

of mixed greens and a vinaigrette. It was good, but we wondered why we have salad after the main course.

But, of course, the meal ended with dessert. Wade had prepared a raspberry puree and put it on top of peach frozen yogurt. It was delicious and a perfect way to round out the meal.

While we ate, our conversation turned to various subjects. One of the most important subjects that we talked about the result of a very open-ended question that Wade asked. *How do you, as students, see UPEI?*

I was the first one to answer. I knew this question was coming and I had prepared an answer before hand. I told him the truth. I told him about how UPEI has no sense of community and how many students just don't seem to care about anything other than getting their degrees. I told him that Founders' Day was proof of just how students will not even participate when they are given the opportunity.

Wade, on the other hand, told me that he thought Founders' Day was a success. He said that just by putting on something that celebrated UPEI's heritage it was a step in the right direction for the university.

Yes, I said, but nobody showed up.

Wade then went on to tell us about how the new Student Centre would help to bring the students together so that they have a place where they feel welcome to go between classes.

Too bad, I thought, that none of the students at this table will be able to make use of it.

Wade then asked us if we all agreed with my assessment.

They did.

And then he asked if we represent the average student.

We didn't, we said, but we do represent the way students should be. We cared. We wanted to make a difference. That was why we were involved with *The Cadre* and the student council. That was why we were organizing the concert.

After the meal, we sat at the table and discussed other matters. We thought of possible recipients of an honorary degree. We thought of Canadian popular culture icons, like Don McKellar and Jonathan Torrenz. Wade praised us for having a young perspective.

We also talked about music and we talked about Maritime musicians for a while. Marc and I fell silent as Ryan, Stephan and Wade discussed Stompin' Tom and others. Ryan somehow mentioned the film *Alices Restaurant* during the conversation and Wade, recognising the name tried to recall a scene from it. His description was the most disturbing things I ever heard: As I remember it, it involved a dog chewing a bear's testicles and someone yelling, "Shoot the dog! Shoot the dog!"

One of our last topics of conversation was the CBC. Wade mentioned that he thought that the CBC could be a lot stronger if it bailed out of television broadcasting and focussed its attentions on the Internet. He said that local cable networks could do a good job of filling in for community-based television programming. He said that UPEI should probably take advantage of what the local cable

network has to offer and do a show.

Stephan then mentioned how we wanted to something related to that with the documentary about UPEI that we were making. I suddenly felt uncomfortable at the thought of Wade knowing that we were making a documentary. I remembered how I wanted to take the camera inside and decided against it to be polite. I even remembered how I was going to ask him for funding.

We had been at Wade's for four hours when Wade decided it was time for us to leave. He never told us that we had to leave, but I could tell from the way that he was shifting in his chair and yawning. I made the first move by standing up and thanking him for a great evening. The others did the same and we walked to the door.

As I bent down to put on my shoes, the lens cap from Stephan's video camera fell out of my jacket pocket. Wade bent down and picked it up for me. I felt awkward because I did not know what to say. We had mentioned the documentary, but how could I explain that we were going to videotape the evening after everything that he had done for us.

I took the lens cap from Wade and thanked him. I think Stephan might have tried to cover everything up with a joke.

We all shook hands with Wade one more time and we went out onto the front step. We headed back into the car and Wade disappeared back into Xanadu. As Marc pulled away, I picked up the video camera, turned it on, and pressed the viewfinder to my eye. The battery was running out, but I thought I had enough time to shoot our trip back into town.

During the ride back, we assessed the situation. There was no way we could write an article about this evening. Wade was too nice. We couldn't invade his privacy by writing about what happened. We reflected on how good the food was, how interesting the conversation was and how cool Wade's house was. As we approached Charlottetown city limits, the video camera's battery ran out of power. The screen in the viewfinder went black and the camera stopped recording. I pulled the camera away from my face and looked around at the world with my own eyes for the first time since leaving Wade's house.

Two months later, I wrote the article.

