



RMCC Letter - August 2024 Edition

Welcome to the August edition of the Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change (RMCC) letter. In this issue, we bring you the latest climate change news, educational insights, and upcoming events.

1. News

Uxbridge Mini Forest Project Kicks Off

On July 6th, 2024, the Rotary Club of Uxbridge, in collaboration with several local organizations, launched an exciting new environmental initiative - the Uxbridge Mini Forest project. Members of the Rotary Environmental Committee, along with other volunteers, gathered at the Fields of Uxbridge to prepare the site for the mini-forest.

Mini-forests are densely planted communities of native trees and plants in a small area, typically about the size of a tennis court. These innovative green spaces offer significant environmental benefits:

They grow 10 times faster than conventional forests, sequester carbon dioxide up to 30 times more effectively and provide 20 to 100 times more biodiversity. (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/d6wJu6RTG7VzEgEV/>)

The day's activities involved crucial groundwork for the future forest. Volunteers spread and wetted a layer of cardboard, then added 10 cm of compost, followed by 10 cm of mulch. This process will eliminate existing plants in the area, preparing it for the planting of trees, shrubs, and other native plants in the fall.



Michael from The Rotary Club of Uxbridge and Mehrzad from The Rotary Club of Richmond Hill.



This method creates dense, fast-growing forests that support local ecosystems. By using native species, these mini-forests can provide habitat for local wildlife, improve air quality, and help combat the urban heat island effect. They also serve as educational tools, allowing community members to observe and learn about local flora and the process of forest growth.

The success of this initiative demonstrates the power of community collaboration in addressing climate change at a local level. We look forward to watching these mini-forests grow and thrive in the coming years.

(The mini-forest project of Rotary Club of Uxbridge received financial support from the Rotary clubs of Richmond Hill and Woodbridge, exemplifying the spirit of cooperation among Rotary clubs in environmental initiatives.)

RMCC Hosts Insightful Zoom Session with Bob Barnett

On July 29th, RMCC hosted an enlightening zoom session titled "Clash of the Titans" featuring guest speaker Bob Barnett. The presentation focused on the crucial topic of protecting trees and forests, highlighting their numerous benefits to our environment and communities.

Bob Barnett shared valuable insights on effective methods for forest conservation and the significant role trees play in mitigating climate change. The session provided attendees with a deeper understanding of the importance of preserving our natural habitats and the practical steps we can take to contribute to this vital cause.

About Bob Barnett: Bob Barnett graduated from the University of Toronto in Architecture in 1968 and has been in private practice as an architect from 1978 to 2024. A dedicated Rotarian, he has been a member of the Leaside Rotary since 1978 and served as its President in 1985-86. In 1995, Bob founded the Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy and served as its Executive Director from 2003 to 2023. Under his leadership, the organization has protected 22,500 acres (91.5 sq km) across 226 reserves, resulting in the accumulated sequestration of 1 million tonnes of CO₂. His work has significantly contributed to the preservation of the ecosystem along the Niagara Escarpment, from Niagara to western Manitoulin.

This virtual event exemplifies RMCC's commitment to education and awareness in the fight against climate change. We thank Bob Barnett for sharing his extensive experience and expertise, and all the participants who joined us for this informative session

2. Climate Change Facts

Recent studies have shown that urban trees play a crucial role in mitigating climate change effects in cities. According to research published in the journal "Nature Climate Change", urban trees can lower summer daytime temperatures by as much as 12°C (21.6°F) in some regions. This cooling effect not only improves comfort but also reduces energy consumption for air conditioning.



Furthermore, urban forests contribute significantly to carbon sequestration. The U.S. Forest Service estimates that urban trees in the contiguous United States store 708 million tons of carbon and annually sequester an additional 21 million tons. This massive carbon storage and ongoing sequestration play a crucial role in mitigating climate change effects, highlighting the importance of preserving and expanding urban forests for their environmental benefits rather than any potential commercial valueSources:

- cover and impervious surfaces reduce daytime urban heat during summer. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 116, 7575–7580 (2019).
- Nowak, D.J., Greenfield, E.J., Hoehn, R.E. et al. Carbon storage and sequestration by trees in urban and community areas of the United States. Environ Pollut 178, 229–236 (2013).

3. Upcoming Events

Richmond Hill Rotary Club Presents: Craft Beer Festival

Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 24th! The Richmond Hill Rotary Club is hosting its annual Craft Beer Festival at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. This exciting event, running since 2013, promises a day full of craft beer tasting, delicious food, live entertainment, and great vibes. Tickets are \$30, and the event runs from 4-11 PM. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.rotarybeertasting.com.



Humber River Festival



On Sunday, September 1st, the Rotary Club of Woodbridge is hosting the 29th Annual Humber River Festival at Nort Johnson Park, 7800 Islington Avenue, Woodbridge, ON. This family-friendly event runs from 10 AM to 8 PM and features the popular Great Frog Race. The festival supports Waves of Changes for Autism, a worthy cause in our community. This is a great opportunity to enjoy a day out while supporting an important initiative. We hope to see you at these events! Your participation helps support our community and environmental initiatives.

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:

Rotarian Fabrizio Burrone, P.Eng. Telephone: 416-505-0278 email: fabrizioburr@yahoo.ca
Rotarian Eric Nejat, Ph.D., P.Eng. Telephone: 437-912-0079 email: eznejat@gmail.com
Rotarian Mehrzad Hosseini Telephone: 647-852-3404 email: mehrzhadh3@gmail.com