

# Mr. Snowman: Neighborliness in Tough Times



New  
Neighbor

This morning, I ran into this fellow on the Cambridge Common. When he tried to pick me up, I gave him the cold shoulder, which he seemed to enjoy. Oh, well.

It was cool to come upon the whimsical snowpersons that seemed to guide my way along the paths covered in deep snow by yesterday's fierce blizzard ...especially after President Barack Obama's thoughtful talk, last night, about the importance of civility, the American national family and the need to move forward in a positive way after the horrific shootings in Tuscon. [ Here's a link to the speech, in case you missed it: <http://pol.moveon.org/azobamaspeech.html?id=25807-6209466-EecNh0x&t=3>]

In fact, despite all the awful things going on the world—or maybe because of them—I'm finding that my neighbors—like whoever made the snowman—seem to be more considerate these days. After the last big storm, I ran into someone from the building next door (who asked me not to use his name) who was clearing snow, water and ice at a crosswalk so that people would not have to wade through deep water to reach the curb. And my downstairs neighbor, who doesn't have a car, sometimes

just shovels out other peoples' cars for the fun (and exercise) of it.

Actually, I've felt that many people have been more neighborly, nicer, since 9/11...tho this group does not include certain Republicans and pundits who seem to get nastier as time goes on. I was shocked to learn that Ben Quayle, Vice President Dan Quayle's son, who is now, unfortunately, a Congressman, actually said in a campaign ad that Barack Obama is the worst president this country has ever had..and don't get me started on Sarah Palin's trigger-happy "mean girl" rhetoric. Rather than engage in namecalling and derision, I'll quit now –and simply thank whomever built Mr. Snowman for your neighborliness and sense of fun. You really brightened my day!

–Anita M. Harris

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