



Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change

RMCC Letter - Special Anniversary & Award

A Special Note from the Editor

Welcome, dear readers, to a truly special edition of the Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change (RMCC) letter! It's hard to believe it's already been one year since we embarked on this journey of shared knowledge and environmental advocacy through this publication. This anniversary alone is cause for celebration, but this particular issue holds even more significance.

We decided to dedicate this special edition to acknowledging the recent, well-deserved recognition bestowed upon two of our visionary RMCC Board Members, Eric Nejat and Fabrizio Burrioni. They were honored with the prestigious District 7070 Environmental Award 2024-2025. While the award was presented to them personally, it is, in essence, a testament to the collective "great activities and hard work" that RMCC, and indeed all our collaborating clubs, have poured into our environmental mission.

This award is a shining example of what we can achieve when we work together. RMCC has consistently strived to be a role model for inter-club collaboration, demonstrating how diverse Rotary clubs can unite, share resources, and amplify their impact on climate change mitigation. From our successful tree planting initiatives that engage hundreds of students, to our innovative mini-forest projects, and our comprehensive Earth Week activities, every endeavor has been a testament to this collaborative spirit.

We hope this special edition inspires you as much as it does us, reinforcing the power of our shared commitment and the tangible difference we are making, together.

Thank you for being a part of this journey.

Your willingness to share this letter is truly appreciated.

Warmly,

Mehrzad Hosseini

Editor, RMCC letter

Celebrating One Year of Environmental Leadership and Recent Recognition

Welcome to this special anniversary edition of the Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change (RMCC) letter. In this commemorative issue, we celebrate our first year of publication and recognize the outstanding achievements of our leadership team.

RMCC Letter Celebrates First Anniversary

As we mark the first anniversary of the RMCC letter, we reflect on a remarkable year of environmental education, community engagement, and climate action awareness. What began as an initiative to better communicate our mission has evolved into a vital resource for Rotarians and community members alike.

Over the past twelve months, our letter has documented numerous environmental projects, from the successful 16th Annual Tree Planting event that saw 156 students plant approximately 350 trees, to our collaborative mini forest project with the Rotary Club of Uxbridge and eight other partnering clubs. We have chronicled comprehensive Earth Week activities including park cleanups with sister clubs York and Danforth, participation in the City of Richmond Hill's Clean Up, Green Up program, and our information tent at David Dunlap Observatory that attracted visits from Mayor David West, Deputy Mayor Godwin, and City Councillors.

Our coverage has extended to significant environmental symposiums, including the District Symposium on Plastic Pollution featuring Dr. Chelsea Rochman from University of Toronto and Karen Wisrig from Environmental Defence Advisory Group. We documented our participation in World Environment Day celebrations at Christie Pits Park, where RMCC members connected with city officials and environmental organizations, including discussions with David McLeod of Environment & Energy of City of Toronto about emergency preparedness during power outages.

The letter has served as a bridge between local action and global awareness, maintaining momentum in our educational mission while documenting the tangible results of our collective efforts. This publication milestone represents more than just consistent communication—it reflects our unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship and community engagement.

District Environmental Award 2024-2025 Recognition

We are proud to announce that RMCC Board Members Eric Nejat, Ph.D., P.Eng., and Fabrizio Burroni, P.Eng., have received the prestigious District 7070 Environmental Award 2024-2025. The award was presented by District Governor Virginia O'Reilly on Saturday, July 19, 2025, during the 70th anniversary celebration of the Woodbridge Rotary Club. This distinguished recognition honors their exceptional leadership and dedication to advancing environmental causes within the Rotary community.



In her presentation speech, District Governor O'Reilly emphasized that environment is an important area of service for Rotary and complimented the cooperation between the Woodbridge and Richmond Hill clubs in environmental education and projects resulting in sustainability of our environment. The dinner celebration event was well attended by three Past District Governors, the Director of District Rotary Grants, local dignitaries, Rotarian members from District clubs, and friends of Rotary.



Eric Nejat's Contributions:

Eric has been instrumental in organizing some of our most impactful events, including the annual tree planting initiatives that have transformed the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park over sixteen years. His personal leadership of the 16th Annual Tree Planting event on October 24, 2024, exemplifies his hands-on approach—personally leading 156 students and seven teachers from the parking lot to the planting site, coordinating with Urban Forest Associates for proper demonstrations, and ensuring safety protocols were followed throughout the day.



His commitment to the principle that "EDUCATING YOUNGSTERS IS OUR DUTY" has brought together hundreds of students in hands-on environmental stewardship activities. The recent event

saw students plant approximately 350 trees and shrubs while learning from both urban forestry experts and wildlife conservationists. Eric's dedication was personally recognized when Shawna from the Canadian Raptor Conservancy presented him with an owl feather for his continuous service in organizing tree and shrub planting events.

Fabrizio Burroni's Leadership:

Fabrizio's engineering expertise and organizational skills have been crucial to RMCC's growth and effectiveness. His participation in high-level environmental discussions, including the Environmental Community Council meeting with Federal Minister Kevin Guilbault, demonstrates his commitment to connecting local Rotary actions with national climate policy. Fabrizio's presence at District 7070 conferences and his role in establishing valuable connections with Rotarians from other clubs have strengthened RMCC's network and influence.



RMCC Foundation and Mission:

As founding members of RMCC, Eric and Fabrizio, along with their colleagues from York Club, established this environmental initiative in early 2023 with a clear mission: "Help mitigating climate change by acting in the Schools, Communities and assisting Local, Provincial and Federal decision making authorities to implement related policies." Their vision created a campaign of awareness on climate change, informing Rotarians, their families, and the public at large about climate-related disasters while showcasing environmental projects across District 7070 clubs.

The founding clubs of Woodbridge, Richmond Hill, and York, with supporting clubs including Newmarket, Etobicoke, Whitby, and Willowdale, have created a forum for discussing climate change projects and related information. This award recognizes the excellent work by the clubs, their Environment Committees, and RMCC members in fostering inter-club cooperation in environmental initiatives.

Collaborative Impact:

Together, Eric and Fabrizio have guided RMCC through significant achievements, including:

- participation in the collaborative mini-forest project, which received a District Grant with total funding of \$14,900.
- Representing RMCC at the District 7070 Conference and establishing connections across multiple clubs

- Organizing successful community engagement events from nature walks to environmental symposiums
- Leading comprehensive Earth Week activities that earned official recognition from the City of Richmond Hill
- Participating in World Environment Day celebrations at Christie Pits Park, connecting with city officials and other environmental organizations
- Providing leadership during our participation in the City of Richmond Hill's Clean Up, Green Up program

Reflecting on Our Journey

Year One Achievements

The past year has been marked by consistent growth and meaningful environmental impact. Our monthly letters have chronicled significant developments:

Educational Initiatives:

We have featured expert presentations from climate scientists, conservation leaders, and environmental policy makers. These sessions have provided RMCC members with cutting-edge information about climate science while offering practical insights for local action. Our participation in district environmental symposiums, such as the virtual Plastic Pollution Symposium on April 24, 2025, has expanded our members' understanding of specific environmental challenges, though we continue to advocate for more comprehensive programming that includes solution-focused presentations alongside problem identification.

World Environment Day and Environmental Awareness:

Our participation in World Environment Day celebrations on June 7, 2025, at Christie Pits Park demonstrated our commitment to broader environmental awareness campaigns. The event, hosted by PDG Lynda Ryder and attended by District Governor Virginia O'Reilly, provided opportunities for networking with environmental organizations like Seniors for Climate Action Now and exploring partnerships with municipal authorities for emergency preparedness initiatives.

Community Partnerships:

Our collaborations have expanded beyond traditional Rotary networks to include educational institutions, conservation organizations, and government agencies. The partnership with Urban Forest Associates for expert planting demonstrations, safety protocols, and tool provision, along with collaboration with the Canadian Raptor Conservancy for wildlife education, exemplifies our comprehensive approach to environmental stewardship. The City of Richmond Hill's support through fresh mulch delivery during our tree planting events further demonstrates the strength of our community partnerships.

Student Engagement:

Perhaps most importantly, we have maintained our focus on **"educating youngsters."** The recent 16th Annual Tree Planting event alone engaged 156 students from one public elementary school and two private schools, demonstrating the sustained interest in this yearly environmental education program. Students participated in comprehensive learning experiences that included proper tree and shrub planting techniques, safety protocols, and wildlife conservation education through the Canadian Raptor Conservancy's Birds of Prey presentation.

The hands-on format allows students to plant approximately 350 trees and shrubs while learning about habitat regeneration for local wildlife. The enthusiastic student participation, evidenced by their numerous questions during presentations and their expressed enjoyment in collected testimonials, confirms the educational value of these initiatives. This direct engagement creates lasting environmental awareness and stewardship values among young participants.

Inter-Club Collaboration:

A defining feature of our year has been the strong collaboration between founding clubs Woodbridge, Richmond Hill, and York, along with supporting participation from Newmarket, Etobicoke, Whitby, and Willowdale. This cooperation was visibly demonstrated during Earth Week activities when Rotarians from York and Danforth clubs joined our Richmond Hill Rotary Park cleanup, and when sister clubs Woodbridge and York visited our information tent at the David Dunlap Observatory Clean Up, Green Up event.

The photograph of founding RMCC members Fabrizio Burroni (Woodbridge), Eric Nejat (Richmond Hill), and David Leung (York) standing together in front of our club tent



perfectly captures the collaborative spirit that has made RMCC's mission successful across multiple Rotary clubs.

Policy Connection:

RMCC has elevated its engagement with environmental policy through participation in meetings with federal ministers and representation at district conferences, ensuring that grassroots Rotary environmental action connects with broader policy discussions. Our engagement extends to municipal partnerships, including discussions with David McLeod of Environment & Energy of City of Toronto about emergency shelter preparedness during power outages, demonstrating our readiness to contribute Rotarian expertise to practical environmental challenges.

Looking Forward

As we celebrate these milestones, we recognize them as foundations for continued growth and impact. The letter will continue to serve as our primary communication vehicle, documenting ongoing projects while introducing new initiatives and partnerships.

Our award-winning leadership team remains committed to expanding RMCC's influence within Rotary International while strengthening local community engagement. The success of our collaborative projects demonstrates the power of inter-club cooperation in addressing environmental challenges.

The recognition from District 7070 validates our approach and encourages continued innovation in environmental programming. With established credibility and growing influence, RMCC is positioned to take on larger projects and broader policy engagement in the coming year.

Acknowledgments

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all RMCC members who have supported our letter initiative throughout its first year. Your engagement, feedback, and participation in documented events have made this publication valuable and relevant to our community.

Special appreciation goes to the Rotary Club of Richmond Hill for their continued support of RMCC activities, with particular recognition of past President Jason who joined the recent tree planting event to show leadership support for environmental initiatives.

We thank our partner organizations including Urban Forest Associates, especially Stephan who provided expert guidance, safety demonstrations, and all necessary planting tools for our tree planting events. Our gratitude extends to Shawna and the Canadian Raptor Conservancy for their engaging Birds of Prey presentations that connect tree planting to wildlife habitat regeneration, and to the City of Richmond Hill for their collaborative spirit in providing fresh mulch delivery during our environmental initiatives.

We thank the students, teachers, and school administrators who have participated in our tree planting events, making our educational mission possible and ensuring that future generations understand their environmental responsibilities. The 156 students and seven supervising teachers from our recent event exemplify the educational community's commitment to hands-on environmental learning.

Our recognition extends to fellow Rotary clubs, particularly Woodbridge, York, Danforth, and Uxbridge, whose collaboration has strengthened our collective impact and demonstrated the power of inter-club environmental cooperation. The founding partnership between Woodbridge, Richmond Hill, and York clubs, along with supporting clubs Newmarket, Etobicoke, Whitby, and Willowdale, has created a robust network for environmental action across District 7070.

We also acknowledge the international connections made during our World Environment Day participation, including the meaningful exchange with a visiting Brazilian Rotarian who shared ideas about environmental initiatives in different countries, facilitated through his son as interpreter.

Finally, we acknowledge District 7070 for recognizing the outstanding contributions of Eric Nejat and Fabrizio Burroni, whose leadership has made RMCC's achievements possible and whose vision continues to guide our environmental mission.

RMCC (Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change) is a group of dedicated Rotarians working together to combat climate change. We collaborate with community leaders, raise public awareness, and implement effective strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainability.

Join us in our mission to create a greener, more resilient future. Together, we can drive significant, lasting change and build a better world for generations to come.

For any questions or inquiries, please contact:

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