Welcome — No, go away!

During my futile quest for glory as a three-term member of the Pottstown School Board, I recently got to experience our town up close and personal by walking door to door throughout the borough.

You can learn a lot about people just by looking at their front porches and yards. For example, it’s obvious that generational poverty is a cultural issue, not just an economic condition. No matter how poor you are, there’s no reason your porch, yard and sidewalk have to be littered with trash. Everybody in town gets big trash and recycling bins, and we have weekly pickup at your door. But most homes, porches and yards are meticulously kept up, even on some of Pottstown’s most depressed blocks.

It’s fascinating to see how residents express their personalities with little signs, banners, and ornaments.

I’m happy to say probably 90 percent of the messages displayed by homeowners are positive and welcoming. But others view strangers as potential criminals who need to be warded off. These homeowners think they’re making their properties safer, but they’re just generating fear and diminishing everyone’s quality of life.

Commentary by Thomas Hylton

As the signs indicate, some Pottstown homeowners are friendly and welcoming, some not.

www.pottstowncitizens.org