

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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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Drivers ignoring lights, buses on our roads

Good morning, Stouffville drivers, it's me, your pesky school bus driver, again.

I was going to write a letter to the editor to say what a great job everyone is doing obeying the school bus stop signals this school year, but I'm afraid that will not be happening now.

During the first three or four weeks of school, everyone was doing a bang-up job, no pun intended.

But last week it seems we slipped back into our me-first, I'm-in-a-rush attitude and are now disobeying our stop-lights.

People, roads such as Hoover Park Drive and Reeves Way are big and busy.

Just because it looks like students are not crossing the road, you still have to stop in both directions.

If the bus is in the main lane

HAVE YOUR SAY, WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

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

and you are trying to make a left turn, please do not drive into the left-hand turn lane, passing part of the bus and make that turn — it is against the law and students may be crossing the road.

Remember, there is a large fine that goes with this.

And remember, the life you save may be that of your grandchild.

Get off of that cellphone and you might see what is going on around you.

DAVE BROOKS
STOUFFVILLE



Meeting the neighbours, one chocolate bar at a time

It had been almost 20 years since I had been a Stouffvillite. (Or is it Stouffvillian? Stouffville-er?)

After four years of university and 15 years of working in Toronto, I felt the need to move to the 'burbs and start planning for a family.

So, with a bit of protest from my decidedly urban girlfriend (think: Green Acres), we bought a nice, new-ish little place between Ninth and Tenth lines, within a few hundred metres of the Lebovic Leisure Centre and public library.

Moving clothes, dinnerware, furniture and two skittery cats in the heat of July can be a little stressful on a new couple, but within a month or two, the boxes were unpacked, pictures hung and the exact time to leave the driveway to get the last parking spot at the GO station was determined.

One last thing remained unfinished: we hadn't met our neighbours.

Perhaps it is a bit ironic that, when living in a city the size of Toronto, people do not make a concerted effort to meet their immediate neighbours.

One rides the elevators of towering condominiums with sunglasses on, staring at the floor indicator until exiting the lift, walking directly to the condo door, getting inside and bolt-

ing everything tight. Dinner, entertainment, conversations ... all done from the safety of a tiny condo, with no additional human interaction.

But now in Stouffville, should I not meet my neighbours? What is the protocol when I see other people on the sidewalk when I pick up the morning paper?

What am I supposed to do with my back yard? Plant flowers? Build a deck? Pave the whole thing because I have never owned a lawn mower?

I wanted to fit into life in a small town and I wanted my girlfriend to be happy, after dragging her away from the pace of the Toronto core.

Luckily, Halloween was approach-

ing. And I had a plan.

I was going to decorate the house, buy lots of candy, dress up and meet the hoards of kids and their parents who would invariably be walking from door to door on Halloween night — which fell on a Friday night.

It was 5:30 p.m. and the weather was unseasonably warm. I was dressed like a Team Canada hockey player and had bags and bags of full-sized chocolate bars ready to go.

I sat on my front porch, keeping myself hydrated with an oversized coffee mug, which may or may not have contained actual coffee.

- 5:45 p.m. ... no trick-or-treaters.
- 6:00 p.m. ... still nothing.
- 6:30 p.m. ... more of same
- 7:00 p.m. ... ditto

What was going on here? Did I get my days mixed up? I refreshed my mug a few times and continued to wait.

Around 8:30 p.m., the first visitors started trickling down the street, but on the opposite side.

"Hey! Candy over here!" I said.

A bit reluctantly, children and their parents crossed the road and visited my house.

Soon, the word spread that some guy was giving out full-sized chocolate bars. More children made direct lines to

my front door, with parents in tow. By 9 p.m., the street was full of costumed children and smiling parents.

"I'm new to Stouffville," I explained. "It is nice to meet you."

For the next couple of hours, I met almost all the neighbours on my street and many more from adjacent streets.

Friendly, hospitable folks from different walks of life, all now in the same area.

Even the older teenage kids, who made only minor attempts at constructing a costume and were only interested in getting candy and moving on, seemed to enjoy themselves.

As Halloween fast approaches, I recommend getting a comfortable costume, picking up some full-sized chocolate bars and digging out an oversized coffee mug.

And get ready to either greet your neighbours for the first time, or re-connect with the ones you might not have spoken to lately.

Anand Date grew up in the Stouffville area, moved away and returned years later. If you'd like to write in The Sun-Tribune's New Voices feature, contact editor Jim Mason at jmason@yrmg.com or 905-640-2612, ext. 23.



Anand Date
New Voices