

MonarRotary Club of Elmhurst Hosts Monarch Boxcar During North American Tour to Help Save the Monarch Butterfly

August 29, 2022

Earlier this month, Kansas City Southern (KCS), Canadian Pacific (CP), GATX, Monterrey Metropolitan Rotary Club (Rotary) and NASCO, working with local Rotary Clubs, announced the launch of the Save the Monarch Butterfly 60,000 Tree Challenge North American Boxcar Tour to raise \$100,000. The funds raised will be used to plant 60,000 oyamel trees at El Rosario Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary in Michoacán, Mexico to help reestablish the monarch population.

On Thursday, September 15, at 10 a.m., the Rotary Club of Elmhurst will host a Pollinator Pledge Signing Event at the Monarch Boxcar's (below) first stop as it follows the annual fall butterfly migration from Canada to Mexico. The public is invited to join Rotarians as well as representatives from the Mexican Consulate (Chicago), GATX, KCS, and leaders of local community groups to learn more about planting pollinator gardens along the migration path and to raise funds for the purchase of oyamel trees. The event will be held at 3 S. York Road, Bensenville, IL. (A block east of the Bensenville Metra train station and directly across York Road from the Old Second National Bank.)



Monarch butterflies are among the most recognizable butterfly species in North America. In addition to being an international symbol of the environment, monarch butterflies contribute to the health of the planet. Pollinators are critical to global food security and healthy natural

ecosystems, but they're disappearing at an alarming rate. Beloved across its trinational North American range, the iconic monarch has only a 10 percent chance of persisting above the extinction threshold over the next 30 years. The time is now to protect monarchs and their incredible 3,000-mile migration which aligns with the CP and KCS networks.

Monarchs find their way south to Michoacán, Mexico for the winter and to the United States and Canada for the summer. These beautiful creatures only travel during the day and need to find a roost at night, where they gather at waystations to rest, refuel, breed, and lay eggs along the way. Although the Oyamel forests in Mexico are recognized as important to Monarch butterflies, deforestation and climate change over decades have fragmented the habitat. The disappearance of the Oyamel forest affects the Monarch butterfly and the local communities that rely on the forest for their livelihoods, water, healthy soil and erosion control.

In support of the 60,000 Tree Challenge, a crowd-funding QR code (below) is featured on the side of the Monarch Boxcar, prepared by the GATX. In early September, the boxcar will stop at events in Windsor, Ont.; Bensenville, IL; Kansas City, Mo.; Laredo, Tex.; Nuevo Laredo, Tamps.; Monterrey, Nuevo Leon; San Luis Potosi, S.L.P.; Morelia, Michoacán; and conclude at the El Rosario Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary. In coordination with local Rotary clubs, these events will generate awareness and raise funds to help save the butterfly.



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