This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Sat Oct 31 14:46:49 2026 / +0000 GMT

Hope and change for Canada ? missed opportunity in Dufferin?Caledon

Liberal ?hope? trumped Conservative ?fear? in a stunning election victory on October 19th, but in Dufferin-Caledon, where Conservative loyalty runs deep, incumbent MP David Tilson kept his seat with 27,929 votes. Liberal Ed Crewson, Green Nancy Urekar and NDP Rehya Yazbek had a combined vote of 32,684. In short, more voters wanted Mr. Tilson out then in, but the three-way split means he will go to Ottawa for four more years. This time the Conservative will be set adrift in a parliament painted Liberal red.

Embedded in a Tory-blue riding, David Tilson won despite sweeping rejection of the Conservative party across the country. However, there is strong sentiment that the riding has missed an opportunity in Ed Crewson ? that his passion for public service and fierce drive for ?real change? might have achieved substantial gains in this riding which faces serious challenges in agricultural, environmental protection, transportation and long- term healthcare. Had Ed Crewson won, he would have been fueled by a jet pack of determination and the power of a Liberal majority. But, partisanship can be an unrelenting and unreasonable foe; it was not to be this time.

Dufferin-Caledon candidates might have set an exemplar for a strategic compromise between parties. All three opposing candidates, Liberal Crewson, Green Nancy Urekar and the NDP Rehya Yazbek told the voters that the riding came before party loyalty. It was clear that Ed Crewson was the most capable of taking the seat in the Conservative stronghold. Party compromise is not without precedent in this riding - in 1919, the Liberal Party, not wanting to split the vote, chose not to run a candidate against independent Thomas (T.K.) Slack in Dufferin County. Mr. Slack won, taking the seat that had been held by the Conservatives for nearly four decades.

However, Shelburne's Ed Crewson and his Liberal team did give Mr. Tilson the fight of his political life Monday night with 23,610 votes or 39 per cent ? an extraordinary increase from the 2011 federal election when the DC Liberals only took 13 per cent of the vote. The Liberal Party of Canada will take notice of what Mr. Crewson achieved here.

Ed Crewson's statement to the Free Press the day after the election: ?My joy in last night was seeing Canadians choose hope over fear, fairness over injustice and action rather than inertia. I am sorry that I will not be a part of Canada's new government, but I have met so many great people in the last nine months that it has made the adventure a rewarding experience. I want to thank all my supporters for a job well done.?

Whether federal or provincial, our votes are first and foremost investments in the future of our own riding ? those elected at the local level are, in turn, investments in the party leaders. Our parents taught us, investments should be made from the bottom up: ?If you take care of the pennies the dollars will take care of themselves.? Ed Crewson was our lucky penny.

By Marni Walsh