

Conservative Lois Brown looks to regain community's support



By Brock Weir

Four years ago, incumbent Lois Brown lost the 2015 Federal Election by less than 1,500 votes to rookie Kyle Peterson.

Now, after what she describes as "quite a deliberation", Ms. Brown is looking flip the riding blue again and return to Ottawa as Newmarket-Aurora's Conservative Member of Parliament.

"I feel in my core I have more work to do," Ms. Brown tells *The Auroran*. "I have all my life been a very active person, very involved in serving the community, and the opportunity to do that as a Member of Parliament, where I can help people, really help people, and resolve issues just compelled me to go back."

Helping to spur her decision to throw her hat back into the political arena is what she says are budget overruns under the incumbent Liberal government which won't be balanced for decades if things continue as they are

"It is distressing to me that my kids are the ones who are going to be paying this bill for the rest of their lives," she says. "I hear the issue of 'affordability' at the door every day. I talk to people who say, 'Look, we're not badly off, we're both working, we have reasonably good jobs, but we just can't get ahead.' I don't want that for my kids, and I don't want that for anybody's kids. I want our young people to have opportunity for growth and opportunity for success. That's one of the reasons I am driven."

Indeed, affordability is one of Ms. Brown's top issues in this campaign. A factor in that, she notes, is the Liberals' plan for carbon pricing and changes to the tax system.

"As Conservatives we're going to be talking about that," she says. "It was a Conservative initiative to put the Child Tax Benefit in

place, but with the changes that have happened, fewer and fewer people are actually getting the full amount of the Child Tax Benefit, so it is costing them more to raise their children. At the same time that Justin Trudeau said, 'We're going to give you a little bit more than what the Conservatives say they will give you,' they took away all of the tax credits that actually allowed families to reduce their taxable income. They removed the Child Tax Credit for sports, for the arts, from textbooks, which is making our university kids have to pay more for their education. They removed the transportation tax credit. All of those things are areas that are reducing the cost of living for ordinary Canadian families. We want to see those things come back. We believe they are good for families, and we believe families know best how to spend their money for what is in their own best interests of their family.?

While Ms. Brown states the Conservatives will scrap the carbon tax, she says she is an environmentalist at heart. A native of Kettleby, she says she grew up in a home with a chemical engineer father who taught her that engineers 'learn to do more with less.' There has never been a time where she didn't recycle, she says, nor when she didn't 'shop in her sister's closet all the time.?

'We always composted, always reused, and it is time that we ensured that individuals are tasked with their own responsibilities,' she says. '(Husband) Kelvin and I often walk the trails and I find it so sad walking through the park through East Gwillimbury and we weren't 400 yards down the trail and there was somebody's Tim Hortons' cup sitting in the crook of the tree. I think we have to invest personal responsibility because that's what's really going to make a difference.

'I have suggested the Conservative party that we need to have a program where we are planting trees. Aurora has been, unfortunately, attacked a lot by the Emerald Ash borer and we have seen the pine needle beetle here as well. We have lost a lot of our foliage. I would love to see a program through our Federal government that says, 'You know, we're going to plant a million trees and work with our municipalities to ensure that that happens.' I don't think we can dictate where they go or what kind, but certainly municipalities to ensure that those things happen.?

This Federal election is shaping up to be one of clear and distinct visions for Canada and, in the run-up to last week's election call, the Liberals have been trying to sell a message that a vote for Conservative leader Andrew Scheer is a vote for Doug Ford-style politics. This is a claim Ms. Brown rejects outright, branding them 'scare tactics.?

'Let Justin Trudeau run against Andrew Scheer,' she says, noting the Liberal leader is not running against the Ontario Premier.

'The Liberals are always going to try and paint the Conservatives with all kinds of scare and accusation,' says Ms. Brown. 'They are trying to be scare mongers with all kinds of issues and accuse Andrew Scheer of all kinds of issues that aren't on the agenda for the Conservative

party. We have a 15-year history of the Conservative party, doing exactly what we said we were going to do and let them accuse. We are going to stand firm on the things that we know Canadians need to have done.?