

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

GOT RACISM?

***New editors going
 H.A.M. over b-day***



HOWARD TING/UDC

From left: Rachel Salyer, Hannah Wise and Ian Cummings go hard as a motherfucker at recent production night.

To our faithful readers:

It's not everyday someone in college turns 30!

We hope you enjoy this special edition of the UDC as much as we have enjoyed putting it together. Like our namesake, The UDC is a constant work in progress, but we consider this some of our best work; you may consider it some of your best reading.

It's been a labor of love, but a trying one at that. Four pages full of all original content and Facebook photography.

A special thanks to Shaun Hittle for being

Ian's confidant, frenemy, better looking other half, provider of cigarettes and companionship, and above all, the source of all things Ian. Be sure to check out Shaun's story on page three.

Our national correspondent Jonathan Shorman also put a heart-felt column together of his own memories with Ian. Find that on page two.

Eyes to the sky, ears to the street,

*Hannah Wise,
 Art Director
 and*

*Rachel Salyer,
 Editor in Chief*



TRAVIS YOUNG/UDC

Ian Cummings, owner and founder of Tony Macaroni's, a new Italian themed restaurant, wears the standard wax mustache worn by servers at the restaurant.

ITALIANS ASHAMED
 Restaurant considered racist by some local diners

LAURA SATHER
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When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that's...racism?

Local diners are up in arms about the city's newest Italian restaurant, Tony Macaroni's. And it's not the food they find unpalatable; it's the service. Diners said servers at Tony Macaroni's use offensive Italian slang and every one of them wears a fake mustache—that means the

female servers do, too.

"They're just parodying my culture," said diner Mike Loretto, Lawrence native and Italian American, who stormed out of the establishment on its opening night. "They come to the table and literally say 'bippity boopity' to sound more Italian. Listen up, punks: you don't sound authentic. You sound ridiculous."

Some people, however, are on the restaurant's side. They find the flavors of the restaur-

ant more important than the service and are willing to overlook the quirks.

"Yeah, it's kinda weird, but I mean, I just paid six bucks for the best toasted ravioli I've ever had in my life. Where else am I gonna find that?" said diner Janice Martin.

Restaurant owner Ian Cummings said all he wants to do is serve delicious food.

SEE TONY'S | 4

CHAMPION NEWS MAN

A role-model for all in news biz

It's 2 p.m. and the phone calls have begun.

Budget is only an hour away and we've got a paper to fill.

As I begin a mini-mental freakout, I instinctively reach for my phone and dial the man I know will make it all, at least a little, better.

Ian Cummings produces. He makes it happen.

He's a fixer. Not like George Clooney in *The American*, who surreptitiously makes guns for assassins. No, this is more like Clooney in *Michael Clayton*, the down and dirty attorney who gets results, yet possesses a certain moral fortitude.

Ian, as is his custom when called on the telephone, answers, or answers after a short while. What almost always ensues is a short, sometimes tense but progressively more optimistic conversation.

Somehow, once again, he's done it. He's shaken loose 400 words of copy from some recalcitrant contributor. I don't question how, lest I become an accessory to some unspeakable felony. I just breathe...a sigh...of relief.

For one semester, I watched as he dealt with the reporters, that motley crew. What he did was an art. One moment it requires a sharp tongue bearing savage truth, another, a few sweet words of affirmation in a needy ear. And on some occasions, even bowing before



By Jonathan Shorman
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the glory of a late-day incarnation of David Foster Wallace himself.

But Cummings did it all with excellence. He was, he is, a true professional.

There are too many moments where I watched Ian shine to do justice to them all in this column. But let me share just one.

It was after our first week of production. A Friday. Ian, myself, and the rest of management found ourself in a heated meeting with another party. It was a stupid dispute.

It was childish and churlish.

But Cummings held it together through the absurdity, making his points with poise and precision. After that meeting I knew, that whatever came our way that semester, we'd be OK. The ship would sail, the press would run.

Amen and amen.

So I've been very happy and satisfied these past few months knowing that *The University Daily Kansan* was in Cummings's hands. It was reassuring as a new alum.

So here's to Ian Cummings.

Man. Journalist. Knows Shaun Hittle.

Carry on, my friend. Carry on.

HURTS SO GOOD

Cigarette savings lost in go-fish tournament

RACHEL SALYER
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"Go fish!"

The simple, childish phrase was muttered, and just like that, a man's fortune was gone.

A crowd of more than 25 people erupted as Joe Gator, tournament favorite, declared victory over Ian Cummings at the 35th annual Get Your Fish Invitational at Clinton Lake Wednesday.

Cummings had unusual tact, displaying some of his cards to his opponent in hopes of "shaking him up."

"That's the strategy that got me to the winning table," Cummings said. "I thought that was the strategy that'd bring it home."

Instead, Cummings found himself dishing out the three of clubs, the last card Gator needed to complete the set and stand both cardless and victorious.

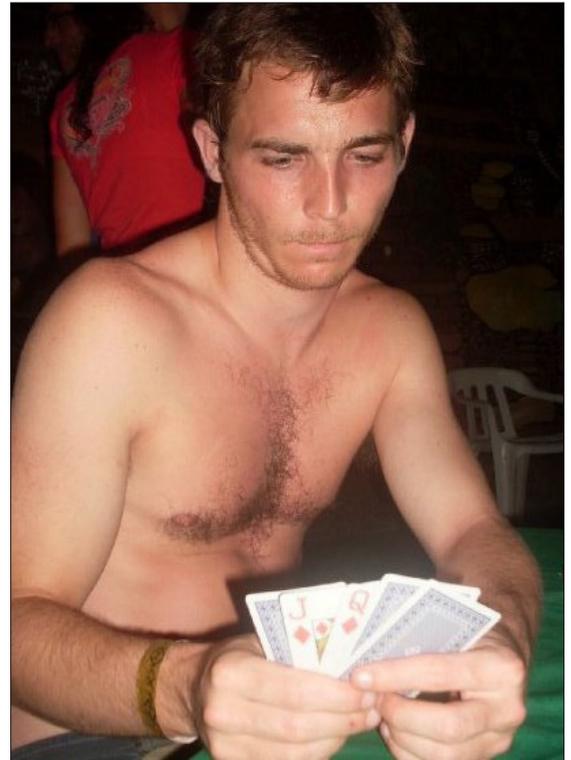
The tournament winner receives a \$5,000 check, but it's common for players to raise the stakes. Gator bet an additional \$5,000 on the game, but Cummings, running short on capital but flush with atypical ideas, bet his cigarette fortune.

He estimates the nest egg he lost was about 50,000 deep in cigarettes, which were all Marlboro's.

"It's not so much the number that bothers me, but the sentimental value," Cummings said. "I can remember almost every gas station I bought them at."

His opponent had no such attachment to cigarettes, and mulled over the idea of what to do with his winnings.

"To be honest I hate cigarettes," Gator said. "I'm



SHAUN HITTLE/UDC

Security footage shows Ian Cummings, serial gambler, in the final round of the Get Your Finish Invitational at Clinton Lake.

more of a dip kind of man, but I'm definitely not going to give them back. I won the damned things, and I'll think of something to use them for."

Cummings, an aspiring sports bar owner, already had a plan mapped out for the Marlboro's. He said he planned to use his winnings to open a "bro-themed bar" where the cigarettes would be a staple.

"I figured you'd come in with your bros to watch the big game and you all sign a cigarette," Cummings said. "It's the type of place where nobody asks you if you're together or separate. It's just bros bein' bros!"

It's customary for bets on the game to be paid on spot,

but onlookers were shocked to see a dump truck filled to the brim with Marlboro's pull into the sandy beach.

"Never seen anything like it," Mychelle McTraylor said, who has been to the tournament every year since it started. "I'm real surprised the damned truck didn't get stuck coming down here like that. It was really something."

Cummings, who was shirtless during match as part of his promotion of his bro-sports bar, began to sob.

"I had big plans, big plans!" Cummings screamed. "Now what am I supposed to do? You don't just start collecting again. How can I tell my family this?"

MYTHBUSTERS

The man, the myth



Contributed photo

Hospitalized kitten after it was attacked by Ian Cummings.

KELSEY CIPOLLA

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He only comes out at night. He survives on caffeine and nicotine. He once punched a kitten. He's thirty. Ian Cummings, notorious local gadabout, has been the subject of frequent speculation in recent months. Here we break down what has been proven, disproven and what is still unknown about this mystery man.

Myth 1: Ian Cummings does not eat.

Cummings' documented diet consists of two main food groups—coffee and cigarettes. Careful observation reveals that several significant sources of nutrients are missing from that list including but not limited to: carbohydrates, fats, fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy. This alarming fact has forced several coworkers and friends to wonder whether or not Cummings actually eats anything.

Many have expressed concern, including close friend and coworker Luke Ranker.

"I saw him order a sandwich once," Ranker said with a sad smile. "He never took a bite of it."

Still, it would seem that Cummings is at least capable of consuming food.

"I eat," Cummings said defiantly when asked about his diet. When pressed to eat a peanut butter Reese's pieces cookie to prove his statement, he grimaced and then took several unhappy bites.

Verdict: Not manorexic

Myth 2: Ian Cummings is a vampire

It was late one Sunday night when Rachel Salyer, crime reporter for the UDC was walking to her car. Suddenly, she noticed Cummings walking toward her.

"Nothing seemed that out of the ordinary until he opened his mouth to talk," Salyer said. "His teeth were covered in blood. Then I noticed spots of it all over his clothes. At first I thought he was injured but then he started eyeing my neck. I took off running."

Salyer said that the encounter led her to believe that Cummings is a vampire. A source who spoke on the condition of anonymity insists that he once saw Cummings, who looked

ALL HANDS ON DECK



BARTENDER AT RICK'S/UDC

From left: Chris Hong, Jonathan Shorman, Ian Cummings, Adam Strunk and Laura Nightengale gather at Rick's Bar to discuss Cummings' return from small-hands therapy.

ROUGH EXTERIOR, DELICATE FINGERS

A true-life story of overcoming adversity

LARRY FITZER

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From small hands come big dreams for Kansan editor-in-chief Ian Cummings.

"I think we can make this the best college newspaper in the tri-county area," said Cummings, huffing on a Marlboro that looks like a Cuban in the editor's child-like fingers.

Cummings fumes about past failures and dreams for the upcoming semester. Some such journalism awards are mentioned repeatedly.

Cummings has come a long way in the past few years, facing his life's main disadvantage head on.

"Yah I got small hands, but so what," he said. "Barry Switzer has no sense of smell. Has that ever stopped him?"

His hands used to be a physical and mental slight,

defining the man in his teens and 20s.

When one of his sisters needed a delicate sewing fix, they came to him. When a local farm needed "nimble fingers" for Goji berry picking, Cummings was heavily recruited.

"They had to find me some child mittens as gloves," Cummings said.

And for the past decade, Cummings has worked as an apprentice to Johnson County's most-famous wood worker, Terry "The Wood" Sims.

"That man. Those delicate hands. That manual dexterity," Sims recalls. "Never seen anything like it. I always figured it'd help him more with the ladies."

Alas, it has not. Cummings' well-documented struggles with the opposite sex were the inspiration for journalist Shaun Hittle's best-selling novella, "30 and

Dirty."

"Most of that stuff was told in confidence," insists Cummings when Hittle, who declined an interview request, is mentioned.

"I thought this was about me. Why do you ladies keep bringing that jerk up?" said Cummings, the trademark fiery temper flaring. "He's all square jaw and no heart."

It's at times like these when onlookers can get a full, unobstructed view of the hands, flailing about, in all their glory.

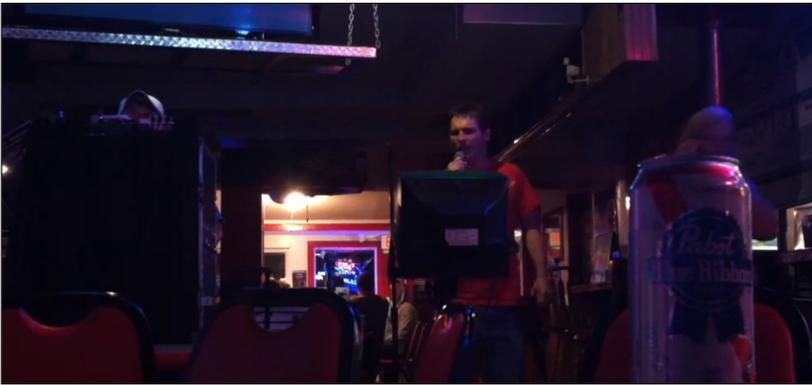
Cummings said he's learned ways to hide his "disability," as he calls it. Hands in pockets; fist bumps with editors instead of handshakes.

But there are those very rare times, when a special lady reaches across the table, yearning for Cummings handheld warmth.

SEE HANDS | 4

SEE MYTHS | 4

TROUBLE IN PARADISE



SHAUN HITTLE/UDC

Ian Cummings, famous karaoke singer, performs his greatest hit "Maggie Mae" at a concert at Kobi's restaurant in Bonner Springs, Kan.

Famed karaoke singer recently hospitalized

LUKE RANKER

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Hordes of adoring karaoke fans swarmed Lawrence Memorial Hospital last night.

Ron McDonald, a Lawrence Memorial Hospital nurse, said fans of the local karaoke celebrity, Ian Cummings, flocked to the hospital after learning he had been in intensive care there since Wednesday evening.

McDonald said 10 to 15 women ran down the hall into Cummings' room carrying balloons and an espresso maker. He said the fans were mostly middle-aged and elderly women.

"I've never seen anything like it," McDonald said. "When I found out who the patient is, I still didn't understand."

He said the women were members of a Cummings fan club. After knocking over several chairs, doctors escorted most of the group to the psychiatric ward.

Cummings became famous for his karaoke covers

of Rod Stewart songs a few months ago. After a bystander posted the footage on YouTube, Cummings became an Internet sensation. Since then, a small cult following has developed around him.

Karen Paul, a member of the group, said they never meant to cause any problems for the hospital.

"We just wanted to make sure our darling Ian was OK," she said. "If he couldn't sing his wonder rendition of Maggie May, I don't know what I would do."

Doctors are not releasing information about the singer's condition yet, but McDonald said Cummings was being treated for symptoms normally caused by a rare form of mold.

Wendy Thomas, Douglas County health inspector, said she was concerned about the possibility of others being infected with Cummings' symptoms. After a short investigation, she said she believed Cummings, a frequent coffee drinker, had been ingesting

the mold with his coffee for weeks.

"It looked like his coffee pot had never been cleaned," she said.

Friend and confidant Shaun Hittle checked Cummings into the hospital after noticing bizarre behavior. Hittle said he arrived at Cummings' house to find him lying on the floor.

"He was wearing jorts and mumbling in Spanish," Hittle said. "I knew right away something was wrong when he said he wanted to listen to the Counting Crows."

Once at the hospital, Hittle said Cummings tried to check himself as "Joe Tinker, Baseball Legend."

After the mob scene, hospital authorities placed security at Cummings' room. Members of the press were not allowed into the room for interviews, but Cummings could be heard arguing with nurses about the merits of cleaning his coffee pot.

"I don't need no damn soap," Cummings said.

TONY'S FROM I 1

He said items on the menu are inspired by all regions of Italy, from Sicilian appetizers from southern Italy to Venetian desserts like Tiramisu from northeastern Italy.

"You think my place is racist? Well, tough," he said. "I'm just trying to make food that people will eat. You think you can go down to freakin' Papa Keno's and get a slice of pizza this good? No."

Cummings said the servers act as characters to welcome diners into the atmosphere of the restaurant.

"It's just a way to get people to loosen up, have a glass of wine, you know?" he said. "I want people to have a good time. You can't accept a little humor? Well, sorry."

And he said the service hasn't hurt the establishment. In fact, it's helped to

bring in more customers. He said the restaurant went from making \$2,000 in sales per day to \$3,700 per day in the span of the week following initial complaints to the media.

Lawrence city manager David Corliss said had he known that Cummings planned on opening such an "offensive" establishment, he wouldn't have granted the permit to open the place.

"I mean, I know I'm not supposed to do that, but hey, we're the city, we can find a way to deny a permit," he said. "I'm not even Italian and I think it steps over the line."

Cummings said he expects his restaurant to stay open for a long time.

"We're making classic Italian food at low prices for people, and it tastes freaking great," he said. "What's not to love?"

HANDS FROM I 3

nancy.

The "Bale comparison" fuels an entire chapter in Hittle's novella, and has been widely discussed on National Public Radio.

So he knows he'll be asked about it in interviews and is ready with a canned and well-rehearsed answer.

"People throw stones at things that shine," he said.

Play on, player.

"I've been told I look like Christian Bale," Cummings insists, no irony in his voice.

The chiseled facial features and serial-killer intensity are there. But it'd be more apt to say Cummings looks like the child of Christian Bale's mother before smoking and excessive drug use were frowned upon during preg-

MYTHS FROM I 3

He has been spotted in direct sunlight, but was described by witnesses as "looking pissed."

Verdict:
Human

Myth 3: He punched a kitten.

Verdict:
That happened.

eerily pale and even more sallow than usual, walk into an alley downtown and then disappear. But something was still there—a bat.

"I wholeheartedly believe that he transformed into a bat and then flew away," the man said.

Although Cummings notoriously avoids sunlight, preferring to go out at night, he shows no aversion to garlic or fear of wooden stakes.