

From the Editor

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I had the great honour of attending the tribute to Jack Layton and was overwhelmed at the powerful words, heartfelt emotions and the sheer number of people that crowded in and around Roy Thomson Hall to pay their final respects. Jack Layton was a man of integrity, honesty and no small amount of wisdom. He taught a lot of Canadians a very basic, but very important, lesson: respect and really listen to your fellow Canadians. It's a lesson well learned.

Despite all the bullying I faced in school, right from Grade 2 until the year I graduated on to college, I enjoyed school most of the time. The classroom was my sanctuary where I got to discover new and exciting things, learn about the history of our country, the nature of our planet and the worlds of imagination tucked between the covers of a good storybook. If ever my grades were low, Mom always asked me if it was my teacher I was not getting along with, because when I did like my teacher my marks were high and my desire to learn endless. But often as I sat at my desk staring out the window, I knew there was more to life than a classroom. The one cautionary comment on all my report cards was that I was a dreamer and my head was always stuck in the clouds. Should that be a caution? Not to dream too much?

A good teacher imparts an eagerness to learn and a desire for that learning to never end. A good education trains your mind to know that there are no limits, only plateaus of knowledge where you can rest for a while savouring what you know, before readying yourself to leap off toward the next pinnacle of understanding. Technology—for me at least—has been like an all-you-can-eat buffet and I can never get enough learning from it. I can only imagine what access to that kind of limitless knowledge is like for kids these days—the world is so vast and yet immediately at your fingertips. Karen shows us (Page 12) that these days, if you can imagine a possible career, there is someone out there doing it and chances are, with a little bit of research, you can discover how to grow up to become that.

Like all of life's journeys though, the road is not always smooth. There are bumps along the way and sometimes we get lost or feel alone, no matter how big and readily

accessible the world is; maybe we feel overwhelmed *because* the world is so vast and immediately on the other side of our computer or TV screens. Your average news station thrives on the doom and gloom of the day and bullying hasn't disappeared—in fact there is a whole new kind of bully, the cyber-bully. Sometimes it's a challenge to face your day, especially when you feel helpless to affect any positive change. But here's the thing: education—and technology for that matter—is a tool, and those who know how to make the best use of these powerful tools can accomplish a great many things. The pen, or keyboard for that matter, has always been mightier than the sword.

Leanne Iskander proves that if you know your rights (Page 62), then you can abolish bullying beyond just the classroom. Scott reveals (Page 19) that teachers are on our side and students are determined to see that "It Gets Better." I, myself, am privileged to get the inside scoop (Page 27) on what it takes to become a Human Book on loan from Toronto Public Libraries. The Human Library is a brilliant rediscovery of 'old fashioned' storytelling around the fire, re-imagined in a modern way and a shining example of how vital our libraries are to the very cultural fabric of our cities.

When we are faced with the ignorance of people in power like the Fords and the Harpers, the wielding of an educated mind is a powerful tool indeed. Never forget, public ignorance is the government's best friend. I think Anne Marie Aikins, whom I spoke to at the Metro Reference Library, summed it up best: "Change happens one person at a time." A pearl of wisdom I believe Jack Layton was well versed in.

Jeffrey Harrison

