

Readers Write

Out of character

To the Editor:

Not long ago I was enjoying a fine dinner with my family at the Fickle Pickle on Main Street.

I mention this location because of what I saw through the window as we were having dinner. Just across the way, there was a young man waiting for a break in the traffic before crossing the street.

It was a coolish, rainy evening, and traffic was pretty light, but the young man seemed nervous about his chances of making it to the other side safely. Finally, after about five minutes, a suitable gap appeared and he crossed the road and went on his way.

I wondered why he needed to wait that long in such cold, wet weather to cross. Why did any of the drivers not notice his plight and allow him safe passage? Was it that they didn't see him? Had they thought his having to cross the street not important enough to slow down for a couple of seconds, or were they simply not courteous enough to make the effort? Unfortunately I suspect it is a combination of the two.

There is a lot of talk about the diminishing small town temperament in Stouffville, and I think this small panorama is indicative of that. For all the posturing of our elected representatives, well meaning proclamations by community leaders and other prominent citizens, and poorly thought-out legislated character initiatives by a regional government that should know better, the small town character that we are so desperate to hold on to rests in the hands of only one group of people: you, the good citizens of Stouffville.

The charming character of a small town is not maintained as the result of some effort by the council and town staff. It is not measured by the size of the theatre

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Historic Photo

This beautiful house on Davis Drive, which is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, was constructed circa 1840 and is one of just six stone dwellings in Whitchurch-Stouffville. Photo courtesy of Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum



MONTHLY MALAISE

Wasting water to retain waste water!
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Vintage Whine

Dude, where's my car?



By Kate Gilderdale

One beautiful spring morning I drove to Markham, gateway to the south, to attend the Christian Blind Mission's fundraising breakfast.

The day started early. My alarm went off at 6 a.m., a time of day when you wouldn't want to meet me. Indeed, meeting my own reflection in the bathroom mirror is an experience not to be undertaken lightly or wantonly at such an unlovely hour. Although I used to get up early every day, I gave it up for Lent once and have never looked back.

Nevertheless, there were people to see and breakfast to eat and I didn't want to be late so I averted my eyes from cruel reality and went to my closet to see if I had anything remotely presentable to wear. I was greeted by racks of jeans, sweatshirts and hoodies hanging about in haphazard fashion, looking as crumpled as I felt.

Then I saw it, the forgotten gem; a power jacket with a cool edge, the kind worn by incredibly efficient type A persons of the female gender; in short, my polar opposites. I had bought this classy addition to my motley mix of clothing two years earlier in a rare fit of forward planning. It's the kind of jacket which is usually owned by someone who would have decided what to wear for breakfast at least 12 hours beforehand, instead of in a panic at the last minute.

The next minor miracle presented itself in the form of a neglected pair of black dress pants, the kind which can be rolled into a ball and chucked into an overflowing drawer of stuff, yet still appear to be freshly ironed once draped about the body, disguising the lumpy bits. Big bonus: they actually matched my jacket. I was

starting to look almost human and it was still only 6:40.

By the time 7 rolled around, I was stylishly (for me) dressed and ready, and reversing unimpeded onto Main Street. To my astonishment, the road was clear in both directions, as if someone had already closed it off for the Strawberry Festival. Now I knew I must be dreaming.

I arrived at my destination a scant 20 minutes later, parked the car, looked around carefully to see where I was leaving it in relation to the entrance, and went into the hotel. After a wonderful and moving presentation, and a delicious breakfast, it was time to head back to the 'Ville. My fellow scribe, Pam Mandich, was sitting next to me and needed a ride home, and I was happy to oblige. It was just a matter of finding the car.

When we got outside, Basil, my Mini, was nowhere to be seen. We walked about aimlessly for a few minutes until Pam came up with a brilliant suggestion. "Maybe it's in the other parking lot," she said, sagely. Being severely geographically challenged, it didn't occur to me that there could be more than one, but it did explain why I didn't recall the trees or the grass verge which had apparently sprung up during breakfast.

If it hadn't been for Pam, I would probably still be walking home. Even though she is organized, impeccably dressed and prone to constant bursts of multi-tasking, I still think of her as a friend, especially in times of a car loss crisis.

Some people are focused and others are vague to the point of lunacy and there are no prizes for figuring out which category I inhabit.

Baby you can ride in my car. But first you have to find it.

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