

Orangeville manufacturer hosts Crewson launch for Liberal banner

By Marni Walsh

The Orangeville home of one of the area's few remaining manufacturers was the scene last Saturday of the official launch of Ed Crewson's campaign to become the federal Liberal candidate in Dufferin-Caledon riding.

Crewson is the former mayor of Shelburne.

Steve Marr, owner and president of DS Handling Systems Ltd., welcomed an enthusiastic crowd to his facility on Riddell Road for the launch. DS Handling is a leading provider and manufacturer of case and pallet conveyor handling systems with more than 30 years of experience.

"I offered to kick off Ed's campaign," Marr said, "because I do not feel Dufferin-Caledon has the representation in Ottawa that we deserve."

He said he is "positive that Ed Crewson can deliver."

Marr introduced the speakers, who included Second World War veteran Dave Barr; Janet Horner, executive director of the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance and the Greater Toronto Area Agricultural Action Committee; Ken and Faye Brett, local market garden operators; Geoff Dunlop, deputy mayor of Shelburne; and Carl Cossack, past-president of the North Dufferin Agricultural Community Taskforce (NDACT), who is currently working toward improving farmland and source water protection in the Aggregate Resources Act (ARA.). Well wishes included a message of support from Murray Calder, Liberal MP in the old riding of Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Simcoe from 1993 to 2004, when he lost out to incumbent Conservative MP David Tilson.

The Bretts attested to Crewson's character as a friend, a businessman and politician, sentiments that were echoed by Dunlop, who also stressed the long-time Shelburne mayor's "prudent financial record." Barr called him a "great supporter of the Legion," while Cossack said Crewson had a "true calling for public service" and an "exceptional skill set" for the job. He said Crewson had earned his respect over three decades of "fair and just conduct" and that he would bring "the same service to our nation's capital." Horner, a newly-elected member of Mulmur council, said that as Dufferin-Caledon gets to know Crewson, they will learn to love him.

"Whatever he chooses to do he is all in."

The Crewson campaign refers to Tilson as an "entrenched incumbent," who Crewson said "has never showed up at a single Shelburne or County Council meeting."

Crewson also assailed the Harper government's "systematic destruction of the social safety net."

He said his roots in the Liberal Party come more from "who I was than who I am." He recalled that as a young boy, he witnessed the support his dying father, a hard-working family man who had served in three Second World War campaigns, received under the 1970 Liberal-implemented medicare plan. Prior to this, he reminded the crowd, Progressive Conservative Premier John Robarts had denied that Ontarians needed public healthcare insurance.

It was this kind of short-sighted thinking, Crewson said, that "made a sick man sicker." He said that after his father's death, under Liberal programs, his mother was supported with a pension and he received funding that put him through university, allowing him to become a successful businessman and community leader who "values tradition and loves his family."

Crewson said there is a need in Dufferin-Caledon to "engage more discussion with healthcare providers and not dictate." He called support for people with mental health issues very weak in this area. "We need to make it better."

