



# ROTARY CROSSROADS

by Rotary Club of Singapore

30 June 2024 | Volume 60 Issue No. 32

Founded on 6 June 1930 | Proud of our Heritage, Committed to our Future  
Lifetime Achievement Award Winner for 'Best Bulletin in District 3310'



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# In Focus

## President Dr Chan Siew Luen's Speech at the Installation Dinner on 22.6.24



President  
Dr Chan Siew Luen

*Following is an extract of President Siew Luen's speech at the Club's Installation Dinner held at Capella Singapore on 22.6.24.*

### 1. Previously, on installation 2023



**Remember this guy?** For the benefit of those who were not here last year, and those who were here but didn't listen, I spoke about a dream where I was pushed into a pool of crocodiles only to be saved by 19 brave souls who formed my Board of Directors. It's been a year since and for the record, we all survived. Actually, we did more than survive. But more of that later.

### 2. Rotary Fellowship

Last year, in my speech, I also talked about my fear of parties. The dancing and singing are scarier to me than that pool of crocodiles. I survived the year but sustained enough PTSD to merit years of therapy. As an insurance policy, I have since developed the habit of checking out the nearest toilet outside ballrooms.

### 3. Thanks to family

My wife, **First Lady Patricia**, is here. Last week, after I finished thanking everyone at the final club meeting, PN Sonali reminded me that I had forgotten to thank Patricia. Actually, I didn't forget. I left her out because I know that she hates public attention. Before the year started, some past first ladies asked her, "are you ready to be first lady?" When we got home, she asked me "What is a first lady supposed to do?" and I gave my smart Aleck reply, "how would I know, I have never been a lady, never mind first or last".



1<sup>st</sup> Lady Patricia



Max & Milo

That night I slept in the doghouse with **Max and Milo**.

But seriously, I would like to thank my wife for her support in what was a really busy 12 months. Her perfect attendance alone would have qualified her for Rotarian of the Year.

My son Kevin is here tonight. The past year we have also not seen much of each other, I was busy with Rotary and he with changing his fencing suit to scrub suits. But I am proud to say that now, when someone calls the landline at home and asks for **Dr Chan**, my helper will reply, "Which one?" Congratulations, son!



Dr Kevin Chan

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## In Focus

### President Dr Chan Siew Luen's Speech at the Installation Dinner on 22.6.24... contd.

#### 4. Passing on of senior members



From left: PP Raymon Huang, PP Chiang Shih Fang & PP Dr Patrick Chin

On a serious note, this past year has also been marked by the passing of three senior Honorary Members. PP Raymond Huang and PP Chiang Shih Fang had both served 51 years in Rotary while PP Patrick Chin served 64 years! They were giants of Rotary Club of Singapore on whose shoulders we now stand. Although their passing cast a sombre mood, the Club celebrated their legacies, remembering their contributions to the Club and to society at large. These memorials served to inspire us to follow in their footsteps in **Service Above Self**.

#### 5. International Service Committee (ISC)

I started my Rotary journey in International Service with the mistaken belief that Singapore does not need charity. This year, International service was helped by Dr Rupesh Agrawal. The i2Eye project in India brought vision care for more than 1000 people in India. The Help the Children project provided 525 of the poorest students in Malang, Indonesia with school-going items. The Bursary initiative in Mumbai provided financial assistance to underprivileged students, and Project Narishakti empowered young women with employable skills. And in China, we had the Shenyang organic farm project. Members donated more than \$120k to fund these projects.



Dr Rupesh Agrawal

#### 6. Rotary Foundation

Larger scale projects were done through The Rotary Foundation using Global Grants. This year, Club Rotary Foundation Committee led by Director Ankit Khandelwal together with Chair Past President Tapan Rao and Global Grant guru District Governor Nominee Shahul Hameed raised **USD277k** for the foundation and executed 35 projects with a project value of more than USD2m.



Ankit Khandelwal

Through my later involvement with Community Service and Vocational Service committees, I learn that much need to be done in Singapore too.

#### 7. Community Service Committee (CSC)

Last year, Minister Desmond Lee was here as our guest of honour. He spoke about the Comlink+ Befriender Program. In response, Community Service Director President Nominee Sonali Sinha working through Senior Parliamentary Secretary Eric Chua, led a team of 13 Rotarians to join this befriender program and received training from the Ministry of Social and Family Development. They will be matched to families to offer emotional support, practical assistance and conveying family needs to MSF family coaches.

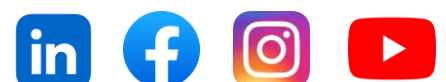


PN Sonali Sinha

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## In Focus

### President Dr Chan Siew Luen's Speech at the Installation Dinner on 22.6.24... contd.

#### 8. Vocational Service Committee (VSC)

**Vocational Service Director Vineet Iyengar**, expanded on our long-term project with ISCOS. The Skills Assistance and Subsidy Scheme for ex-offenders provides subsidies to suitably qualified ex-offenders to get driving licenses as these are found to be the most cost-effective skills that can make a difference. ISCOS Executive Director Mr. Tan Wee Teck is here tonight. Thank you for your work in giving ex-offenders another chance.



Vineet Iyengar

#### 9. Swimarathon



As part of our fundraising for these projects, we have the Annual Swimarathon. This year, we enlisted the help of **Singapore Aquatics**. Mr. Edwin Ker, Executive Director of Singapore Aquatics is here tonight. Thanks to the tremendous support from SAQ and our national aquatic athletes including **Olympic Champion Joseph Schooling**, more than 12000 laps were swum in one day, raising \$60,000.

#### 10. RI Convention



Rotary International Director Mr. Chew Ghim Bok is here tonight. He is Chair of the Rotary International Convention Host Organizing Committee. Last month, almost 14k Rotarians congregated in Singapore for the Convention. **Rotary Club of Singapore** was one of the 7 clubs that hosted hospitality events for our visitors. Thanks to Organizing Chair, Director Rajkumar and his team, we had a fantastic host hospitality night at the One Degree 15 Marina in Sentosa Cove. Please give it up for Director Raj Kumar.

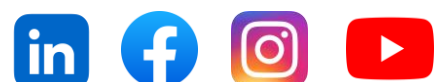


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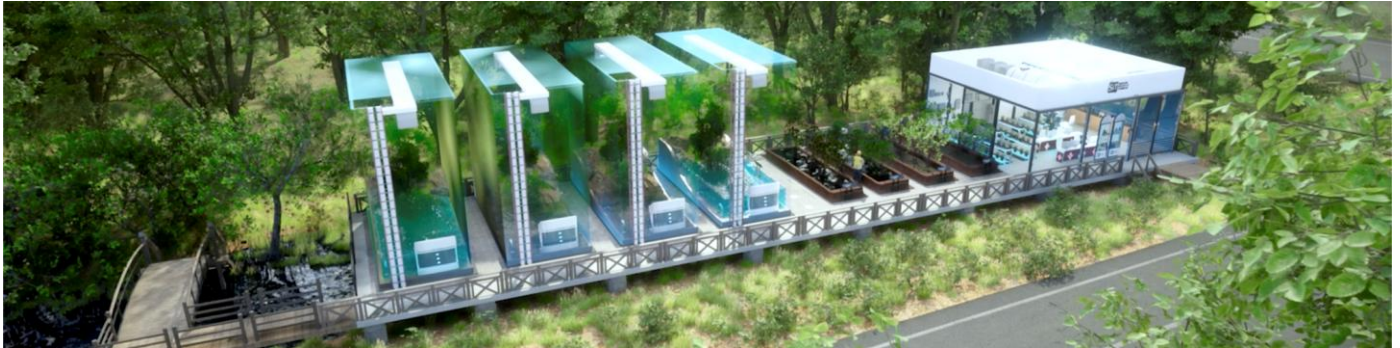
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## In Focus

### President Dr Chan Siew Luen's Speech at the Installation Dinner on 22.6.24... contd.



As a legacy of Singapore's hosting of the 2024 Rotary International Convention, a Mangrove Conservatory costing \$680k will be built in the new Singapore Institute of Technology campus in Punggol. Rotary Club of Singapore has been appointed to lead all 23 Rotary Clubs in Singapore to bring this project to fruition. This conservatory will conduct research in optimizing mangrove regeneration to help restore coastlines and serve as an outreach for public education.

#### 11. Environment project – best project

Within our club, helping the environmental portfolio this year, is **Rtn Suresh Hathiramani** whose haze management project using drones to detect hot spots in the Riau islands won the **Best Environmental Project** in District 3310. Increasingly, projects to protect the environment will be front and centre in all aspects of life. Jonas Salk, the virologist who developed the first polio vaccine once said, that if all human beings were to disappear from the Earth, within 50 years, all forms of life would flourish. We have been extracting too much from the planet and massive restorative efforts are urgently needed.



Suresh Hathiramani

#### 12. Interact Club

In the same way that we are extracting fossil fuels from the earth and dumping waste into the ocean, we are also mining left brain grey matter from our children's brains to serve economic and industrial needs and dumping social media waste into their minds. The best schools across the world as we know them today, are designed to produce employees for industry. Are we nurturing our children to create a better future? Do we know what the future looks like?

A six-year-old girl was deeply immersed in drawing in class. She caught the attention of her teacher who went over to her. "What are you drawing?" asked the teacher. "I'm drawing a picture of God." But nobody knows what God looks like," said the teacher. "They will in a minute." Maybe children know something we don't.

**Rotary's contribution** to the future is through our **Interact Clubs**. Rotary Club of Singapore has 10 Interact Clubs and 3 Rotaract Clubs led by Youth Service Director Louisa Lee. Special to me is the Interact Club of Sembawang. **Prof Steven Ooi** of the NUS School of Public Health is here tonight. He was my co-conspirator in chartering the Interact Club of Sembawang two years ago. Using public health as a platform, we create opportunities for youth to exercise their creativity in assessing public health needs and demands, identify and collaborate with other stakeholders to bring about positive and impactful changes. Dr Wong Sweet Fun of Yishun Health is here tonight. Yishun Health, our Major Project partner in 2021, has been supporting our Interactors by providing expert guidance as well as infrastructure support.



Louisa Lee

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## In Focus

### President Dr Chan Siew Luen's Speech at the Installation Dinner on 22.6.24... contd.

Rev Samuel Stephen of Alliance of Guest Workers Outreach is here with us tonight. Thank you for guiding the Interactors in the **Migrant Health Matters** Project that won Best Interact Project in District 3310 this year. We believe that the Interact movement augments the formal school curriculum and is a great incubator for visionary leaders to emerge. Our Guest of Honour Deputy Prime Minister Mr Heng Swee Keat is a case in point, having been an Interactor in his school days.



### 13. Major Project

However, some children are not so fortunate. There are 19 Children's Homes in Singapore housing about 800 children who have had adverse childhood experiences. The Major Project of the year led by **Rtn Pauline Teo**, was the Equine Assisted Learning Program for Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home. Mr. Chng Yi Ta, Chair of Equal, Ms. Sandra Leong, CEO of Equal, and Mr. Low Kee Hong, Executive Director of Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home are here tonight. **We raised \$215k** for the program to help mitigate if not overcome the psychological trauma that impeded the growth and development of these children.



Pauline Teo

#### Feedback from staff have been overwhelmingly positive:

"Equine therapy has significantly helped children regulate their emotions, contributing to their physical, emotional and psychological well-being."

"**All staff** who observed the sessions noted how this therapy enabled the children to become more aware of and better understand and regulate their emotions. "

"**John**," 11-year-old boy, who underwent the program, said, "Horse therapy has helped me handle my emotions and improve my empathy because the horses show their feelings too."

"**Mary**," 16y old girl probably said it best, "I rate it 10/10!"



We will continue to monitor the progress of these children in the coming year to assess the impact of equine assisted learning towards their growth and development. All the indicators are very encouraging, and we are confident of the results and hopeful that this

can be extended to the other children's homes in Singapore.

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## In Focus

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#### 14. Crocodiles



The metaphorical adversaries, can be made to in an **ally**. Through innovative programs, we seek to cultivate antifragility, turning adversity into an asset. We strive to help our beneficiaries overcome their challenges and turn their vulnerabilities into strength.

#### 15. Handing over

**While the future is uncertain**, there is at least one thing that is certain. In a few minutes, I shall be handing over the stewardship of our illustrious club to President-Elect Tom Wolf. In quintessential Singapore fashion, it will be a **peaceful transfer of power**. Tom brings a wealth of experience to the club, and I am confident that he will bring us to yet another level. I look forward to continuing serving under the new leadership and to giving my utmost support to ensure the success of the new team.



P E Tom Wolf

#### 16. Thank you.

**It's time for me to go**, but there is so much more to do. We can, however, take comfort in knowing that the lives of those we touched are made better. Before I take my leave, I want to thank all members of the Rotary Club of Singapore for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your President. Your dedication to the cause and your relentless pursuit of Service Above Self have been an inspiration to me and were the driving force behind the great work that our club has done in the last 94 years. It has been an honour and a privilege to have worked alongside all of you in creating hope in the world. **Thank you.**



# Shoichi Ishizaki Endowed Fund



As a fitting finale to the Club Rotary Foundation Fundraising for RY 2023/24, Mr Tetsuji Ishizaki, son of our late Honorary Member Shoichi Ishizaki, presented a cheque of SGD100,000 to Rotary Club of Singapore to set up an Endowed Fund, the “Shoichi Ishizaki Endowed Fund”.

Extracts from the eulogy by PP Stan Low in 2022:

*“The late Rtn Shoichi Ishizaki joined the Club in March 1973. He served in several positions, including Vice-President. He was bestowed Honorary Member, the highest membership class in our Club. He was most remembered as our energetic Ambassador to our Japanese sister-clubs, like the Rotary Clubs of Kobe East, Wakayama East, and Osaka Semba. In 1982, he helped to organize the first visit to Japan by 40 Rotarians and wives. Shoichi san worked very hard to make sure that everyone felt comfortable, and the food was excellent. Since that first visit in 1982, he had managed many other visits to our Japanese sister clubs. He continued to make sure that every visit was memorable.*

*He helped many people during the Kobe Earthquake in 1995 and the Fukushima Tsunami in 2011. His generosity and contributions extended beyond Japan to various humanitarian projects in Singapore and other countries in Asia.*

*He worked hard in his business, he made many good friends, he enjoyed life, and he contributed generously to help many poor people in this world. He was a true Rotarian.*

*We thank him very much.”*

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# Closing of a Rotary Year – The City of Joy, Gastronomic Challenges and Mother Teresa

I finally made a trip to India. Kolkata to be precise. PP Tapan Rao said he orchestrated the visit to happen on my last days as President to ensure that there will be a peaceful transfer of power. I can assure him that his fears are unfounded. Some of you would have noticed that this year's installation was a week earlier than usual. PE Tom Wolf had called me a year ago and ask if it was alright for me to do the installation one week earlier. My reply was, "you're sure you don't need it one month earlier?"



District Governor Nominee (DGN) Dr Shahul Hameed arranged a punishing schedule of project visits from day 1, with lots of time on the road as the project sites were far from the city centre. Truth be told, I was not really looking forward to this. I am not a fan of travelling and prefer to stay home to read a book. But this is something that every President of Rotary Club of Singapore got to do. I missed the trip last year due to COVID and so this is the last chance to visit our projects as President.

This visit has been an eye-opening experience and I am grateful for the opportunity. I have served as International Service (ISC) Director in 2018/19 and have studied the Global Grant projects that we have been doing. In the past year as President, I also have had the opportunity to study every Global Grant project that our Club undertook. I knew what project we were doing and how the system worked, on paper. Being here to see the projects in operation, meet the people executing the projects, both Rotarians and Rotary Community Corp leaders, and ultimately, the beneficiaries, put a face to the words and numbers.

When I first became ISC Chair in 2018, I met with the Global Grants team to better understand the projects. I noticed that the vast majority were in India. So, I made a comment that I had better buy a map of India and stick it on my wall. To which, then PP Shahul, told me that buying a map of West Bengal was enough. Indeed, one of the criticisms that was often levied against our Global Grants team was the over concentration of projects in one state in India.

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## Closing of a Rotary Year – The City of Joy, Gastronomic Challenges and Mother Teresa... contd.

Having visited the project sites, I saw the close working relationship between our GG team and the local Clubs on the ground. On 28 June, we visited the Rotary Joynager Eye Hospital. This hospital has expanded over the years and a new building has been constructed to serve the increased demands. Our GG project was to fund the equipment at the outpatient department.



Just before the trip, the GG Committee debated over the justification for funding of certain equipment which was more expensive when a simpler technique had been proven to be just as good. I took the opportunity to raise this with the local Rotarian in charge of the project and he took great pains to explain to me. He conceded right from that start that our concerns were well founded from the clinical perspective, but they had still proposed



the more expensive technique because of local government funding for the more expensive procedure that will result in more patients getting treatment at a lower out of pocket expense.

The openness of information and candidness of communication impressed me greatly. The same spirit was pervasive across all the project sites that we visited, and I begin to understand why we were so heavily invested in West Bengal.

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## Closing of a Rotary Year – The City of Joy, Gastronomic Challenges and Mother Teresa... contd.

Next, we visited the Haemodialysis Centre with our partner club the Rotary Club of Calcutta-Mahanagar, with Past Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta in attendance. PRIP explained the public-private-people partnership that ran the dialysis centre. The Government providing the building rent-free, Rotary providing the dialysis equipment through a Global Grant and a private healthcare company operating the centre with funds from the government. Such PPP partnership creates mutual trust across the sectors and improves sustainability as each sector holds its own.



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## Closing of a Rotary Year – The City of Joy, Gastronomic Challenges and Mother Teresa... contd.

In the evening, we attended the installation of sister club RC Belur where PP Tapan and DGN Shahul were conferred Honorary Membership. This spoke volumes about their contributions to RC Belur and RC Singapore was proud to have them as our members.



We visited the Rotary Hooghly Eye Hospital which we had a global grant through RC Bugis Junction that provided them with ophthalmologic equipment and funding for cataract surgeries. This was yet another massively impactful project that provided vision care for thousands of patients.



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## Closing of a Rotary Year – The City of Joy, Gastronomic Challenges and Mother Teresa... contd.

Next we join RC Belur at their Cervical Cancer Prevention camp at a girls' school whereby information on cervical cancer vaccination were taught to a packed hall of students. This global grant project seeks to vaccinate young girls against cervical cancer.



But this second day was most eventful for me. Indian gastronomy did not quite agree with me and sent me running to the toilet. Like attending installations, I kept a lookout for the nearest toilet in every building I stepped into. We have been warned to watch what we eat and to take the signal from PP Tapan who was universally acknowledged to be the most kiasu and kiasi when it comes to food. After this episode, I have effectively dethroned PP Tapan to take the top spot of gastronomic coward.



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## Closing of a Rotary Year – The City of Joy, Gastronomic Challenges and Mother Teresa... contd.

However, this gastronomic challenge did not stop me from visiting the House of Mother Teresa. Located within the bustling city that is Kolkata, once we stepped in, there was a certain calmness to the place. Thanks to Google, we did a quick search on Mother Teresa or St Teresa as she is known now after her canonization. She did a lot in Calcutta in her time but even that, there is a lot more work to be done and Rotarians are filling in wherever we can. I can't help the unmitigated temerity to compare what we do in Rotary to Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity, which is committed to helping the poorest of the poor. A mini epiphany that I had during the tour of the house was when the sister who was guiding us said that loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the worst form of poverty. We can feed the hungry with food and treat the sick with medicine, but alleviating loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is much more difficult. Some food for thought for future projects.

That night, I skipped the RC Belur Awards night to cure my Indian gastronomic antagonism with a healthy dose of fish and chips and braised lamb shank. Feeling recharged, I have an early night to brace myself for a six-hour drive to another GG project site visit – Rotary Lalpur Eye Hospital and Rotary Purulia Eye Hospital.

Bernie reminded me that my hours are numbered, and I should put in my last words before the Rotary Year officially ends. On the issue of Global Grants, I urge members who want to do Global Grant projects to study the system and to devote the time and energy to building trust and understanding not just with potential partner clubs but within our Club as well. I also urge the Global Grant Committee to present every Global Grant at the respective service committee meetings so that more members are educated on the grants and in turn are able to do more projects that benefits a wider circle.

Allow me once again, on this eve of the new Rotary Year, to thank all members for the opportunity to serve as President and the support that you have given me. It remains for me now to wish the new team every success and all Rotarians a Happy New Rotary Year!

Dr Chan Siew Luen  
President, RY2023/24



# Mark Your Diary

## Birthday Celebrants

RCS sends Birthday greetings to celebrants this week:

Dr Hoon Sing Keow for 27 June  
Edward Loy for 28 June



## Wedding Anniversary Celebrants

RCS sends best wishes to Wedding Anniversary celebrants:

Dr Denis & Mely Hew for 26 June  
Jamshid & Zerin Medora for 27 June  
Leonard Ong & Yee Fuang for 30 June  
Grace & Shaun Roache for 30 June



## This Meeting

**3 July 2024**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Rotary Year**  
**2024/2025 at the**  
**Raffles Hotel Singapore**  
**(East India Room, Level 1)**

**Speaker:** Prof. Leo KoGuan Scientist,  
Philosopher, Philanthropist

**Topic:** The Time Engine of Giving

*HAVE MANY LAUGHS AND HELP THE NEEDY*

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## Next Meeting

**10 July 2024**

**Details to be advised**

## Coming Rotary Events

July – Transition Month

August – Membership & Extension

September – Basic Education and Literacy

October – Economic and Community Development

November – The Rotary Foundation

December – Disease Prevention and Treatment

January – Vocational Service

February – Peace and Conflict

March – Water Sanitation

April – Maternal and Child Health

May – Youth Service

June – Rotary Fellowships

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## The Four-Way Test

Of the things we think, say or do:

- Is it the truth?
- Is it fair to all concerned?
- Will it build goodwill and better friendship?
- Will it be beneficial to all concerned?



## The Guide to Daily Living

Before doing the things, we want to do, consider first, the Precepts of the guide. Ask ourselves these 4 questions and act upon them:

1. Have I spent some time in self-examination?
2. Have I spent quality time with my family?
3. Have I given my best to my work?
4. Have I given some time to someone near and far?

The Guide, in fact, encompasses the 4 parts of the Object of Rotary.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023/2024

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