

Survey says We are friendly

STOUFFVILLE — Stouffville—the friendliest small town in Ontario? Sure is—as far as Jeff Bryce is concerned.

Jeff, an honors psychology graduate of Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, should know. He took it upon himself to find out.

For most of last winter, he went knocking on doors in various communities across the province, gauging the willingness of citizens to help. Out of a total of twelve, Stouffville topped the list.

At each door, Jeff posed the following question: "Excuse me, I'm lost. May I use your phone to find out where my friend lives?". In Stouffville, 95.7 per cent said "yes". Another 4.3 per cent said they'd phone for him. No one turned him down.

With each response, Jeff (or one of his six assistants), made a check mark on a graph. The total added up to an honors' thesis on "helping and trusting behavior".

Not every time was he welcomed inside and offered a cup of coffee. Quite the contrary. On many occasions, he had doors slammed in his face or was subjected to words not printable in a family newspaper. But not in Stouffville. Said Jeff: "Stouffville is a sure bet for smiling faces and trusting souls, not to mention a lovely place to raise your kids".

Second highest on the affirmative response list was Milton at 95.1 per cent "yes"; 3.3 per cent "willing to phone" and 1.6 percent "no".

At the very bottom was Chatham where 78.5 per cent opened their doors and 13.7 per cent refused. In-between (from best to worst) were—Meaford, Port Dover, Jarvis and Waterford, Newcastle and Bowmanville, Port Colborne, Brantford and Dundas.

Jeff carried his little white lie only as far as necessary to obtain an answer. If the response was negative, he thanked the person and left without disclosing the truth. But if they invited him in, he would immediately inform them of his project, thank them and leave.

Editor's mail Appreciated article

Dear Mr Thomas:

Just a short note to express my thanks for your lovely article.

It is clear now, that people found it difficult to approach me. However, after the story appeared in The Tribune, I had many express wishes to me for a continuing successful future.

This added encouragement will definitely help me face the future with that smile I've tried so hard to keep.

Again, I thank you. You obviously knew the importance of presenting this type of story with the care it needed.

Sincerely,
Tannis Topping,
R.R. 4, Stouffville.

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