



PROMISES FOR ESSEX – Essex MP Jeff Watson, left, and John Baird, president of the Treasury Board, speak to local members of the Conservative party at the Essex Railway Station Friday. The party's Electoral District Association invited Baird to the area as part of the final leg of a tour of Southwestern Ontario. The tour focused on discussing issues such as crime and governmental accountability.

Treasury Board president brings promises to Essex

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

Treasury Board President John Baird visited the Essex Railway Station Sept. 1 with promises that the federal government will get "tough on crime" when the House of Commons begins its session this fall.

Essex MP Jeff Watson accompanied Baird during the visit, part of the final leg of a tour of Ontario's southwest region.

The event, which was opened to local members of the Conservative Party of Canada, was the fourth roundtable on crime Baird attended last week.

Baird said two "big" justice bills will be brought to the

House of Commons this fall, including one on conditional sentencing.

"If someone commits violent crimes or offences involving children, we have mandatory minimum sentences that say if you use a gun in the commission of an offence, you're going to do serious time," Baird said.

Baird, whose office is responsible for accountability and ethics, said the federal government will also be pushing this fall for the Federal Accountability Act, which passed third reading and now sits in the Liberal Senate.

"It's going to really overhaul the way we finance political parties," Baird said. "No more big money in politics. No more

high-priced cocktail parties or big granted cheques like there used to be. We're really opening it up to the middle class."

Baird also said his government is looking into providing "big, new powers for the Auditor-General to follow the money and make sure it's spent wisely and well."

Locally, Watson said the government is working to get the proper aid to farmers this fall as they come out of the fields after harvest.

He also said the Conservative platform is shifting to address major environmental issues.

"We're trying to play a major role and that's critical to our quality of life in this region where we have more smog days

than anywhere else in Canada," Watson said. "And we have a lot of respiratory problems that are attributable to that so we want to see good quality of life returns to this area."

Rich Tapping, president of the Essex Electoral District Association, said by inviting Baird to town, the 500-plus local Conservative Riding Association members have the opportunity to have their voices heard.

"We can help form policy here from the grassroots," said Tapping, who was elected as the president of the Essex EDA in April. "It's often said that Ontario stops in London and we're breaking that barrier down."

Essex United Church

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SEPT. 20	Parkinson Disease	
SEPT. 28	Bik Historical Museum	Puce Rd. (Pool Cars)
OCT. 4	Hiatus House	
OCT. 12	Bus Trip	Sarnia boat cruise & Casino
OCT. 18	Macular Degeneration	Dr. Tood Wilbee
OCT. 25	Diabetes	
NOV. 1	Ten Thousand Villages	
NOV. 8	Pele's Rock Bottom	
NOV. 15	Recognizing Depression	John Postons
NOV. 22	Exchange Student	Mexico
NOV. 29	From Memories to Memoirs	
DEC. 6	Ageing Skin Care Lunch at A-1 (on your own)	Arline VanDoorn

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