



613 COM HOUSES

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OTTAWA COALITION OF COMMUNITY HOUSES

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A YEAR IN REVIEW: COMMUNITY HOUSE HIGHLIGHTS

For our December 2021 issue we will be deviating from our usual OCCH Newsletter format to present some of the 2021 highlights from our community houses, as well as share photos of holiday initiatives in our communities.

Though 2021 was unarguably a challenging year for all of us, we are taking a moment to reflect on the many bright points that have encouraged,

strengthened and brought joy to our communities.

Community houses across Ottawa have worked tirelessly to pivot and adapt to restrictions and remain open to our communities. We wouldn't have been able to accomplish this without our partners who have supported us, responded to our needs and believed in the importance of our work at the

grassroots level. For this, we extend our heartfelt gratitude.

OCCH is looking forward to a new year full of collaboration and innovation with all our amazing partners, both directly in our communities and city-wide.

We hope you enjoy looking back on some of highlights of 2021 with us.

Carson's Community House



Carson's Community House invited Ottawa Public Health and the Champlain Regional Infection Prevention and Control Team to do a needs assessment prior to reopening in-person programming. They received feedback and recommendations to put in place to be well prepared to offer programming to the community.

Lowertown Good Neighbour's Community House



On June 11th, Lowertown Good Neighbours Community House kicked off the summer by giving away 130 plants, including pots and earth to 60 residents.

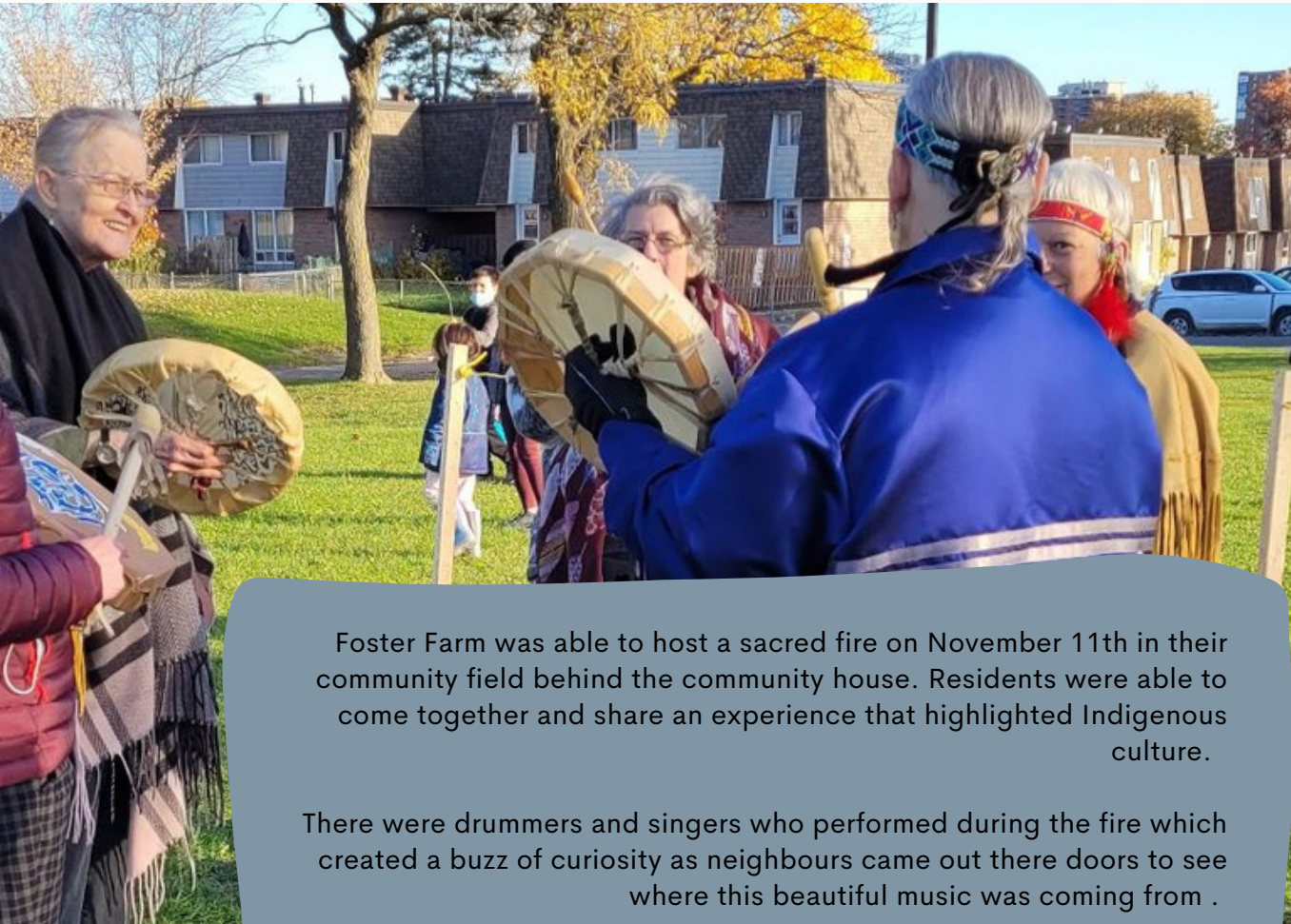


Confederation Court Community House



Thanks to the City of Ottawa COVID relief funding, Confederation Court was able to continue to connect with our families through door-to-door outreach programs and services.

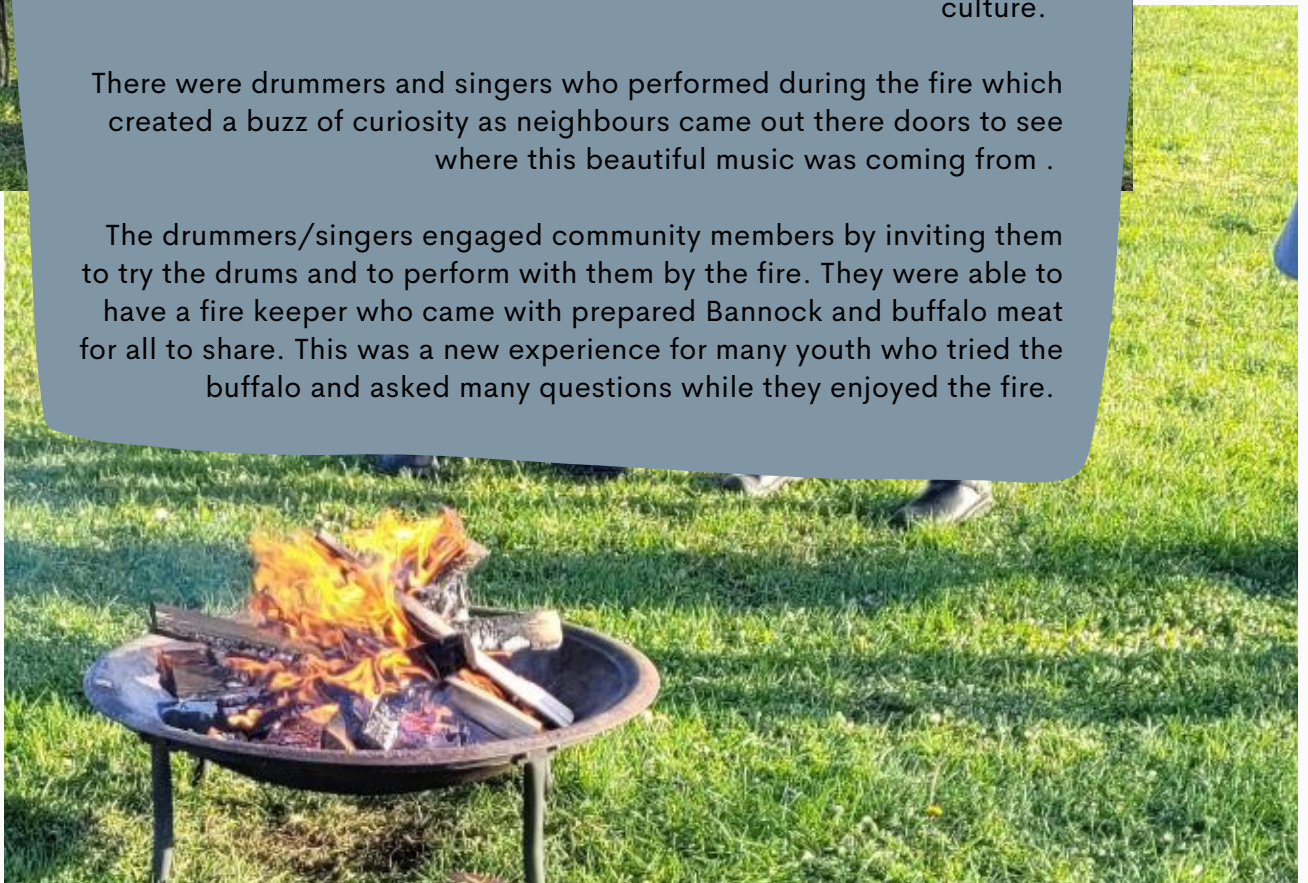
Foster Farm Family House



Foster Farm was able to host a sacred fire on November 11th in their community field behind the community house. Residents were able to come together and share an experience that highlighted Indigenous culture.

There were drummers and singers who performed during the fire which created a buzz of curiosity as neighbours came out their doors to see where this beautiful music was coming from .

The drummers/singers engaged community members by inviting them to try the drums and to perform with them by the fire. They were able to have a fire keeper who came with prepared Bannock and buffalo meat for all to share. This was a new experience for many youth who tried the buffalo and asked many questions while they enjoyed the fire.



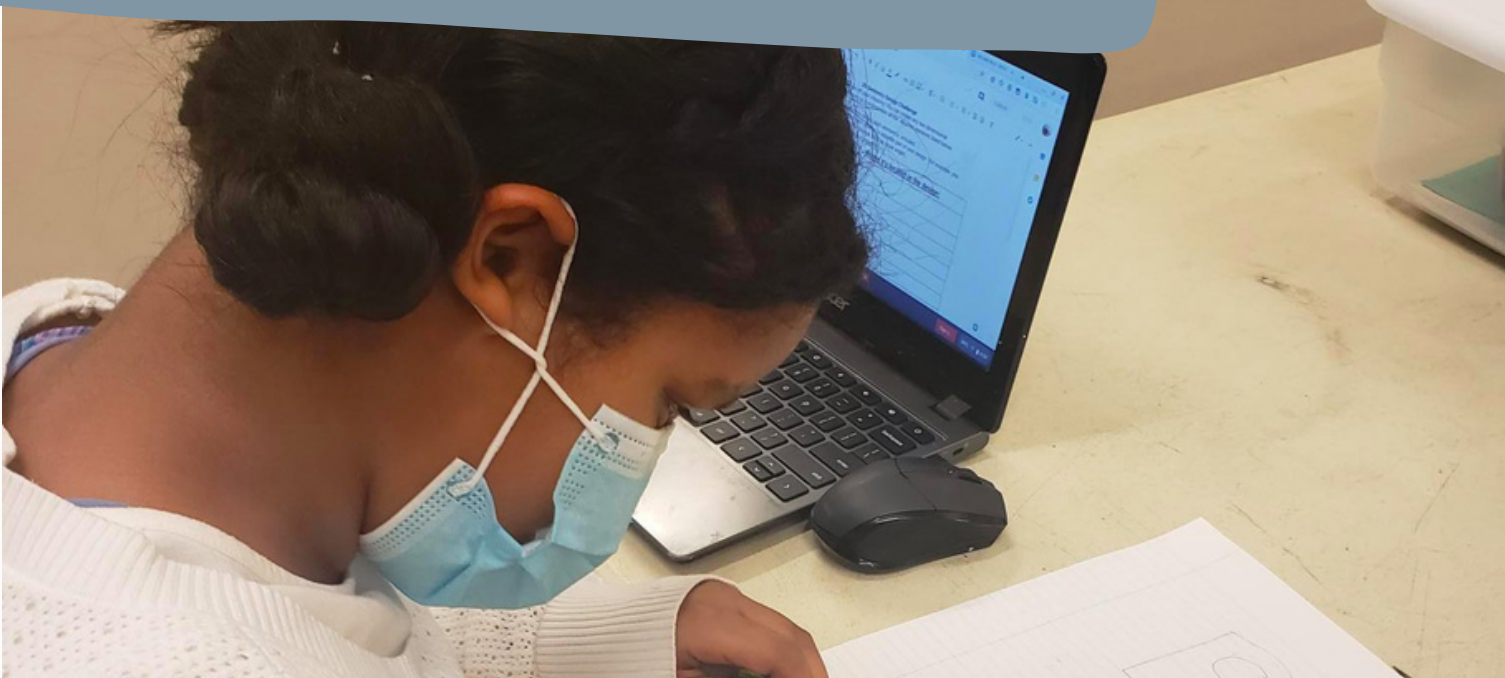
Banff Avenue Community House



For Banff, the highlight of the year was the amazing support and care that was demonstrated by partners and the broader community.

Banff saw donations of over 42,400 lbs of produce, \$7,000 worth of devices made available to students in the community, 200+ children and youth were equipped with the essentials to support academic success and active play throughout the year.

We are so very grateful to all for supporting us to be responsive during these difficult times. THANK YOU!



Michele Heights Community House



Michele Heights encouraged engagement by creating and assembling 200 summer activity kits for neighbourhood children.

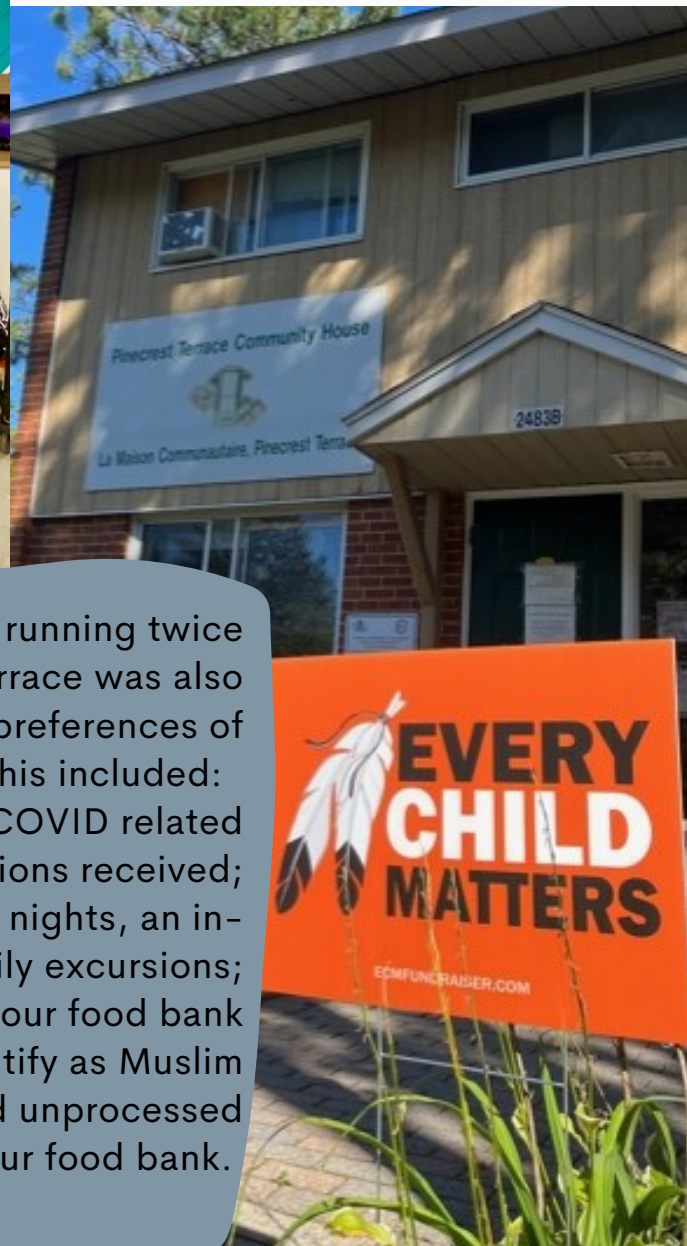
Britannia Woods Community House



In addition to offering expanded food bank services to address an increased need in the community, Britannia Woods Community House staff have worked hard to build the capacity of family wrap-around services. Some of these services included:

- Hosting 3 COVID Vaccine information sessions;
- Implementing and launching of two new targeted children/youth and family programs focused on community safety and supporting Black parents in navigating the education system; and
- The continuation and operation of an emotional support line focused on the mental health needs of Black, Racialized community members.

Pinecrest Terrace Community House



In addition to keeping our food bank open and running twice per week (by appointment only), Pinecrest Terrace was also able to focus on the individualistic needs and preferences of families in our communities. This included:

- Gift card distribution made possible by COVID related funding and donations received;
- Family activities such as Bingo events, paint nights, an in-person outdoor dance workshop and family excursions;
- Distribution of Ramadan Hampers to all of our food bank clients who eat Halal foods or identify as Muslim
- Increased culturally appropriate, staple and unprocessed foods at our food bank.



Staff & volunteers at Blair Court Community House take a break from distributing hampers to pose for a photo.

HOLIDAY SUPPORTS & CELEBRATIONS AT A GLANCE

For community houses, the holiday season begins to ramp up in late November and doesn't wind down until the end of December. Holiday supports arrive in many different forms, with many houses gathering, assembling and delivering hampers to community members. Other supports this year included referrals to Toy Mountain and Caring and Sharing, a dozen frozen turkeys at Confederation Court, fresh fruits and vegetables at Blair Court, winter kits at Banff Avenue and many more.



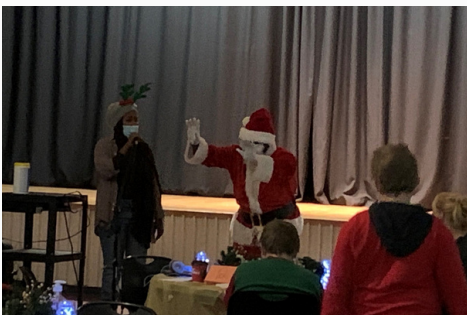
Staff & volunteers at Blair Court Community House distribute fresh produce to a community member.



Holiday hampers await pick-up at the Confederation Court Community House



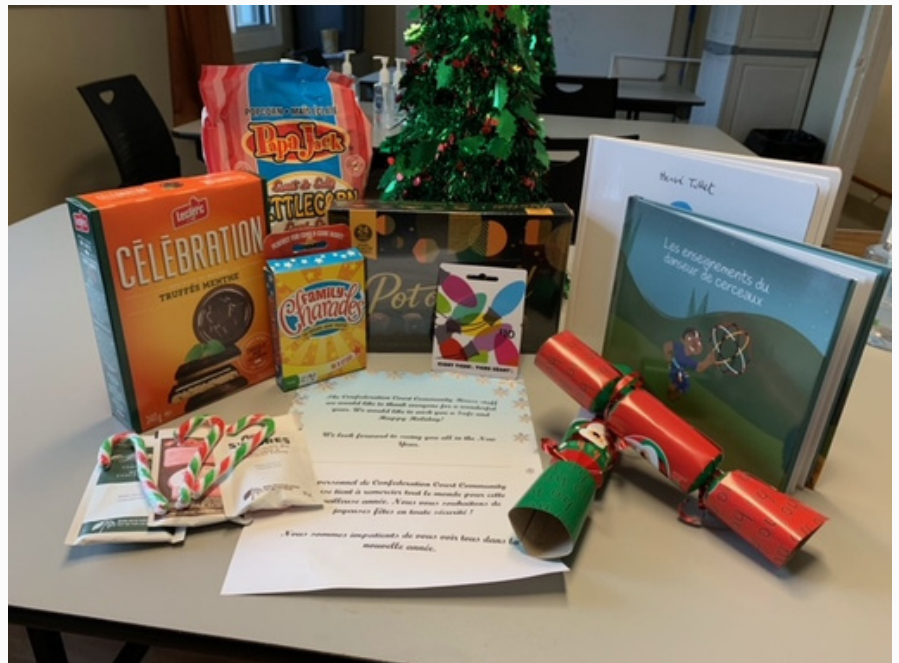
Banff Avenue youth pose during winter kit shopping



Santa stops by the Britannia Woods Community House holiday party



A view of the holiday shopping model at the Blair Court Community House



A look at the contents of the hampers distributed at the Confederation Court Community House



Working together: Banff Avenue's Sylvie Manser drops off a toy order to Blair Court Community House



A look inside the holiday hampers distributed at the Blair Court Community House



Staff at Confederation Court Community House welcome a generous delivery of holiday turkeys.



Beautiful top beets ready to be enjoyed by community members (Blair Court)



Fresh fruits and vegetables get sorted into milk crates for families in the Banff Avenue community



Tables set for the first Britannia Woods Community House party since 2019, completed with hand sanitizer!!

HAPPY new year



Staff and volunteers pose for a festive group photo at the Britannia Woods Community House holiday party



Shopping bags full of winter wear (Banff Avenue)