadkar

Support Members and Patrons:
Suresh Menon Alka Murli
Moksh Juneja Rajashri Mokashi



Message from the Editorial Team <i>The year end message for us all by the Lead Editor Dr Leopard</i>	Page 1
Straight Talk <i>From the President Rtn Dr. Rajashri Mokashi</i>	Page 3
Introducing the President Nominee : Nalini Kannan <i>As the Club PN is announced, a quick profile of the woman who would lead us in 2026-27</i>	Page 4
Know Thy Board <i>In this edition, BoD member Alka Murli, the President Elect, shares her thoughts</i>	Page 5
Theme Feature:: ADHD: The New Pandemic <i>A theme feature about the challenges in education due to the growing rates of ADHD and its ramifications by Friends of Rotary Ankita Bagade (Cousin of Nikhil Gurjar)</i>	Page 7
Theme Feature:: Goodfellows: A Bridge Between Generations <i>Another theme feature on a new vocational service on senior care by Rotarian Child Ved Ganguly</i>	Page 9
Health:: Dental Alternatives for Sleep Apnea <i>An article that reveals highly effective alternatives for Sleep Apnea by Rotarian Ann Dr Pallavi Gurjar, as she explains how she achieved some breakthroughs in her patients as she elaborates on her experiences</i>	Page 11
New Generation:: As a Rotaractor at Burwood, Sydney <i>R/child Athreya Kannan shares his experiences as a Rotaractor at Burwood, Sydney</i>	Page 13
Project In Focus:: Self-Defense Training for Girls <i>Senior Rotarian Vishnu Kamat explains the concept behind the project on Self Defense for Girls. This is an ongoing project that would run through January 2025 as well.</i>	Page 15
Travelogue:: Winter Wonderland: A Journey through Sikkim's Mystique <i>Rotarian child Riya takes us through the beautiful hill state of Sikkim as she describes her experiences when she visited the place in December</i>	Page 17
Cuisine:: Know Thy Kebabs <i>A culinary odyssey for kebab lovers, this article explains the origins of kebabs and the various types of ovens used across the world for the same.</i>	Page 24
Project Completion / Activity Reports for November <i>As given by Secretary Rtn Suresh Menon and Rtn Alka Murli</i>	Page 30
Call for Funds: A generic page for donations this time!	Page 35

“Balance is not something you find; it is something you create.”

As we step into the new year and I reflect on my first six months as President, one of the most profound realizations I’ve had is the delicate balance required to effectively navigate people, processes, and results. A recurring question that often occupied my thoughts was: Which approach is more effective in achieving goals—being results-oriented or process-oriented?

I observed that leaning too heavily on processes risks losing momentum and delaying results, while focusing excessively on results can compromise the strong foundation that solid processes provide. Over the past six months, I’ve come to understand that neither mindset is inherently superior. The key lies in harmonizing the two to achieve sustainable success.

Through this reflection, I’ve realized that process-driven and results-driven approaches are not opposites but rather complementary. Together, they enhance one another. For an institution like Rotary, which has thrived sustainably for over 110 years, achieving this balance has undoubtedly been a cornerstone of its enduring success.

In sharing my journey of mastering this balancing act, I leave you with the inspiring words of Harold V. Melcher: “Live each day as you would climb a mountain. An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal in mind, but many beautiful scenes are to be observed from each new vantage point. Climb slowly, steadily, enjoying each passing moment; and the view from the summit will serve as a fitting climax for the journey.”

So, let’s continue climbing this beautiful mountain of community work together, striving to make the world a better place through a perfect balance. Wishing you all a very Happy New Year!

YIRS,
Rajashri



THE PRESIDENT NOMINEE



NALINI KANNAN

Nikhil Gurjar

EXCLUSIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

Nalini Kannan, born and raised in Chennai, is affectionately known as "Chennai Express" by her friends. She completed her graduation in Chemistry from Madras Christian College and her post-graduation in Public Administration from Madras University. In 1986, she cleared the IAS prelims with Political Science and Public Administration as her subjects but could not sit for the main exams due to a scheduling conflict with her wedding to Mr. Kannan.

Nalini worked for 12 years in Indian Customs, a central government office. Currently, she is the proprietor of Athreya Engineering Services. She was closely involved with the Inner Wheel Club of Deonar for 20 years, serving as its president twice and as the Silver Jubilee President in 2013-14. She also held various district-level positions, including coordinator.

Her association with the Rotary Club of Deonar began in 1999 when she was a Rotary Ann, and she became a full member in 2015. She served as Youth Service Director three times, as TRF Director, and as Membership Growth Director. At the district level, she contributed to the Youth Service and the Rotary Youth Exchange Program. Youth service is especially dear to her heart, and she has hosted Rotary Youth Exchange students from various countries on several occasions.

A passionate traveler, Nalini has journeyed to all seven continents and experienced the wonders of the world, her travel adventures continue. She is happily married to Mr. Kannan Iyengar, a past president of the Rotary Club of Deonar and a proud Paul Harris Level Two Major Donor. Nalini is blessed with a daughter, Aishwariya, and a son, Athreya, both of whom are Rotaractors. Athreya Kannan is the Past President of the Rotaract Club of Burwood, Sydney. Nalini is also blessed with a granddaughter, Amoha, who keeps her active, joyful, and connected to youth.

Nalini is the President Nominee for the year 2026-27



PRESIDENT ELECT

*As the PE announces her team, she also sets the ball rolling for the next year. In this edition, we understand her perspectives on her year, the way she expects the transition to take place and the various focus areas that she has thought of. Here is **Alka Murli**, the Club PE and BoD member for you..*

RR: At the outset, hearty congratulations to you for declaring your team for the inspired year. Tell us about your Rotary journey so far.

AM: Thank you Nick.

I fondly recall my early years of community service with the Inner Wheel Club of Deonar, which marked the beginning of my journey into community engagement. Those were my formative years, and I embraced community service with the ease and joy of a fish taking to water. One of my earliest

Cont'd

collaborations with Rotary Deonar was developing the traffic island during Rtn. Ajit Pappu's presidency. That project, along with many others—big and small—helped build enduring bonds of trust and friendship with Rotary Deonar.

It was our Club Pitamah, AKS Kulbhushan Jetlyji, who played a pivotal role in bringing me into Rotary. His unwavering dedication and complete involvement in everything he undertakes have always been a source of inspiration. When he and Ajit visited my home to invite me to join Rotary Deonar, there was no room to say no.

The Rodeos, as we proudly call ourselves, welcomed me with open hearts, making me feel at home instantly. Over the years, presidents like Padma, Prabodh, Sudhir, Vidhya, Sangeeta, and Rajashri have not only given me ample opportunities but also their unwavering support.

This journey has been nothing short of incredible—an opportunity to forge lifelong friendships while contributing meaningfully to humanity. It's a testament to the power of shared purpose and camaraderie in making a difference.

RR: It is said that the Presidential Year is one of the most fulfilling, enriching and learning experience for anybody in Rotary. As you are on the run up to your presidential year, could you share some of the interesting learning that you had so far?

AM: I am sure it is! Rotary Deonar gave wings to my ideas. When I joined this incredible club, I was given the freedom to develop and implement new project initiatives. This taught me a valuable lesson: when your intentions are genuine, people naturally rally around you. Rotary has been my greatest teacher, imparting invaluable lessons in time management, project planning, scaling up initiatives, understanding community behaviour and most importantly, managing people. Never did I imagine that I would one day be asked to serve as the President of this esteemed club. With a legacy of 38 outstanding Presidents before me, and so many dynamic and capable members in our midst, the honour feels both humbling and immense. It fills me with great pride and an even greater sense of responsibility. With so much goodwill and faith in me, I can only say..... I am truly blessed!!!

If it is said that, “a year as Rotary President changes your life completely and exponentially”, I am preparing myself to navigate the exhilarating and sometimes turbulent waves ahead, ready to embrace the journey with all my heart.

RR: Tell us about your Pre-PETS experience. Did the Rodeo legacy help you there?

AM: Pre-PELs, as it is now called (where Training is aptly replaced with Learning), truly lived up to its reputation as Masti ki Pathshala. It was a remarkable platform for bonding, gaining a deeper understanding of Rotary at a broader level, and fostering innovative learning, critical thinking, and knowledge sharing.

The use of the Case Study method to address real-life challenges was particularly impactful. We had just one night to prepare our case. It encouraged us to think collaboratively as a group while honing essential leadership skills like quick thinking and decision-making under pressure.

I'm thrilled to share that my group's case study was adjudged the best in terms of content and presentation. What made me even prouder was realizing how many of these learnings are already deeply ingrained in the ethos and practices of my club, RC Deonar. This experience not only validated our efforts but also reinforced my belief in the strength of our club's values and initiatives.



RR: Together Everyone Achieves More. Tell us Alka, how was the experience of selecting members of your team? How did you go about it?

AM: As I began envisioning the scope and scale of my plans for the year, one thought dominated my mind: I must honour the legacy entrusted to me and live up to the expectations placed upon me. With this guiding principle, I sought out like-minded individuals within our club—those who share a vision for a brighter tomorrow, possess the capability to transform that vision into reality, demonstrate unwavering commitment to Rotary, and uphold the highest levels of integrity.

Believe me, the people and positions just fell in place naturally, culminating in a cohesive team that embodies unity and purpose. I just announced my team for the year 25-26 and I am truly inspired by the incredible group that has come together, united by a shared commitment to doing good in society.

RR: Have you identified any thrust areas for the next year? If so, could you brief us about them?

AM: With so much already accomplished, identifying an entirely untouched area can be challenging. However, changing demographics and evolving societal challenges demand our continued focus. Two critical issues that stand out and require urgent attention are the growing disconnect between education and job readiness, and the rising mental health concerns—both within the general population and particularly among students. My team is committed to tackling these pressing challenges with dedication and determination.

RR: What initiatives of your predecessors would you be continuing in your year? Are any proposals on the table to take things up on a larger scale?

AM: We take pride in our impactful flagship projects that have been successfully running for years, fostering a community of healthy, happy, and motivated citizens. These life-changing initiatives, such as Polio Eradication Drives, Operation Restore, JOY Musculoskeletal Corrective Surgeries, Pink Angels, TB Eradication efforts, and more, continue to make a significant difference in people's lives.

Many of these projects are designed with scalability in mind and are expanded based on demand. For instance, the Urban Forest being developed at Shatabdi Hospital is implemented across a sprawling 7,000 square ft area, where nearly 3000 trees are being planted using the Miyawaki technique. Similarly, the Pink Auto project, which empowers women beneficiaries, is scaled up annually to meet growing demand. These initiatives are a testament to our commitment to creating a sustainable, inclusive, and vibrant future for all.



ADHD: THE NEW EPIDEMIC!

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder or ADHD isn't a new term today. 6.4 million have been diagnosed with ADHD. There has been a 42% increase in the number between 2011 and 2012 alone! Statistics show that 3 times more in number boys are diagnosed with ADHD than girls. 25% are suspended before they leave school. 35% drop out before completing high school.

The question is who has ADHD and how do People get it? 80% of the cases have a strong genetic basis. This means that a birth parent passed it on. Or it may be caused by birth trauma or poor foetal malnutrition. It is a known fact that ADHD is not caused by poor parenting. The brain of ADHD has a unique feature that can be seen during a brain scan.



*Senior Teacher and Educationist, **Ankita Bagade**, recently completed a specialization on the teaching learning process involving challenging areas like ADHD. In this article, she shares a few insights on her specialization and explains a few points that are central to the issue. Ankita is a friend of Rotary, and is a relative of Nikhil Gurjar.*



Characteristics: There are many typical characteristics of students with ADHD. The most common problems are students find it difficult to learn from mistakes as they require cause-and-effect thinking which is controlled by the frontal cortex of the brain. ADHD impacts this area. ADHD children are not able to think or work in sequential order. Many of them have difficulty in Time management. They may not be able to read the clock or have a sense of Time to do various activities. They lack a sense of direction. These children are Impulsive and do things suddenly. These children lack the ability of problem-solving.

Most parents are frustrated with the behaviour of their child and don't know how to deal with them. A good counselor will hear their concerns and respond to their frustrations. Counselors share their research in a positive and supportive way.

Parenting a child with ADHD is a challenge that requires love, support, and patience to teach them how to navigate their obstacle-filled world. Early diagnosis helps the child to be prepared for the future.

Diagnosis can be done by a clinical psychologist or a Trained licensed medical person such as a neurologist/ paediatrician/ psychiatrist. A school psychiatrist is not eligible to diagnose the student. The diagnostic process is time-consuming. Lots of information from students, parents, and pediatricians was collected. Documentation of the behaviour is required to understand the complexity of the child behaviour. Diagnosis also helps us to identify whether the condition is mild, moderate, or severe.

School responsibilities: Every school has a committee that meets regularly to discuss the students and help teachers brainstorm appropriate interventions. The Committee share concerns and observations with grade-level teachers, and the mental health team and formulates individualized education programs for each student.

Famous personalities: such as Michael Phelps, (gold medalist in Olympics swimming), and Whoopi Goldberg (actor) also had ADHD but they were able to overcome their shortcomings and become achievers in their respective fields. There is Hope

GOODFELLOWS: A BRIDGE BETWEEN GENERATIONS

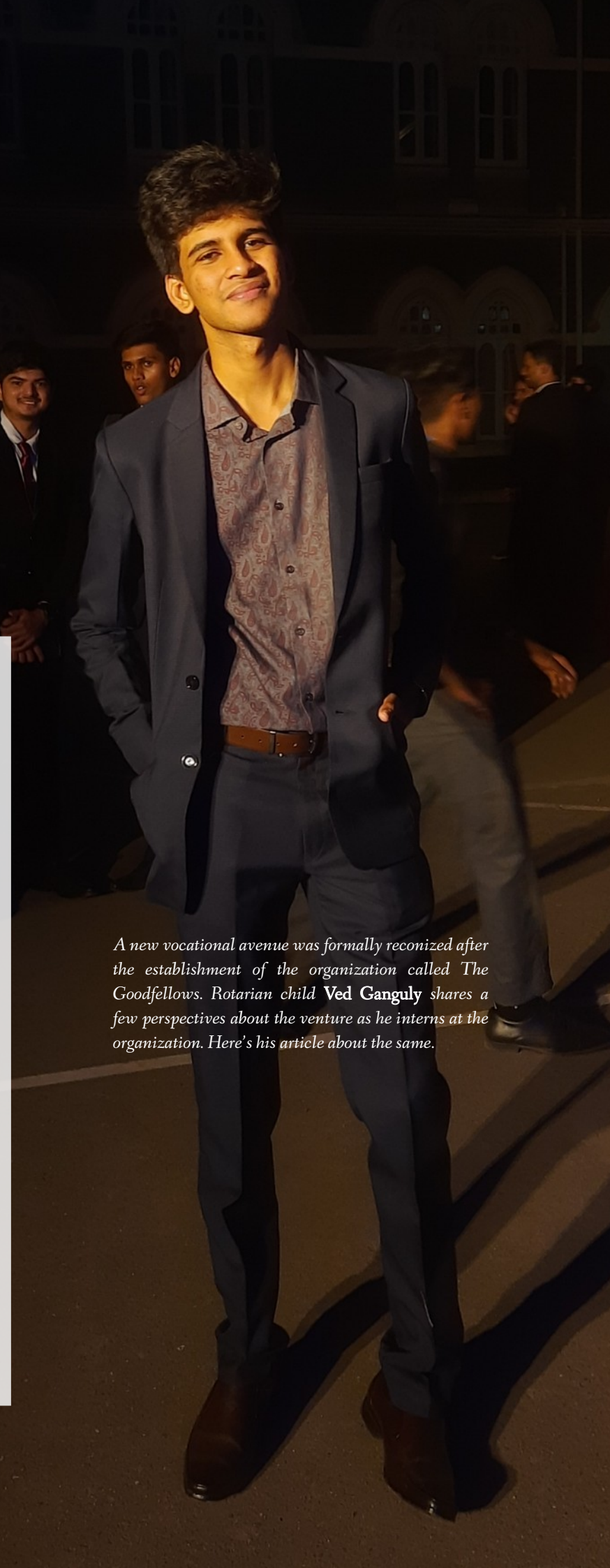
Imagine a world where seniors aren't lonely, have someone to share a laugh with, to reminisce with, and help them navigate modern life's complexities. That's the beautiful vision behind Goodfellows, a unique startup that's all about forging meaningful connections between young people and Senior citizens.

Founded by Shantanu Naidu and supported by incredible individuals like Dr. Niranjan Hiranandani and the late Ratan Tata, Goodfellows isn't just about providing services and building genuine friendships. We call the seniors in our program "Grandpals," and our mission is simple: to treat them with the same love and care we would for our grandparents.

"Everything Grandkids Do" – that's our motto. It's about spending quality time together, chatting, sharing stories, going for walks, trying new hobbies, helping with chores, and simply being there for them. We help them navigate the digital world, from smartphones and online payments to understanding social media lingo empowering them in a world that's constantly changing.

But Goodfellows is more than just one-on-one interactions. We organize vibrant events – Holi celebrations, Navaratri dances, and Christmas parties bringing together a whole community of young Goodfellows and Grandpals. It's a chance to share memories, celebrate cultures, and build lasting bonds.

*A new vocational avenue was formally reconized after the establishment of the organization called The Goodfellows. Rotarian child **Ved Ganguly** shares a few perspectives about the venture as he interns at the organization. Here's his article about the same.*





Many of our Grandpals face challenges like Alzheimer's or Parkinson's, and we're committed to supporting their well-being through activities that engage their minds and bodies.

I first discovered Goodfellows through an Instagram reel that truly resonated with me. It emphasized the importance of patience, kindness, and empathy when interacting with the elderly. Inspired, I joined the Goodfellows team, eager to make a difference.

Visiting Grandpals in their homes has been an incredibly rewarding experience. It's taught me the value of patience, the power of empathy, and the importance of cherishing every moment. These interactions have profoundly impacted my perspective on life, reminding me of the importance of giving back and making a positive impact on the world.

One of my favorite parts of the job is planning events. I love reaching out to potential sponsors and collaborators, setting up the whole event right from logistics, and most importantly, building relationships with organizations that share our values. These events are truly magical – a vibrant mix of laughter, shared stories, and genuine connection.

Working with Goodfellows has been an incredible honor. It's opened my eyes to the immense potential for positive change, not just for myself but for the entire community. It's shown me that I can use my skills to empower others, spread kindness, and make a lasting difference in the lives of our seniors.



DENTAL ALTERNATIVES FOR SLEEP APNEA

A disease that is getting diagnosed more commonly these days is that of Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Amidst the myriad of alternatives pursued by Chest physicians, ENT surgeons and other medical practitioners, dentistry is known to provide alternatives to this area. Rotarian Ann Dr. Pallavi Gurjar highlights the same in this article

Yesterday, I got a chance to save someone's life. My patient was suffering from Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). During the check up, I saw a pattern in his teeth wearing and gum recession, some TMJ (Temporo Mandibular Joint) disorders and tongue indentations. As I had already noted some pointers in history taking, sleep apnea tests revealed that his heart was at risk due to low oxygen level. This made me realise the importance of awareness about OSA. So, I decided to write on sleep apnea.

A few years ago, I got a chance to work on complex OSA patient case in KEM hospital where I designed a special oral device for him which could help us solve his case better. A surgery was also performed to correct his nasal anatomy and my dental device along with that helped us improve drastically in his Apnea Hypoapnea Index(AHI).

To clarify, there are 2 terms associated with OSA.
Apnea: A complete cessation of airflow (no breathing) for at least 10 seconds.

Hypopnea: A partial reduction in airflow, typically 30-50%, for at least 10 seconds, accompanied by a decrease in blood oxygen levels (desaturation) or arousal from sleep.

$$\text{AHI} = \frac{\text{Total \#Apneas} + \text{Total \#Hypopneas}}{\text{Total Hours of Sleep}}$$

Clearly, an AHI above 30 is high and a serious concern.

Many patients with OSA remain untreated or undertreated, which can lead to serious health consequences, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cognitive impairment.

Not many know that a dentist can play a major role in identification and treatment of OSA as apnea are commonly treated by chest surgeon or ENT in India. But in my career, I have identified and treated so many of these patients as they show prominent oral and anatomical signs. Just that, one needs to have eye for it.

Dental spacers and devices, also known as mandibular advancement devices (MADs) or oral appliances, are used to treat obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). These devices work by advancing the lower jaw (mandible) forward, which helps to keep the airway open during sleep.

Thus, it can improve the quality of sleep, reduce snoring and increase oxygenation, which can improve overall health. Moreover, these dental devices are often more convenient than CPAP therapy, as they are portable and don't require a mask or machine.

Dental devices are often recommended for individuals with mild to moderate OSA and individuals with anatomical issues, such as a narrow airway. It's also beneficial to those who are unable to tolerate CPAP therapy.

Mandibular Advancement Devices (MADs), Tongue Retaining Devices (TRDs) and Dental Spacers are some of the devices which benefits the OSA patients the most.

MADs and dental spacers advance the lower jaw forward, which helps to keep the airway open and TRDs hold the tongue forward, preventing it from falling back and blocking the airway. By advancing the lower jaw and stabilizing the tongue, dental devices increase the space in the airway, reducing the risk of obstruction.

But It's very essential to work with a qualified dentist or healthcare professional for optimal results as these Dental devices need to fit well in individual's unique oral anatomy. These devices may require follow up visits too to ensure its effective working and to make any necessary adjustments.





Coming from a family of Rotarians, I've always known that no matter where you go in the world, there will always be a Rotaract or Rotary club ready to welcome you and help you navigate a new world. Similarly, when I moved to Sydney in 2018, I began searching for a club to join and reached out to the then-president, Puneeth. He was extremely welcoming, inviting me to one of the meetings. Before I knew it, I had made new friends in a city I knew little about.

During the first three years in the club, we organized many social events where members from our club, as well as other clubs across Sydney, would gather to discuss upcoming events, share meals, and network. The meetings in Sydney were different from what I was used to. Moving to a country like Australia, where the population of the entire country is comparable to that of Mumbai, you quickly realize the difference in scale and with it, the impact a club can have. Each event, although hosted by a single club, would see participation from members all over Sydney. This was because each club had only 10-15 members, and they were run not for the sake of numbers, but out of the collective willingness to support one another's initiatives and create change. Positions within the club were secondary, which is why, for the first three years, I chose not to take up any.

R/Child Athreya Kannan, shares about his journey at the Rotaract Club of Burwood, Sydney. He is the son of Nalini and Kannan.

AS A ROTARACTOR AT BURWOOD, SYDNEY



In 2020, our club faced a tough reality. Most of our members were international students, and many Australians either didn't know about Rotaract or already had their own social circles, making Rotaract less appealing to them. When the pandemic hit, we knew that many of our members would return to their home countries, and with new immigration halting, there would be no fresh influx of members. It was then that I decided to run for president in a last-ditch effort to ensure the longevity of the club.



During this time, we hosted several online game nights, including quizzes and games like Gartic Phone, with a "bad pun" as a prize because with no budget and no in-person meetings, that was all we could afford. As the pandemic continued, we realized it was our responsibility as youth to step up. As hospitals filled and blood donation centers struggled, we organized a friendly competition among Sydney's Rotaract clubs to donate the most blood. Along with our parent Rotary club, we also volunteered to package and deliver over 2,000 COVID care packages to the homeless and elderly in the city.



Toward the end of the 2022 Rotaract year, we made one final effort to secure the future of Rotaract in Sydney by proposing a merger of the remaining clubs. Our goal was to ensure that Rotaract as an entity would continue to thrive. However, the insistence on keeping the Rotary club's names attached to their sponsored Rotaract clubs led to the tough decision of folding the Rotaract Club of Burwood.

But here's the bright side: though our club no longer exists, the spirit of its members lives on! Those who remain in Sydney have joined other clubs, and those of us who moved away still participate in events from time to time. For me, my journey continues as I pursue a master's in sustainability, aiming to bring about impactful change in the world. So, while Rotaract may have ended, the Rotaractors live on!

SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING FOR GIRLS



Vishnu Kamat, a senior Rotarian spearheaded a self defense training for girls. Here is a brief about the project, including its motivation and the activities that were performed. We haven't included the project photos in this article.

Teaching girls self-defense is essential for their safety, empowerment, and overall well-being. It provides them with the physical skills needed to protect themselves in dangerous situations, fostering a sense of security and confidence. Self-defense training goes beyond just physical techniques—it also teaches girls situational awareness, helping them recognize and avoid potential threats before they escalate. This can be life-changing, especially in environments where girls may feel vulnerable, such as walking alone or navigating unfamiliar areas.

Self-defense also plays a key role in breaking down gender stereotypes. It challenges the outdated notion that women are weak or incapable of defending themselves, promoting gender equality and encouraging girls to assert their right to personal safety. It instills confidence and strengthens mental resilience, reducing fear and anxiety in high-risk situations.

In addition to physical protection, self-defense education helps girls learn to set healthy boundaries and communicate assertively. This can be particularly empowering in situations of harassment or abuse, as it teaches them to stand up for themselves and take control of their personal space.

Moreover, self-defense can act as a deterrent to potential attackers. If a person knows how to defend themselves, they are less likely to be targeted. For survivors of trauma or abuse, self-defense training offers a way to regain control and build strength, contributing to healing and resilience. Ultimately, teaching self-defense to girls promotes personal empowerment, safety, and a cultural shift toward equality and respect.

Our project was titled **Self-Defense Training for School Girls: Empowering the Next Generation.**

This self-defense training program for school girls was conducted by reputed Black Belt trainers. This initiative targeted girls in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades, with approximately 250 students across three schools in the Chembur area: SCB Mankhurd, Matoshree School in Deonar, and Abhinav School in Trombay.

The training program runs from November 12, 2024 to January 22, 2025, with 10 basic sessions offered at each school. Sessions will take place twice a week, lasting 1.5 hours each, aimed at providing essential self-defense skills.

This program has been running successfully for the last four years, forming new groups of school girls every year. An advanced course is available for those who have completed the basic sessions.

Our mission is to empower girls with confidence, self-awareness, and the skills necessary for personal safety.





A JOURNEY THROUGH SIKKIM'S MYSTIQUE

Nestled amidst the majestic Kanchenjunga, Sikkim is a land of breathtaking beauty and tranquil allure. While many travelers prefer the summer months, we decided to explore its snowy cool charm during the winter. The crisp mountain air, frost-kissed landscapes, and cooler tones of nature cast a spell on us, making this journey an unforgettable escape.

Our adventure began with a focus on the Kanchenjunga, its grandeur omnipresent and mesmerizing from every angle. The towering peaks, adorned with glistening snow, felt alive with mysticism as we traveled across Sikkim to capture its many facets.



*Rotarian Child **Riya Gurjar** takes you on a journey through the winter wonderland of Sikkim in this exclusive article.*





In Gangtok, we explored the Chardham, a serene spiritual retreat replicating India's holy shrines, followed by Samdruptse, where the towering statue of Guru Padmasambhava aka the quantum buddha, stood solemnly amidst the winter haze. At Buddha Park in Ravangla, the colossal golden Buddha radiated peace, surrounded by rolling hills blanketed by an expanse of green field.

From there, we journeyed to Nathula Pass, a high-altitude marvel where nature's icy grandeur was on full display. Amidst the snow-covered expanse stood the Nathula Bholenath Temple, a beacon of spirituality perched dramatically against the rugged terrain. The temple, shrouded in serene silence, offered a surreal experience as the icy winds swirled around us, adding a mystical aura to the sacred space.





A short drive away, we arrived at the enchanting Chengdu Lake, a frozen gem nestled amidst towering peaks. Its reflective frozen waters mirrored the surrounding snow-draped mountains, creating a scene straight out of a postcard. The lake's beauty felt otherworldly, and it struck us that this serene location had been immortalized in Bollywood movies like *Dilwale* and *Yaariyan*. Standing by its icy shores, we could almost hear the echo of cinematic melodies, adding a touch of nostalgia to the pristine setting.

Returning to Gangtok, we found the city center to be a lively contrast to the chilled outdoors. Bustling with locals and travelers alike, the vibrant streets exuded warmth and culture. The aroma of local delicacies wafted through the air as shops selling traditional Sikkimese crafts lined the lanes. The city's energy, vibrant yet unhurried, wrapped us in a comforting embrace, offering a perfect balance to the tranquil landscapes we had explored earlier.

Our next destination, Pelling, greeted us with its unspoiled charm, a serene contrast to the bustling energy of Gangtok. Initially, we hadn't planned on including this quiet town in our itinerary, but a spontaneous change of plans revealed a softer, more introspective side of Sikkim—the yin to the majestic, towering yang of the Kanchenjunga.

Our first stop in Pelling was the helipad, a vantage point that offered an uninterrupted view of the Kanchenjunga in all its glory. Standing there, enveloped by crisp mountain air, we felt the profound presence of nature's grandeur. The snow-clad peaks loomed large, a silent yet commanding guardian of the land.

From there, we ventured further into Pelling's treasures. The Rimbi River, with its gentle flow, meandered gracefully through the valleys, weaving a

melody of peace and serenity. The sight of its glistening waters cutting through the verdant landscape felt like a painting brought to life.

Next, we visited the Skywalk Monastery, a unique blend of architectural marvel and spiritual sanctuary. As we walked across the glass-bottomed path, a breathtaking panoramic view of snow-draped landscapes unfolded before us. The experience was exhilarating, as if we were suspended between the heavens and the earth, embraced by the vastness of nature.

One of the most profound moments of our journey came at Khecheopalri Lake, a sacred waterbody revered by both Buddhists and Hindus. This mirror-like lake, undisturbed by even a single ripple, exuded an almost mythical stillness. It is said that leaves falling into the lake are promptly removed by birds, preserving its pristine surface—a testament to the sanctity of this site.

Beyond its serene beauty, Khecheopalri Lake holds deep spiritual significance. Believed to be a convergence point for Buddhist and Hindu faiths, it is also known as the "wish-fulfilling lake." As we stood by its tranquil shores, the air seemed to hum with a sacred energy, and we found ourselves instinctively whispering our hopes and dreams into the stillness.

Pelling, with its harmonious blend of natural beauty and spiritual depth, offered an experience unlike any other. It wasn't just a detour but a revelation, an exploration of Sikkim's softer, soulful side that complemented the rugged magnificence of its peaks.

On our way back, we took a delightful detour to Darjeeling, a charming hill station that offered yet another perspective of the majestic Kanchenjunga. The towering peak greeted us once more!







**KNOW THY
KEBABS!**





The history of kebabs dates back over 2,000 years, with origins in the Middle East and Central Asia. The concept of grilling meat over an open fire likely originated as early humans began to master the use of fire for cooking. The word "kebab" comes from the Arabic word "kebab," which generally means "grilled meat."

Ancient Times: It is believed that kebabs were first prepared by nomadic tribes in the region that spans present-day Iran, Turkey, and Central Asia. These early kebabs were typically skewered pieces of meat, such as lamb, beef, or goat, cooked over an open fire.

Persian Influence: The kebab as we know it today is strongly associated with Persian cuisine. The Persian term "kebab" refers to various grilled or roasted meats. The invention of skewering meat likely originated in Persia (modern-day Iran), where soldiers during the early Islamic period would skewer meat on their swords and cook it over a fire.

Ottoman Empire: The kebab spread through the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and the Mediterranean during the rise of the Ottoman Empire. Various regions adopted their own variations, such as the shish kebab (skewered meat) in Turkey and the döner kebab (vertical rotisserie) in the Balkans and Anatolia.

Modern Global Spread: Kebabs became more widespread in the 19th and 20th centuries as a result of migration, trade, and globalization. Today, they are enjoyed in numerous countries, with regional variations such as the Greek souvlaki, the Indian seekh kebab, and the Middle Eastern shawarma.

Various cultures have developed specialized tools and cooking methods for preparing kebabs, from simple skewers to complex rotisserie systems. Below are some examples of kebab cooking equipment from different regions:



Shish Kebab (Turkey, Middle East)

Cooking Equipment: The primary tool used is a long metal or wooden skewer, which holds cubes of marinated meat (often lamb, beef, or chicken). Kebabs are grilled over an open flame or charcoal, often on a large flat grill (known as a "mangal" in Turkey).

Mangal: A traditional Turkish grill, usually made of metal, designed to hold charcoal or wood, with skewers placed over the heat to cook the kebabs.



Döner Kebab (Turkey, Greece, Germany)

Cooking Equipment: The signature equipment for making döner kebab is the vertical rotisserie or spit. This device consists of stacked layers of marinated meat (usually lamb, beef, or chicken) cooked on a rotating spit, allowing for even cooking. The meat is shaved off as it cooks and served in pita or flatbread.

Vertical Rotisserie: Also known as a "gyro" in Greece, this machine spins the meat in front of a heat source, ensuring crispy outer layers while keeping the inside juicy.



Seekh Kebab (India, Pakistan)

Cooking Equipment: Seekh kebabs are typically cooked on skewers, often made from metal, and grilled over an open flame or tandoor oven. Seekh refers to the skewer itself, and the kebab consists of spiced minced meat, usually beef, chicken, or lamb, shaped around the skewer.

Tandoor Oven: In India and Pakistan, seekh kebabs are sometimes cooked in a tandoor, a traditional cylindrical clay oven that can reach high temperatures. The skewers are inserted into the tandoor, where the intense heat helps to cook the kebabs quickly.





Shawarma (Middle East, Levant)

Cooking Equipment: Shawarma is similar to döner kebab but is typically made with different marinated meats such as lamb, chicken, or beef. The primary cooking equipment is a vertical rotisserie, where the meat is stacked in a conical shape on a rotating spit, cooked by a heat source from the side.

Vertical Rotisserie: Similar to the equipment used for döner kebabs, the shawarma rotisserie has a rotating mechanism to ensure even cooking and is typically served with various accompaniments like tahini, pickles, and vegetables.

Kebabs on Open Grills (North Africa, Middle East)

Cooking Equipment: In many North African and Middle Eastern countries, kebabs are prepared using open-flame grills, often referred to as "mangals" or "barbecues." These grills use charcoal or wood to generate heat, and skewers are placed over the fire to cook the meat.

Mangal: A portable grill often used in the Middle East and North Africa to cook various types of kebabs, from chicken to lamb. The grill is made of metal and has adjustable racks to control the distance between the skewers and the heat source.

Souvlaki (Greece)

Cooking Equipment: Souvlaki, the Greek version of kebabs, is typically made from small pieces of meat (such as pork, chicken, or lamb) skewered and grilled over an open flame. The key equipment is the skewer, often metal or wooden, and a charcoal grill (also known as a "brazier").

Charcoal Grill: This simple yet effective cooking tool allows for the slow cooking of souvlaki over medium heat, which imparts a smoky flavor to the meat.

Kebab Griddles and Flat Grills (Balkans)

Cooking Equipment: In the Balkans, a popular form of kebab is the ćevapi (grilled minced meat). This type of kebab is often cooked on a flat griddle or grill. Griddles made of cast iron or heavy steel are used for cooking kebabs evenly across the surface.

Ćevapi Grill: A specialized grill designed for cooking multiple small, cylindrical kebabs at once. The grill is often flat and can be fueled by charcoal or gas.

Kebabs in Barbecues (Western World)

Cooking Equipment: In the Western world, especially in the United States and the UK, kebabs are often prepared as part of a backyard barbecue. Skewers made from metal or wood are placed on traditional grills or BBQs to cook the meat and vegetables. A charcoal grill or a gas barbecue is commonly used.

Barbecue Grills: These grills are equipped with adjustable grates, allowing cooks to control the heat and cook kebabs slowly or quickly, depending on the type of meat used.

Conclusion

Kebabs have evolved into a variety of forms, with each region contributing its own unique cooking techniques and equipment. From the traditional skewers of the Middle East to the vertical rotisseries of Turkey and Greece, the cooking tools reflect the rich cultural history behind the dish. Whether grilled over an open flame, roasted in a tandoor, or spun on a rotisserie, kebabs remain a beloved food enjoyed around the world.

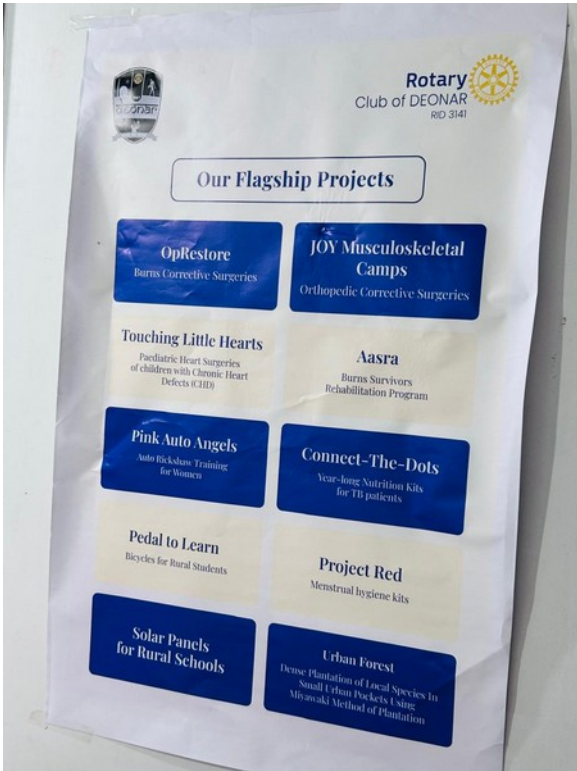


**GET THE LATEST
FROM OUR OWN
SECRETARY
SURESH MENON**

Christmas Carnival

19 December 2024

The stall was put up mainly for creating awareness about Rotary's activities and initiatives for the betterment of society at large. Posters of our Projects were put up. The volunteers will answer questions from the visitors. Also a QR code of our Club's account was kept for sponsorship and donations on the spot.




















Inauguration of Miyawaki Forest Work

15 December 2024

Urban Forest development work commences to ensure that different direct and indirect beneficiaries including hospital staff, patients, local residents and Chembur Deonar as a suburb benefits. Not to forget the safe haven being created for flora and fauna

VIBRANT TRF LEADERBOARD FOR OCTOBER 2024				
ANNUAL FUND  DEEPA MANI Bombay Chembur West \$6,000	POLIOPLUS FUND  SANKARA RAMNATH Bombay Mulund Valley \$2,442	OTHER FUNDS  Dr. RAJASHRI MOKASHI Deonar \$122,799	ENDOWMENT FUND  SATYAN ISRANI Bombay \$25,000	TOTAL  Dr. RAJASHRI MOKASHI Deonar \$123,257
 HARISH CHANDARANA Borivli \$4,395	 APURVA PATEL Bombay Airport \$1,688	 Dr. DHARAM POPAT Bombay North \$38,560	NIL	 Dr. DHARAM POPAT Bombay North \$38,560
 Dr. NIDHIKA BAHL Mumbai Elegant \$2,946	 PALLAVI SANGHVI Mumbai Malabar Hill \$1,625	 Dr. NIDHIKA BAHL Mumbai Elegant \$26,190	NIL	 SATYAN ISRANI Bombay \$31,000
VIBRANT TRF LEADERBOARD TOTAL CONTRIBUTION TILL OCTOBER 2024				
1ST  SATYAN ISRANI Bombay \$2,81,989	2ND  SHILPA MEHTA Queen's Necklace, Mumbai \$242,830	3RD  Dr. DHARAM POPAT Bombay North \$145,094	4TH  Dr. NIDHIKA BAHL Mumbai Elegant \$142,941	5TH  Dr. RAJASHRI MOKASHI Deonar \$125,385

Club was Recognized on the TRF Leaderboard

December 2024

Vibrant TRF Leaderboard based on contributions made during October 2024 Heartiest Congratulations to the top three leader clubs under each fund category and for total contribution made during October 2024... Heartiest Congratulations to *Top Five Leading Clubs* under total giving till October 2024...

AGM

19 December 2024

The AGM was conducted by President Rajashri and the Inspired board was formally announced by the PE Alka Murli. Nalini was introduced as the President Nominee. Birthdays too were celebrated.





DECEMBER 2024



BLOOD DONATION DRIVE

10am - 5pm : Ghatkopar Railway Station



BLANKETS DISTRIBUTION

Govandi/Chembur/Mankhurd



MIYAWAKI URBAN FOREST INAUGURATION

Shatabdi Hospital



AGM

7pm : Banquet Hall, 2nd Floor, BPGC



BICYCLES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN AT RCC

Karjat



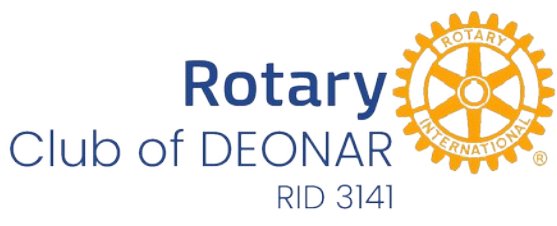
SELF DEFENCE PROGRAM

To be announced



Appeal

To contribute to the various projects by the Rotary Club of Deonar, please feel free to use the above UPI code.



If You Are Interested In Joining Our Rotary Club, Please Connect With Ravishekar At +91 98202 28303