

Ottawa Journal: Meals on Wheels March for Meals

We have many outstanding community organizations in Dufferin-Caledon and they provide wonderful programs and services which we greatly appreciate. These organizations include Caledon Meals on Wheels and Dufferin County Community Support Services (DCCSS) which offers Meals on Wheels. Last week, I had the opportunity to participate in the Community Champions Week as part of this year's North American March for Meals campaign.

Here in our community, Caledon Meals on Wheels has been delivering nutritious meals to clients for over 25 years and they also offer a variety of other wonderful programs, such as: social dining and wellness, friendly visiting, and security programs across the Town of Caledon and in Orangeville. DCCSS works in partnership with Caledon Meals on Wheels in Orangeville and provides a hot and frozen meal program to clients throughout Dufferin County. In addition to the Meals on Wheels program, DCCSS offers 13 other excellent programs ranging from: a transportation program, an adult day program, and a service arrangement program (home help, home maintenance, and respite care). The staff and management at Caledon Meals on Wheels and DCCSS, together with the many exceptional volunteers, work hard to provide these invaluable programs and services to clients, to help them remain independent in their own homes and therefore, stay in our community.

Each year, both Caledon Meals on Wheels and DCCSS participate in the national March for Meals Campaign, which is a month-long event championed by the Meals on Wheels Association of America. This year, the Community Champions Week ran from March 17 to March 21, 2014 and I was invited by Caledon Meals on Wheels to participate along with other representatives from our community, to deliver meals to homebound clients.

The aim of the March for Meals Campaign, including the Community Champions Week, is to raise awareness of senior hunger and to recognize the essential services provided by Senior Nutrition Programs across Canada. It's also an excellent opportunity for new volunteers to join Meals on Wheels organizations across the county to help them continue to succeed. It also presents an opportunity for Canadians to support these organizations with donations, to ensure Meals on Wheels may continue to deliver essential programs.

On March 18, during the Community Champions Week, I delivered meals to constituents in Bolton with a Caledon Meals on Wheels volunteer. It was a pleasure meeting constituents and learning of their enthusiasm of the meal delivery program and appreciation of the exceptional volunteers who make it all possible. I saw, firsthand, the tremendous impact this program has on our community and this is reflected by the fact that in 2012, Caledon Meals on Wheels delivered 21,000 meals to over 450 clients throughout the Caledon and Orangeville area. In Dufferin, DCCSS delivered just under 7,000 meals to approximately 125 clients last year. I applaud Caledon Meals on Wheels and DCCSS on their leadership and dedication to the residents of Dufferin-Caledon!

If you would like to learn more about the programs and services offered by Caledon Meals on Wheels, please feel free to visit <http://cmow.org/> or call 905-857-7651 (Caledon area) or 905-584-2992 (Orangeville area). More information on volunteering opportunities and donations can also be found on the organization's website. For more information on DCCSS' Meals on Wheels program and volunteering opportunities, please e-mail DCCSS at dccss@dufferincounty.ca or call 519-925-5452.

By David Tilson, MP