

FEATURES

Adam Turner, Editor

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The Patch to Justice



TWO EASTERN STUDENTS DECORATE DORM ROOM WITH DOZENS OF COLLECTED CITY AND STATE POLICE PATCHES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

By **MICHAEL EMERSON AND ADAM TURNER**
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Some people collect stamps; some collect coins. However, a certain pair of students on campus has shown an interest in a slightly more obscure collectible.

Police studies major Robby Sykes, 20, and Nathaniel Arnold, 18, a criminal justice major, both of whom are from Lexington, share a room in Keene Hall and a common hobby: collecting city and state police patches.

Currently, Sykes owns 42 different patches from different cities nationwide; Arnold owns 80.

Despite having nearly double of his own collection, Sykes maintains that he himself actually started first.

"I came in with just one, I had one from the state police and then I got a couple others from one of my police officer friends, and then he was like 'Ah man, that's a cool idea!'" Sykes said. "And so he just started writing letters to any police department he could think of that came to the top of his mind and somehow or another he got ahead. In our room we have part of our wall totally covered. Whenever we met in the middle of our ceiling, we decided to stop. But he got to the middle before I did and decided he didn't wanna stop."

Sykes explained that the idea originally came from wanting to honor the state he

loves.

"The idea was when I first got my first patch I thought it would be a cool idea to represent departments all over the state, because me personally, I don't want to leave the state. I want to work somewhere in the Commonwealth after graduation," Sykes said. "So I grabbed a patch from here and there to represent law enforcement all over Kentucky and then once you run out of so many departments to write to, you've gotta spread out. It started out as a Kentucky thing and kind of grew into a national thing. But law enforcement is like one big family; different states, different cities, but they all do the same job."

And it certainly has become a nationwide collection. In addition to numerous cities and counties in Kentucky, the pair have raked in patches from states such as California, Alaska, Hawaii, Arizona, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Vermont and Rhode Island.

Sykes said he believes he and his roommate will eventually have a patch from all

➤ SEE PATCHES, PAGE B3



SONYA JOHNSON/PROGRESS

Nathaniel Arnold and Robby Sykes have managed to collect over 100 patches from cities and counties all over Kentucky and across the country including one from Juneau, Alaska.



A balloonist with tricks up his sleeves

BALLOONIST/MAGICIAN/COMEDIAN JOHN CASSIDY TREATED EASTERN STUDENTS TO A SHOW JAN. 26

By **ELISE SVOBODA**
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The art of ballooning can seem like less of an art, and more a party trick.

But for John Cassidy, the craft of ballooning encompasses so much more than air and latex.

Cassidy is a professional magician, comedian, and balloon artist, and Thursday, Jan. 26, he treated Eastern students to a show in SSB.

According to his official web site, Cassidy originally performed his tricks at birthday parties, but when he noticed adults liked his programs, his career took off. He has performed for the White House twice, for schools, colleges and more. Cassidy holds several Guinness Book of World Records and has been on multiple TV shows including *The Today Show*, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* and *Live with Regis and Kelly*.

Cassidy started the way most comedians do— making others laugh.

"I made my dad laugh once when I was a little kid and it was the best sound I had ever heard in my life, and then my mom was really sick for years and I was going to become a doctor and try and make her feel better," Cassidy said. "I found out that was hard and this is a lot easier."

Cassidy's love for balloons also developed at a young age.

"I bought a bag of balloons like 9-year-olds [do] and have been playing with them ever since," Cassidy said.

Cassidy also mentioned he just recently started performing for colleges in the last year or so.

"I have never done colleges, and they are so fun," Cassidy said. "The kids are polite and especially everyone here."

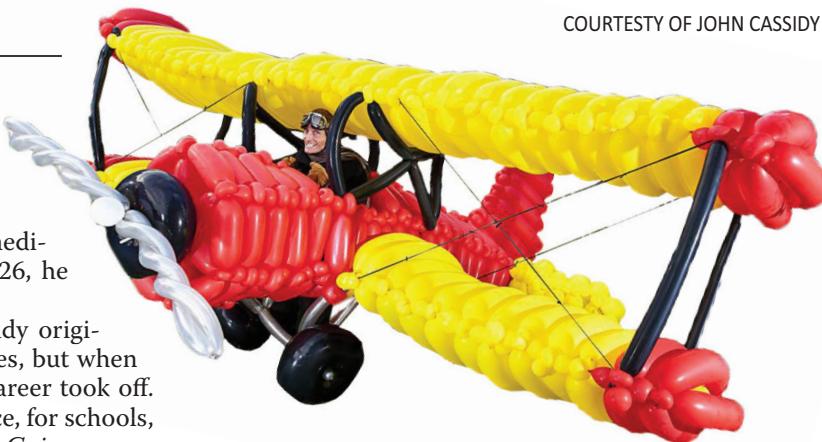
This magic man uses a large amount of balloons per show.

Cassidy said, "I really did get audited four years ago for \$27,000 in latex expenses and no dependence, so it really set off a schedule C audit. I use about 30,000 balloons a month."

Cassidy says his favorite part of the show is "the fact that anyone will come and have a good time and laugh is the best thing in the world. It's a lot of fun."

So when it came time for Eastern to find entertainment for the semester, Cassidy seemed like the perfect choice.

"We saw him at a conference we attend to preview acts to bring to college campuses and one of our students was pulled up onto the stage," said Nikki Hart, assistant director of student life in charge of activities for students.



COURTESY OF JOHN CASSIDY

Students got the opportunity to join in his magical presentation.

Caeleigh Gilliland, 19, an undeclared major, said she had an awesome time on stage until Cassidy brought out the flame-throwing Rainbow Brite doll.

Gilliland said her favorite part was when Cassidy picked on her for being Canadian.

Whenever Cassidy had a group of students up on the stage with him, he had them start blowing up balloons to see who could blow up the most; Cassidy put the students to shame.

J.P. Sparr, 19, geology major from Liberty, said it was fun being up on stage with Cassidy.

"That guy is really, really funny," Sparr said.

The student who arguably had the most interesting time with Cassidy was John 'Cody' Lawson, 19, a network, security, and electronics major from Corbin, who was on stage for the majority of the show.

Lawson's experience was fun, yet terrifying at the same time.

"I should have brought more boxers," Lawson said.

For Cassidy's final number, Lawson was asked to pick a card and hold a dartboard while Cassidy's whole body was inside a balloon. A lawn dart was shot out of a cannon and popped Cassidy's balloon. The lawn dart stuck into Cassidy's bottom with Lawson's card, the 4 of clubs, pinned on.

For more information about Cassidy's career and performances, you can follow him on Twitter @JohnCassidyShow, like him on Facebook, or visit his website at www.johncassidy.com.

And stay tuned for upcoming Student Life events by following on Twitter @EKUStudentLife and checking out www.studentlife.eku.edu.



SAMANTHA TOY/PROGRESS

Cashman set to rock Paddy Wagon Feb. 16

By **ADAM TURNER**
adam_turner66@mymail.eku.edu

Rock and roll has sadly become diluted and neutered in its old age. It had a lively, spirited youth (the 50s), some rebellious, game-changing teenage years (the 60s) and a few decades of mature, experienced adulthood. Thanks to the rise of pop and the death of the album, however, this music genre has seemed to have entered a major mid-life crisis.

Here to kick some life square in its pants is the band Cashman.

This two-piece, Nashville-based blues band features the gritty, down-home guitar playing of lead singer Ray Cashman and the rhythmic, unrelenting drumming of Adam Verone. And they will be bringing their particular brand of rock and roll to Richmond's Paddy Wagon on Thursday, Feb. 16.

Ray said the goal of their music is simple: to have a good time.

"It's a drum/guitar combo so it's a lot of driving rhythm. Everybody seems to have a good time," Ray said. "So that's really important to us, to come out and have fun."

"It's a little bit of hill-country, a lot of slide guitar, some old blues stuff that you don't hear a lot these days. All original songs besides a few covers. And we rock it out too," Verone added.

Though Ray has been performing under the Cashman name for many years and many albums, his partnership with Verone is a new one.

"The first note that Adam ever played with me was at what used to be called the King Biscuit Blues Festival in Helena, Arkansas," Ray said. "That was about a year and a half ago in October."

Verone said that his experience with his new band has been an exciting one.

"It's been crazy for me. A big culture shock," Verone said. "This whole hill-country, blues we've been playing is pretty new to me. But I'm really getting into it. It's been awesome because I've been learning a whole new style of music."

Each member has had a lifelong love of music and numerous influences on their style.

"Well, man, I like a lot of different stuff. R.L. Burnside, Lightnin' Hopkins, I love Townes Van Zandt, Tony Joe White, Rolling Stones. Got a wide variety of influences," Ray said.

The band is a touring powerhouse, averaging about 150 shows each year all around the country. They play a lot in Nashville as well, though Ray noted that their venue options are limited there.

➤ SEE CASHMAN, PAGE B3



COURTESY OF KAT RAYLS

Kanye West’s top ten tracks

By JABRIL POWER
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Kanye has dominated the world of hip-hop consistently since his debut album in 2003, *The College Dropout*. The spotlight has remained on the music mogul for years as people wondered what Kanye West would say or do next. Every album has received tremendous amounts of critical praise, with each of them being almost nothing short of perfection. And with five solo albums under his belt, Kanye could easily be argued as being one of, if not the most important artist in hip-hop history. So in his honor, we disregard all his egotistical actions and microphone stealing to present to you Kanye West’s Top 10 Songs.

10. Last Call (*The College Dropout*)

“Last Call” clocked in at a whopping 12 minutes and 40 seconds. This song’s length mostly had its outro to blame. But this last song on the album intelligently gave us a handful of Kanye as an artist, who he was at the start of his career and what he had to offer. It seemed to be Kanye’s last attempt for you to really get to know him. And *The College Dropout*, in my opinion, was only meant to do one thing: To let us know he was something different, and he had heart. I’d say it worked out for him well.

9. Crack Music (*Late Registration*)

“How we stopped the Black Panthers? Ronald Reagan cooked up an answer...” On “Crack Music,” Kanye and The Game gave us a politically conscious song deep-fried in the soulful samples of the New York Community Choir. The chants and horns were something we as listeners will not forget. It was the perfect blend of a very “gangsta” chorus, and the socially conscious verses really made this song one of his most memorable to date.

8. Power (*My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*)

This song really has one of the most memorable samples in the Kanye West’s arsenal. Originally performed by King Crimson, Kanye flips it and makes this song one of the most powerful, in-your-face songs he has produced. This anthem goes great with almost anything sports related or action packed and was even featured in

The Social Network trailer. What is the song really about? I don’t think anyone knows exactly, though it did stir a bunch of conspiracy theories. Nonetheless, Kanye still delivered.

7. Late (*Late Registration*)

This easily made it in the list for me. From the amazing orchestral sound to the fun lyrics about the pointless things in college, Kanye really gave us an amazing piece of work that reminded us no matter what he puts out and no matter how long it takes him, it will be worth the wait.

6. Everything I Am (*Graduation*)

This was a glimpse of the Kanye we had seen back on *The College Dropout*, and fans loved it. DJ Premier chopped it up on the turntables while a beautiful piano sample and passionate lyrics about being accepted really helps the listeners remember this song for its pure greatness and honesty. You quoted this song your senior year, don’t lie.

5. Devil in a New Dress (*MBDTF*)

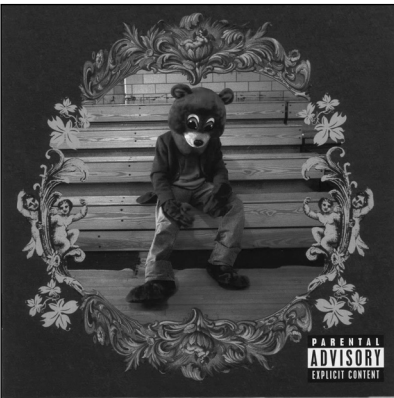
This *Dark* composition was heavily reliant on soulful samples, but just when you thought this beat would just be a loop, it broke out into an amazing, gritty guitar solo wrapped up by one of Rick Ross’s best verses. All the violins, pianos and sounds on this song helped make the album a beautiful beast.

4. Christian Dior Denim Flow (*The Good Friday series*)

This song has so many features and was an “All of the Lights” of it’s own. This hinted at the amazing album that was to come with *MBDTF* and puzzled fans on why this didn’t make the final cut.

3. I Wonder (*Graduation*)

Listen to this, and it will explain why this is number three in the list. The experimental sound, the weird samples, the simplistic but emotional lyrics makes this a one-of-a-kind Kanye song. This song truly stands out amongst all



the others. Young Kanye was just trying to find the answers in life within this song.

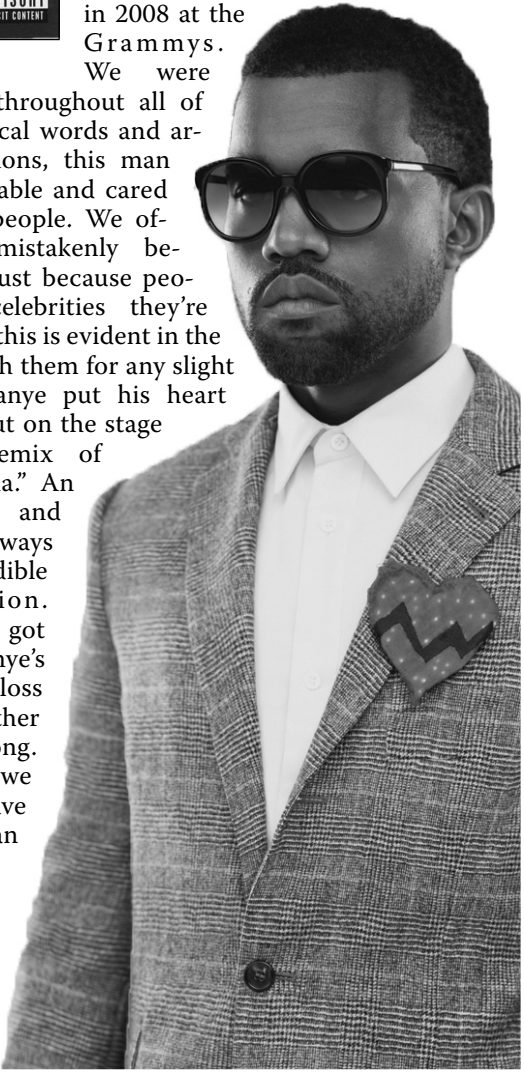
2. Dark Fantasy (*MBDTF*)

“Can we get much higher?” This song introduces one of the darker hip-hop albums of 2010 and arguably the darkest for Kanye’s career. This ignites the flame to one of the best, most powerful hip-hop albums in five years, with the question “Can we get much higher?” Allowing the listener to really reflect on Kanye’s career, what he was, and what he’s become, he allowed us to see he was not the same man during *The College Dropout*. He has given us something new every time he steps to the plate. What can he do next? Can he get any higher then he already is? Has Kanye reached his limits? This song is an important point in a new era for Kanye West.

1. Hey Mama (Grammy Version)

Kanye performed this song after his mom passed in 2008 at the Grammys. We were

reminded throughout all of his egotistical words and arrogant actions, this man was vulnerable and cared for other people. We oftentimes mistakenly believe that just because people are celebrities they’re invincible; this is evident in the way we bash them for any slight mishap. Kanye put his heart and soul out on the stage in this remix of “Hey Mama.” An orchestra and Kanye is always an incredible combination. We really got to feel Kanye’s pain and loss for his mother with this song. I wish we could have seen it on an album.



COURTESY OF KANYEWEST.COM

My Little Pony develops fandom following

By EVAN McMILLIN
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Both my gender and age are definitely outside the targeted demographic of the *My Little Pony* franchise, which is adolescent girls. So, why am I recommending college students to enjoy the show *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*?

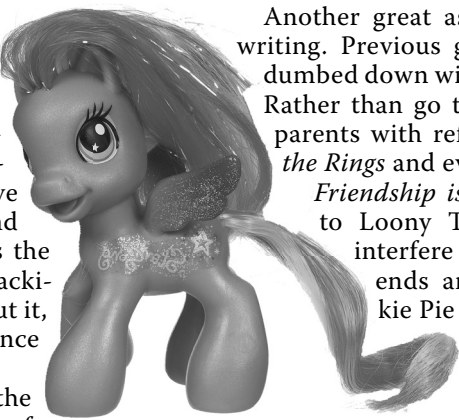
My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic is the latest generation of the Hasbro toys with its own show. The animated series of *My Little Pony*, *Friendship is Magic*, is written and developed by Lauren Faust. She is known for her work on *Powerpuff Girls* and *Foster’s Home for Imaginary Friends*. *Friendship is Magic* includes the voices of Tara Strong, Ashleigh Ball, Andrea Libman and many more.

This still doesn’t answer the question of why a college student should watch a show traditionally targeted

to young girls. *Friendship is Magic* is an excellent example of an element of mainstream media being absorbed by Internet culture.

The show has gained a large cult following online, with the fans often referred to as bronies. Many fans approve of the various pop culture references and character development, and as well as the animation and Looney Tunes-style wackiness. I personally enjoy everything about it, despite the occasionally clichéd tolerance and friendship lessons.

Unlike in previous incarnations of the *My Little Pony* franchise, the characters of *Friendship is Magic* are well developed and memorable. Each character has his or her own distinct personality and downfalls. From the highly studious and naïve Twilight Sparkle, who occasionally shows signs of OCD, to the shy and quiet Fluttershy, who is comically prone to outbursts of psychotic rage all can be relatable to real life.



Another great aspect of *Friendship is Magic* is the writing. Previous generations of *My Little Pony* were dumbed down with half-hearted attempts to be “girly.” Rather than go this route, Faust decided to cater to parents with references to *Charlie’s Angels*, *Lord of the Rings* and even *The Big Lebowski*.

Friendship is Magic makes frequent throwbacks to Looney Tunes. Characters will occasionally interfere with the screen fade as an episode ends and acknowledge the audience. Pinkie Pie travels like Pepé Le Pew, hopping on all fours. Comically, like Pepé, when Pinkie is chasing someone, she always magically arrives to the destination first, much to the annoyance of those she pursues.

The animation is another excellent aspect of *Friendship is Magic*. The show is animated in Adobe Flash, which creates crisp and beautiful images. The animation flows smooth and clean. The animation of *Friendship is Magic* is comparable to that of *Foster’s Home for Imaginary Friends*.

My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic is an excellent show for everyone who appreciates great cartoons. Faust breathed new life into a stale and generic franchise with great writing, excellent character development and beautiful animation. This is a show that you should definitely be watching.

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Mack is a Senior History Major with a minor in religion. As an avid New York Yankees fan, Mack recommends that students not wear Red Sox apparel to tutoring appointments. Also, gifts of Bruce Springsteen tickets would be highly appreciated

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Man on a Ledge fails to live up to great premise

By KENNA TRENT
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I love the premise of *Man on a Ledge*: an escaped convict creates an elaborate diversion while his brother attempts to prove him innocent. Since I saw the first trailer, I have been anxiously awaiting its arrival. Is it a thriller? Is it a heist? I don't know! But it's a fresh idea, and that is fantastic.

Unfortunately, the execution of a good idea is another story.

There is something about *Man on a Ledge* that just doesn't seem to add up. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.

Man on a Ledge tells the story of Nick Cassidy (Sam Worthington), an ex-cop who has spent time in jail for stealing a one-of-a-kind diamond from a real estate mogul (Ed Harris). He is allowed out of prison for one day to attend his father's funeral and takes that opportunity to escape his guards. His plan is to get a hotel room with a view of the city and step out on to the ledge. Soon, reporters, by-standers and police have him surrounded on the ledge. While a police psychologist (Elizabeth Banks) tries to talk him down, another plan is in the works. Nick's brother Joey (Jamie Bell) is across the street trying to steal the allegedly already stolen diamond to prove it was never stolen at all, making Nick innocent.

I can't really pinpoint what I don't like about this movie, but I have some ideas. And I'll get to those later, because I must first admit there were some redeeming qualities of *Man on a Ledge*.

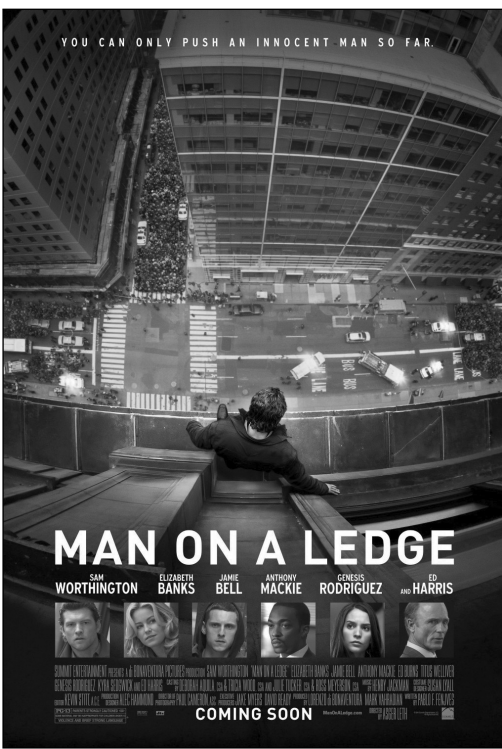
For someone who usually plays larger-than-life charac-

ters, Sam Worthington does a great job of being an average Joe. His demeanor, motivations and 5 o'clock shadow are all believable; the kind of person you want to cheer for.

I was pleasantly surprised to see funny-girl Elizabeth Banks put into a different scenario. It was perfect casting for a character who is trying to be professional while losing it slowly. And, of course, Ed Harris was superb. I wouldn't expect anything less from a man who has spent the later part of his career picking bad-guy roles. He just plays that character well.

Then, there was everyone else. Jamie Bell and his onscreen girlfriend Genesis Rodriguez were the diamond thieves and supposed comic relief of the film. However, their lovers' squabbles were poorly timed and inappropriate for the film as a whole.

On top of that, their theft was completely nonsensical. Entire scenes are spent doing a heist thing that will, hopefully, get them to the diamond, but the entire plan is lost to the audience. They are just watching them crawl through vents and cut wires, and the audience has no idea how those paths are getting



COURTESY OF IMP AWARDS

them anywhere. The plot leaves the audience hanging in other points, as well. As the details of Nick's plan are unfolding, the police are making quick leaps and bounds by using logic. While the whole scheme of the bad guys comes together in the end, there were places in the middle I still haven't filled in. I mean, how did they know?

Perhaps there were too many plot points and ideas that didn't get fully realized, which made the film ultimately turn out all wrong. For a great idea, the execution was poor and was only redeemed by the performances of the main characters. Minus Rodriguez, who's only redeeming quality was that she brought her push-up bra to the robbery.

If you like action movies, this will get the job done. You will be entertained, but at the cost of quality.

Verdict: C

Witty film critic offers sharp humorous reviews

By MICHAEL EMERSON
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You've all heard of certain famous critics such as Siskel and Ebert, Gene Shalit and others but what about critics who aren't so renowned. I'm of course talking about Doug Walker, or "The Nostalgia Critic," whose reviewed repertoire includes classics such as *Fern Gully* and *Last Action Hero*.

As his name implies, he only goes for movies that were made at least 10 years ago and have garnered a nostalgic audience.

You might want to be careful about watching his reviews, as they are not simple summaries but full plot treads that contain a cer-

tain witty execution. His reviews are not only a source of credible information, but a huge source of entertainment, as well. He, in simple terms, verbally and physically rips the movies apart and can be credited as one of the biggest cynics in the history of media review.

Now, I could talk all day about his reviews, but I'm actually here to bring attention to his website, "hatGuyWithTheGlasses.com, and the many contributors on it. Noah Antwiler (The SpoonOne), Lewis Lovhaug (Linkara) and Phelan Porteus (Phelous), just to name a few, all offer their own style, demographic and influence. This site has more than 30 different critics from Chicago to France, all contributing to the cause of getting honest-to-goodness reviews of movies, video games, comic books, TV shows, books, music and anything else that may peak your interest.

The biggest draw that comes

from this site is abstract humor that is produced from the analysis of the different forms of media. You're not just getting a review, but a full blown cavalcade of sketch comedy gold.

One crucial aspect of this site is that it encourages anybody from anywhere to do what they do, even to the point of making a living off of it like Doug does. The other big aspect is that the main contributors all know one another and indulge in various crossovers when both reviewers wish to review the same thing.

Speaking of crossovers, every year during the summer the site administrators and Doug Walker fly every contributor from around the world to produce an Anniversary Special. The first one was a "Brawl" of sorts that pitted gamers vs. critics with Doug Walker and James Rolfe (The Angry Video Game Nerd) leading the two sides respectively. With a fourth anniversary on the way, the site as a whole is combining forces to accomplish a goal outside its normal routines, such as the hostile takeover of Mollassia (A real Micro Nation in Nevada). All this and more are the reasons why this site should be gaining more viewers.

PATCHES

CONTINUED FROM A1

50 states.

The two of them obtain these patches by writing or typing letters to different police stations in hopes of a response to receive a patch.

"We both write letters, but we do it different ways. He handwrites all of his, more personal y'know, and I have a template where I'll change the name, the address, the chief of police's name," Sykes said. "But we hand sign it and do it the old fashioned way: send it out in the mail with a stamp and wait till we get a letter back."

Their family and friends have shown great interest in their collections, going so far as aiding them in obtaining patches.

"Both of our families are very supportive, all of our friends know and every time we get patches we put it up on Facebook for all of our friends to see," Sykes said. "We keep our door propped open here in the hallway on our floor, and people walk by and they'll just stop in the hallway and stare and ask 'What is all that?'" So we have to explain all the time."

Arnold shared the excitement that comes from anticipating the arrival of a patch.

"It's just fun coming in from a long day and finding a patch in the mailbox," Arnold said. "My favorite patch would be the one from the Georgetown SWAT."

Sykes has a slightly different preference.

"My favorite patch is the one from Paducah, Kentucky," Sykes said.

They've had little to no luck in finding other patch enthusiasts, but of course, this is what makes their collection special.

Other people around them seem to share their excitement, however.

"The people at the desk always ask if we have new patches... they're just as excited to get them as we are," Sykes said. "They always want to see the patches we've got before we take them up."

Sykes and Arnold plan on continuing their collection after college and beyond, finding more suitable means of preservation such as framing them to a mantle. They said they believe that committing to this collection inspires them to work harder in hopes of one day reaching their goal of becoming law enforcement agents.

The two young men share a common interest not only in their collection, but in their same dream of practicing law. Sykes said he had this passion since he was in kindergarten and the teacher passed out sheets featuring the famed question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

"I always put down police officer," Sykes said. "So one day I just gave it some thought and I came to the realization that it bothered me when I see people in distress or see people in danger or see people who are in need of assistance from somebody who has the power to make a difference in their life. I decided I want to dedicate myself to public service and be a help to anybody any way that I can. I couldn't think of any better way to do that than to be a police officer."

While Nathaniel said his story may not be as "romantic," he still wishes to pursue the road of justice.

And for this pair, it seems the road to justice is paved with embroidered patches and good intentions.

CASHMAN

CONTINUED FROM A1

"We can't really play downtown because we don't play covers of country music (laughs)," Ray said. "So east Nashville is kind of where all the rock and blues, bluegrass, all the other music is happening."

"The whole independent movement is there," Verone said.

Their constant touring has even brought them to Kentucky in the past.

"Yeah, we've played in Lexington and I've played Rabbit Hash about 57 times," Ray said. "It's a town with maybe a hundred people. It has a dog for the mayor, but it's a fun place. It's just a small town that loves music."

The band is now preparing a new album, their latest since 2010's *Snake Feast*.

"I've got about four albums out right now and we're fixing to record a fifth album, tentatively called *The Rough Tumbled South*," Ray said. "It'll be out maybe early summer."

Throughout the lineup changes and the new albums, one thing has always remained: the joy of playing music. And their upcoming Richmond show should prove to be yet another rocking good time.

"We're looking forward to it. We should be pretty much on our game because we've just come off a three week tour," Ray said.

For more information or to hear some of the band yourself, check out www.reverbnation.com/cashman and prep yourself for their upcoming Paddy Wagon show. Show up and help shake rock and roll out of its current funk back to its former glory.

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OPEN 7:00am-1:00am MON-SAT