



Battersea Pumpkin Festival – Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Battersea Pumpkin Festival Cancelled Due to COVID-19

For 25 years, the Battersea Pumpkin Festival has been welcoming residents and visitors alike to the village-wide celebration of the harvest, rain or shine. For the first time in the festivals' history, the Pumpkin Festival's organizing committee has made the decision to call off the event that was to take place October 3rd. Concerns around the spread of COVID-19 at large crowd gatherings is considered too much of a risk.

"The conversation shifted from 'if' we can run to 'should' we run the festival," said Amanda Pantrey, Festival Coordinator. "Inviting thousands of people to our little village seems socially irresponsible this year. Although it is very sad to cancel, it is the right thing to do. I could not imagine the pain we would all feel if we brought COVID-19 into Battersea."

The festival celebrated its 25 year milestone last year and as a thank you to the community, festival goers enjoyed the day with a waived admission fee. Usually, there is a cost of \$5 per person with a maximum of \$20 for immediate family. For what would have been the 26th Annual Pumpkin Festival, the organizing committee is asking the community to consider giving their 'cost of admission' to the Battersea United Church. The Church has fallen under hard times, they usually host fundraising dinners throughout the year but as a result from the pandemic, they have lost out on a large portion of their revenue.

"The Church is a hub in this community. Obviously it fulfills a spiritual need, but even for those who are not affiliated with the religion, the Church provides a sense of community. People who are living with food insecurity can access their food cupboard, the Church hall is used for many community events like the Pumpkin Festival and Pumpkin Pie Coffee Houses, the list goes on." said Pantrey. "It is an asset in our community and they have given so much to the Festival, we thought this would be a great opportunity to have some good come out of cancelling." Donations can be made to the Church via e-transfer to batterseaunited@outlook.com or by cheque to Battersea United Church, 2217 Wellington Street, Battersea ON, K0H 1H0.

The Festival organizing committee would like to thank the community for years of support of the event, and in the decision to cancel for 2020. We look forward to welcoming everyone back to Battersea in October 2021. Questions and comments can be directed to Amanda at amandapantrey@outlook.com or 613-353-6653.

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Amanda Pantrey - Chair, Battersea Pumpkin Festival
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