Ryan Doll
ISU Student, Ames Councilman

Ethos: Where are you from and how long have you lived in Ames?

Doll: I'm from Cumming Iowa, that town with the main business being those t-shirts you see around campus. I moved to Ames from there 8 years ago in 1997, took 2 years of school, left to go work at the hotel in Gateway Center, spent a year with Starbucks and opened 2 stores in Des Moines. From there I worked in Wisconsin Dells, and came back 2 years ago to finish up school, now I'm graduating this year with my degree in political science.

Ethos: Feel any pressure setting the standard being the first student elected?

Doll: Yeah, I definitely do. There are a lot of people looking at me. None of the other candidates have had the interviews and the attention. A lot of people out there think that this is a joke, that this isn't serious. I have to prove that it is to some.

Ethos: Do you consider yourself to be a liberal or more of a conservative?

Doll: I consider myself more moderate, more liberal in social issues.

Ethos: Why did you decide to run for the Council?

Doll: I think a lot of it came from being involved in student government at ISU (GSB senate). It felt like a lot of the times when we had issues to bring to the city there was no one there to address them, no one there to listen. I talked to people in the community and they seemed to feel the same way - that the city council has been unresponsive. We worked on the special election for two year terms for city council last year and after that failed we were trying to find somebody to put on council, trying to find a student who had been here long enough and was a viable candidate, and someone who wanted to stay in Ames. We searched for quite awhile and couldn't find anybody that we thought would be a good candidate. So then we started looking at ourselves.

Ethos: Who did you vote for in the election?

Doll: Um, myself.

Ethos: How do you feel about the current status of our own Welch Ave?

Doll: It's gone down, even in the last 8 years I've been here. There are things we can do to improve it. Yes, it's always going to be the nightlife scene for campus. It's always going to be the bars. It's always going to be the tattoo parlors. But there's no reason why it can't be our daytime scene also. There's no reason why there can't be cafes, little restaurants, some clothing shops, specialty shops, something like that. I think a corner pharmacy would be great down there. There's lots of room for that type of improvement. I think you can have a daytime and a nighttime culture. I've also heard plans that they want to move the fire station off Welch. I think once that happens, it will open up a lot. I'd like to see it closed off. I think the pedestrian mall is a really good idea for down there.

Ethos: What do the non-collegiate residents of Ames think?

Doll: There used to be a grocery store down there, some clothing shops, things like that to enjoy during the day. Campus United and Welch Avenue have been neglected and I think the people that live in the neighborhoods see that, and that's why they're so upset. They've seen the decline. The members of the community around here have lost quite a bit. An elementary school, grocery stores, they've seen these huge apartment complexes rise up in their backyards. Its part of the cost of living in this area, but at the same time it's tough when you've had 20-30 years invested in your house. I've talked to hundreds of people in the neighborhoods around here, and none of them hate students. They enjoy students. A lot of them are professors, they moved here to be around the students. To be near the campus. It's not that they dislike the students. They tend to not like parties at 2 am that keep their kids up and walking outside and seeing someone urinate in their backyard.

Ethos: How do you feel about the keg ordinance?

Doll: Well, I'm glad it's a county issue and not a city issue. When it first came out last year, I understood the intent. The intent is not to punish students or anyone for having a keg. Its intent was after something happens to somebody, a minor especially, they can track down who bought the keg quicker. It's another way to find out who provided alcohol to a minor. I don't think it's going to have the effect they think it's going to, I think it's another wasted law. I don't even know how many alcohol related laws we've added to the book in the last 20 years, but it's ridiculous, and you haven't seen the increase in arrests or fines, and you haven't seen the numbers of underage drinkers go down. So I don't think it's effective.

Ethos: Do you plan on running for re-election or for a higher position?

Doll: I hope so, I don't know. I've always wanted to run for office, I didn't think that Ames city council would be the first one I ran for. A lot of it is based on timing, what the political climate is, where I'm at. This worked out for me. I knew I wanted to stay in Ames. Everything just seemed to fit. I would like to, but I can't say what things will be like in 4 years.
**Ethos:** Which ensembles are you in charge of?

**Smith:** I direct the Cyclone Marching Band, I direct the Symphonic Band, and I direct the Men's Basketball Band.

**Ethos:** How long have you been at Iowa State?

**Smith:** This is my fourth year.

**Ethos:** Let’s talk about your college life. Where did you attend college?

**Smith:** My undergraduate degree is from the University of Illinois, and my master’s degree is from the University of Michigan.

**Ethos:** Which instruments did you play?

**Smith:** My primary instrument is trumpet.

**Ethos:** How do you feel when the bands perform?

**Smith:** Sometimes there’s a bounce. You always have to be on your guard. You can’t let the music flow and know that the band is going to be doing a good job. Especially with marching band, because I’m not up there on the ladder during halftime or pre-game, except for the Alto Miter. So you just have to trust the marching band that we’ve done the job we can do and it’s at a level that we’re happy with and we can perform it and let it flow. That’s where the synergy… really comes across. The more times we have chills on the back of our neck, the better, no matter what the ensemble.

**Ethos:** When you’re watching a band perform, do you ever get an urge to grab your own instrument and uniform?

**Smith:** (Laughs) No, no. My enjoyment comes from the satisfaction of seeing the product in finished form and being on the side of its generation, everything from show planning to coordination to rehearsing and preparing it for the performance and then seeing the performance.

**Ethos:** In the rare moments when you aren’t directing the ensembles, what do you do?

**Smith:** Well, my wife is a high school band director and she also does our color guard. The life of band directors is very consuming. It’s not a 40-hour work week, we’re constantly involved. Plus, we have two small children. So, our lives pretty much revolve around making sure that they’re fed, clean, and taken care of. Right now in our lives, that’s what’s consuming us. We spent some time outside of our jobs involved in the community. My wife plays the oboe and I’ve worked with the Central Iowa Symphony in the past few years, not as much this year. But we’ve found out with the kids, that’s consumed a lot of our lives. Plus, last spring we moved into our first house, so taking care of things at home is what’s dominating our lives. I do enjoy watching sports. I like movies a lot. And of course, I enjoy spending time with my family.

**Ethos:** As a teacher, what lessons do you hope the students learn?

**Smith:** The most important thing, I think, has to be the quality of the experience that the students have had. That’s a big consideration for me. I was taught that if the students don’t have a positive experience, nothing else really matters because if they don’t have a positive experience, they won’t be back. That’s a pretty quick message. I feel that we’re doing a good job here because our retention year to year is fairly high.

**Ethos:** When the marching band is ready to go on the field, the announcer introduces the band as “The Pride of Iowa State.” Some students wonder what makes the marching band “The Pride of Iowa State.”

**Smith:** I can’t remember specifically how that started. Our announcer has some liberties of how he wants to do it. What I would interpret that as meaning is, we are representatives of Iowa State. I tell the band that we are representatives of the students, of the faculty, of the university, and even in a larger sense, the people of Iowa. When we’re traveling, especially out of state, we represent all those groups. We are comprised of about 300 students from over 70 different majors. You might be hard pressed to find a larger group in the university that has that amount of diversity and background. So, I think, in a larger sense, we represent Iowa State University. We are also the most visible, and I think from that standpoint, that’s what “The Pride of Iowa State” represents. We’re visible, we’re there to perform, we’re there to support, we’re there to entertain and encourage.

**Ethos:** Is there any way you could give us a sneak peek or preview of what there is to expect from the bands in the future?

**Smith:** For marching band, I’ll tell you that I’m looking into a super hero show. I know that in 2007, it’s the 50th anniversary of “West Side Story” and it’s also the 50th anniversary of “The Music Man” which is a very Iowa-related musical.

**Ethos:** If Jason Berryman played the piccolo and wanted to join the marching band, would you let him in?

**Smith:** (laughs) Well, he’d have to audition.