

HOLIDAY HUMANITY

Your weekend
just found a new
inspiration, a
constructive way
to make a
difference

GANASHREE KEDLAYA

DECCAN CHRONICLE

Bengalureans are looking for meaningful ways to spend their weekends, and a few clubs provide just the right respite.

"We organise Smiley Day once a month. This day is special," says Rupa Patil, founder, Weekend Nuts. Smiley Day is a community service event. "People register online. Last month, we had an event that kicked off from Cubbon Park. The participants walked up till Shivajinagar, distributing goodies," says Rupa. The team gave away goodies to construction workers, roadside vendors, street kids and even traffic cops. The club targets youngsters and working people. "Our objective is to give people options and show them better ways to spend their weekends," she adds.

The club organises many fun events like wine tasting, musical nights, and photography contests and the most recent Smiley Day was held on Independence Day. "It was an open event, where people were allowed to come

and give a free speech on 'India and I,'" says Rupa.

Mahesh Chand takes pride in creating awareness about the fading bird population within the city. "We have been organising Bird Walks for the past two years, where we take participants to different locations, away from the city." The programme is open to everyone and the team documents the sightings, strives to understand the nature of birds, and their migratory behaviour.

"We recently spotted the yellow throated bulbul," he exclaims. There are many who now want to spend their weekends trying to do their bit to save wildlife.

"We had four or five people interested when we started.

Now we have more than 60 people joining in," says Mahesh. "Bird watching is my hobby. It is so much fun," says Sarita K, student.

The group INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) organises a monthly event called *Parichay*, a walk that lets you explore the much neglected cultural and historical heritage of the city. "We have been organising Heritage Walks for the past two years. We introduce people to our city's history and heritage," says Meera Iyer, core member of INTACH.

"I have participated in two such weekend events. One was based on conservation and the other was focused on charity," says Sam A, an IT professional. "I have met many people who share the same interests, and that has made a whole lot of a difference."



Members of the Weekend Nuts