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## Get to Know a Film Fest Volunteer: Ryan Day

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April 5, 2009



Ryan Day has been volunteering at the Wisconsin Film Festival since its inception 10 years ago. - Katjusa Cisar/The Capital Times

Ryan Day hasn't skipped a year since he started volunteering at the Wisconsin Film Festival 10 years ago while a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Even after he graduated with a degree in art in 2003 and moved back to his native West Allis, he's come back to Madison year after year to volunteer. He has saved all his badges, and collects the festival shirts and buttons.

While an undergrad, Day volunteered on the film committee in the Wisconsin Union Directorate, the student-run group that books entertainment and cultural happenings on campus. He originated the midnight movie showings at Union South (now held at the Memorial Union).

He was hanging out with some other volunteers on a couch in the lobby of the Orpheum Theatre on Saturday night during a three-hour screening of "Ghajini." He chatted with 77 Square about the patrons, finding love and not seeing movies.

**Day job?** I'm a screen printer for pipe markers. I work for one of the world's leading pipe marker companies.

**Why do you volunteer?** All the people. You get to strike up some interesting conversations. It's just fun. Who wouldn't want to be sitting on State Street people watching?

**Who are some memorable people you've met while volunteering?** There are people who make their own merchandise to hand out.

**You mean filmmakers?** No, patrons! I see people make their own T-shirts with Sharpies. Some people write down the movies they're seeing on their shirts and check them off. The patrons are sometimes as interesting as the people in the movies. At "Nerdcore" last year, people who were in the movie were freestyling while they waited in line at the Bartell. Then, during the movie, they were actually swearing at themselves (on-screen).

**What movies will you be seeing this weekend?** I don't get to see anything. I volunteer all the time. Some people call me crazy. I really haven't seen a movie (at the festival) in going on five years. I do like to see movies, but I've learned over the years that it's just better for me to volunteer the whole time.

**What's changed about the festival since you started volunteering 10 years ago?** The amount of volunteers has grown exponentially every year. It started out with 70 volunteers, now it's 200-something. Once people find out we're volunteers, they want to do it. You can't go wrong volunteering. I met my girlfriend through volunteering. (Festival director) Meg (Hamel) met her boyfriend via volunteering. There's bound to be other people who've hooked up through the festival.