

Sun-Tribune

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**LETTERS
POLICY**

The Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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OPINION

**Stouffville
Sun-Tribune**

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Keep it simple, Stouffville

Have you observed the traffic outside the Lebovic Leisure Centre lately? It's worse than ever and sometimes just plain chaotic.

It started with a roundabout, which failed to direct traffic into the parking lot.

That didn't work and either does the solution to the problem. Hardly anyone pays attention to the army of traffic signs that have been erected in abundance.

Drivers I spoke to are paying more attention to the children darting in and out of the building than the signs.

You might see a parking spot and make the legal turns and stops to get there, only to be beaten by a driver who ignored the rules and made an illegal turn. This is wrong and dangerous, especially for pedestrians coming from the pool or library in the centre.

School bus drivers also appear to be having trouble navigating the entrance and

HAVE YOUR SAY

► What do you think of this issue or others? E-mail letters to the editor to jmason@yrmg.com

parking lot. They are dropping children and disabled adults at the centre. The new turns are too tight for their stretch vehicles.

Cutting the parking lot in half with barricades last year proved very frustrating for patrons. It was most challenging for pedestrians, especially those pushing strollers.

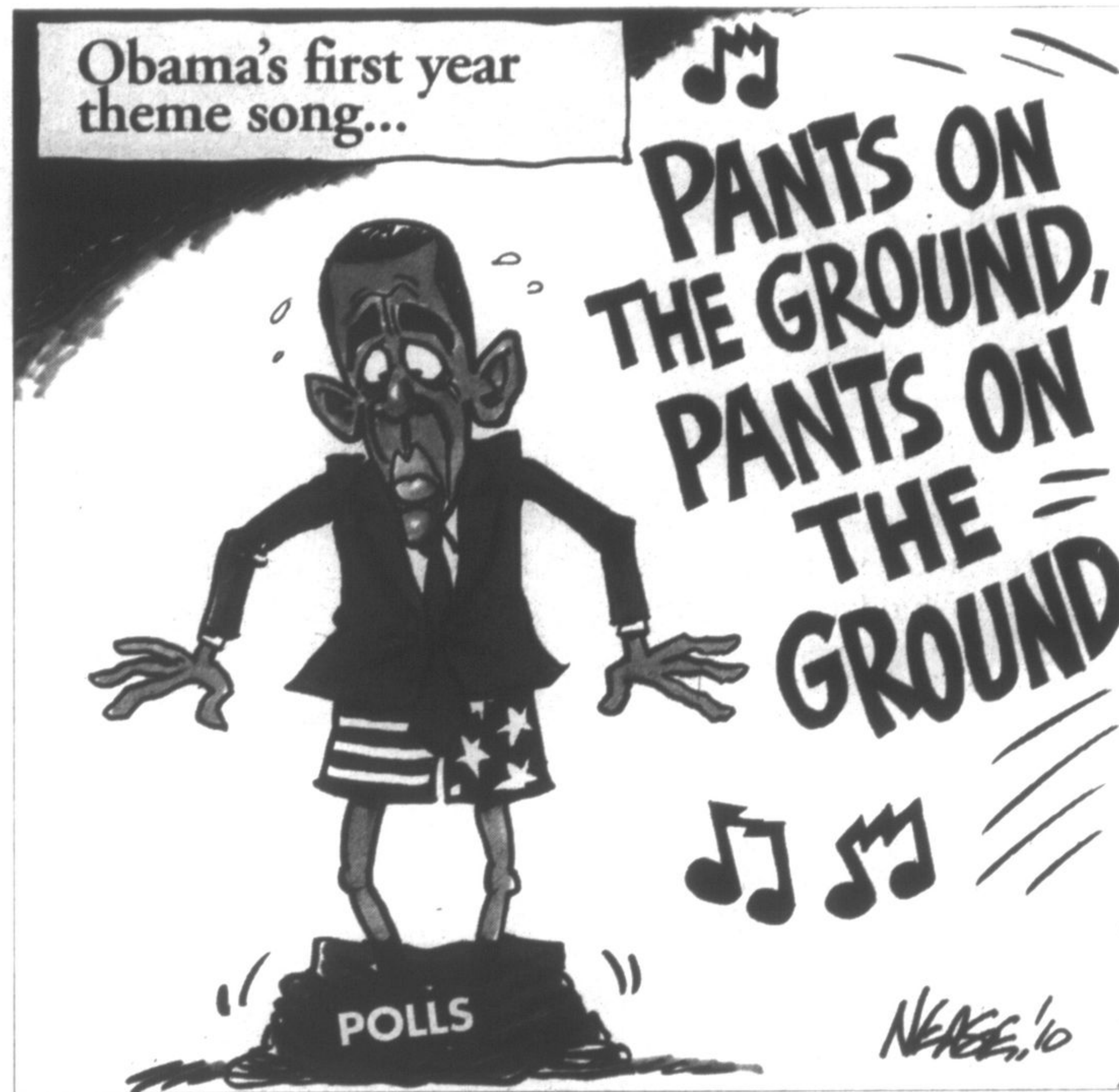
Please, consider others when putting up barricades, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

A suggestion? Remove our sign-adorned island. Get two gallons of white paint and two gallons of yellow.

Keep it simple and don't waste our tax money.

The simplest ideas always work best.

**JACK VERHOOG
STOUFFVILLE**



Honour good character in our communities

The driver deliberately moved his vehicle into the lane in which I was driving, drawing my eyes away from his screaming face to his SUV mere inches away from my vehicle.

As we stopped at the red light, he leaned across the passenger seat, his face twisted and red, spittle flying and despicable obscenities spewing from his mouth.

The light turned green and he sped off, leaving me shaking in shock and disbelief over the sheer force of the toxic rage that was an out-of-the-ballpark overreaction to a minor incident in a parking lot.

I had pulled out from a lane in the parking lot to join a line of cars waiting to turn onto Yonge Street, seeing his approaching car but, admittedly, misjudging — actually, not expecting — the careless speed at which he was tearing through the lot. Our vehicles hadn't even come close, but as he pulled up behind me, he was blaring his horn, gesturing wildly and shouting.

I had raised my hand to genuinely acknowledge his "courtesy" in allowing my vehicle a place ahead of his, but quickly dropped it as he continued to honk. Take a pill,



Debora Kelly

buddy, I thought, what's the big deal, and waved him off dismissively.

As my car moved to the front of the line, he got out of his SUV. I let this ticking time bomb stomp his way up to my door before I drove off.

That's when he chased me, trying to run me off the road, endangering not only me but the other drivers around me.

His road rage was the most extreme I had personally experienced — the icing on the cake of the aggressive cutting off, tailgating and third-finger raising behaviour on our roads that is now so common that it's expected, if not accepted.

We all make mistakes, with nei-

ther intention nor spite; do they really merit this contemptuous disregard for common courtesy?

In the week following, the guy's ugly, spittle-marred face came to mind each time I observed yet another roadway discourtesy. It's dispiriting to see this onslaught of rudeness, impatience, frustration and general lack of manners — and not only on our roads.

We see it in the political arena, in neighbourhoods and schools, at malls and grocery stores, on TV, at hockey rinks and the workplace. Not to mention MTV awards.

It seems as if we've resigned ourselves to this coarsening of our culture. After all, what can we do about it but live our own lives and raise our children with civility? It's too easy to feel helpless — if not frustrated and angry ourselves — against the barrage of rude, angry, mean, disrespectful and hurtful behaviour.

But we can do more. We can honour the good in our communities.

Compassion, courtesy, responsibility, courage, integrity and optimism abound — in the political arena, in neighbourhoods and schools, at malls and grocery stores, on TV, at hockey rinks and the workplace. And even on our roads, sometimes.

It's important to recognize what is right about our communities, which is why the York Region Character Community Foundation hosts an annual awards celebration in April.

It's dispiriting to see this onslaught of rudeness, impatience, frustration and general lack of manners — and not only on our roads.

The event honours individuals and organizations that have demonstrated attributes such as courage, inclusiveness, fairness, integrity, optimism, compassion and initiative.

Please join the celebration by sponsoring an award or making a nomination — there are 22 categories, including the citizen of character, business leader, neighbourhood of character and Wendel Clark sports award.

Nomination forms, available at www.charactercommunity.com, must be submitted by Feb. 12.

Debora Kelly is editor in chief of the York Region Media Group