

2021 ELUCO ANNUAL REPORT

As with any new year there are always challenges to meet. 2021 was no exception. COVID 19 was of course our major challenge. Having had to contend with this in 2020 did give us a heads up on how to work within its confines.

COVID did define Nancy's agenda for the bulk of the year but it did not inhibit her from coming up with creative and dynamic ways to support and advocate for our Marconi families. She purchased and delivered groceries to vulnerable families. Interactions with the families were held outside, regardless of the weather, in order to keep everyone safe. She provided recipes and ingredients to her "kid" chefs so they could continue to develop their culinary skills. She created and delivered activity packs to children to keep them occupied once on-line school was over. With the unit shut down advocacy had to be carried out on individuals' front porches or during a walk. Permission slips to contact organisations on behalf of the individuals had to be signed and then it was back to the unit to phone, fax, complete paperwork and help to resolve issues facing the community member. These efforts have been a lifeline during these unprecedented times and have given hope to those involved. What a difference it makes to know that someone cares!

Tensions are high within the Marconi community and police are frequently in the community for disputes, violence, weapons and drug activity. To help residents ease some of the tension in their lives Nancy provided Anxiety Workshops for both Adults and Youth. She met outside with individual participants teaching, counselling and providing worksheets and activity packs with tools for managing anxiety that they could complete at home. As well she offered two Nutrition Workshops to Adults suffering from Anxiety or Adults suffering from Depression. Health experts have identified food to avoid and foods to embrace plus recipes to try.

Warm weather and vaccinations allowed Public Health to ease COVID restrictions over the summer. One of our young people was a camp counsellor at Kee- Mo-

Kee for their day camps. Only one youth attended Kee-Mo-Kee this summer as Nancy did not want to jeopardise the health of her volunteer drivers. Social Skills Camp was not operational. Children were able to participate in an outdoor afternoon day camp sponsored by the Boys and Girls club at the Marconi complex. Nancy, in conjunction with the London Public Library Outreach, hosted a workshop with stories, activities and crafts for the younger children who could not participate in the Boys and Girls camp. This was held outside to maintain social distancing.

With the September re-opening of the unit by London Housing and the assistance of two vaccinated volunteers Nancy decided to offer a school lunch program. Limited space inside the unit meant kids could not safely social distance so they were fed outside. Numbers were small to begin with but increased as the fall progressed until the program was shut down due to the new variant.

Nancy closed out the year with a very successful Christmas Share program. She spread God's message of hope, peace, joy and love to 87 families. This would not have been possible without the overwhelming generosity of organisations and individuals who support us. Thank you!

The Board did not meet in-person until September. All business and reporting was handled on line. In early September we met at a Springbank Park pavilion for our AGM. We welcomed long time community member and volunteer Debbie Gillingwater to the Board. At this time we agreed to resume meeting in person but at Rowntree United Church as there was more room for social distancing. One of our pressing agenda items was choosing a videographer to do an ELUCO promotional video that was funded by the United Church Council. The Siloam Audio-Visual team was selected and hope to have this project wrapped up by year end or early in the New Year. This video will be used in churches, at fundraisers and at presentations to show case ELUCO's work.

A successful Walk and Roll for Families fundraiser was held in Springbank Park on September 26, 2021. A number of our Board members and participants met at the park while others were more comfortable walking in their home area. **MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS!** We raised just over \$7500.00.

Welcome Wednesday

Begun in 2008 Welcome Wednesday is an interfaith hospitality lunch for residents of north east London and includes time for socialization. The program is housed at Rowntree United Church. Volunteers from Rowntree Memorial, Siloam United, Valleyview Mennonite and ELUCO cater a nutritious meal. The onset of COVID meant the cancellation of eating indoors as well as the social aspect of the program. Instead of the usual 60 people, 35 masked individuals turn up at Rowntree's vestibule for a hot bagged lunch. Some socialization does occur by a few socially distanced folks. We are very thankful to Rowntree for providing a home and leadership for our program. Many thanks also to our dedicated volunteers who have remained steadfast through these tough COVID times.

Gratefully Submitted by Sharon Ashton

The Food Cupboard

After being open for 3 days in January the Food cupboard was shut down till February 19th by COVID but stayed open for the remainder of the year. This year we provided food for 260 families which translates to 576 adults and 147 children. These numbers are down about 20% from last year. We are so thankful for our fearless volunteers who continue to serve our very appreciative clients.

Submitted with gratitude by Judy White

ELUCO had another very successful year despite the challenges of COVID. It couldn't have happened without Nancy's unfailing determination to serve our Marconi families through "thick and thin"! She could not have accomplished this without the financial support of our many donors as well as many "people hours" of support from our volunteers. A big thank you as well to our Board members who were always quick to reply to emails for all of the issues which arose this past year! Hopefully, 2022 will be less challenging (right now that does not look

promising) but with God's message OF PEACE, LOVE, JOY and HOPE we will triumph as together we respond to the community's needs.