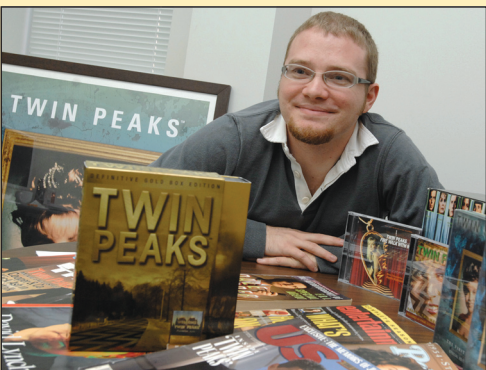


IT grad helps keep 'Twin Peaks' on the map

Something interesting happened on television in 1990: A quirky, creepy murder mystery called *Twin Peaks* arrived, creating a sensation and a cult following. Fans of the short-lived program had never seen anything quite like it and were not ready to let it go when it went off the air after 29 episodes.

The series created by David Lynch (*Blue Velvet*, *Eraserhead*) and Mark Frost (*Hill Street Blues*) caught the attention of University Publications web developer Jared Lyon '01 (information technology) when he was in seventh grade.



Jared Lyon '01

"I grew up in a small town, and I liked the idea that there was more happening in this boring town that I lived in than meets the eye, and that's what *Twin Peaks* is all about," Lyon says. "On the surface, it's just this town where everyone likes coffee and cherry pie, but then there's this whole underbelly, and something evil coming from the woods."

Years later at RIT, Lyon found fellow *Twin Peaks* fans in Computer Science House, a special-interest wing in an RIT residence hall.

"Computer Science House would have something called 'Peakings'—33

hours of *Twin Peaks* straight," Lyon said. "I always took a nap during the lull in the second season."

Lyon joined the house after the first Peaking he attended, when he surprised everyone by providing a missing episode from his own collection.

The Peakings also included performance art. House members took turns as the "Log Lady" – an especially eccentric *Twin Peaks* character whose cryptic recitations led off each episode when the series aired in syndication.

A friend from Computer Science House who took a job in Seattle heard about a *Twin Peaks* festival nearby and invited Lyon to visit in 2001.

Lyon attended the festival in North Bend, Wash. – the shooting location of the fictional town of Twin Peaks – and saw room for improvement. He started volunteering and soon became part of the organizing committee.

Since 2001, Lyon has shared his fascination for the peculiar characters and the odd camera work characteristic of the program with an ardent fan base. Fans from all over the world meet annually for a weekend-long festival filled with bus tours (with Lyon as the tour guide), movie viewing, trivia games and a celebrity dinner. After the dinner, Lyon hosts a celebrity Q-and-A session, one of the festival highlights.

"It's really like a family reunion," Lyon says. "There's this instant connection that people have."

In 2004, Lyon became a co-organizer of the annual festival and, tapping his professional skills, created a corresponding Web site (www.twinpeaksfest.com). The recently released DVD set *Twin Peaks - The Definitive Gold Box Edition* includes a documentary about the festival, *Return to Twin Peaks*, which prominently features Lyon at the 2006 event.

"People say *Twin Peaks* is groundbreaking," Lyon says. "What does groundbreaking mean to us now in 2007? Back then it was completely different. The popular TV shows were *Cheers*, *The Cosby Show*, *Who's the Boss?* There was no *Lost*, *Heroes*, *X-Files*. Of course, there was always the *Twilight Zone*, but *Twin Peaks* was still one of a kind."

Susan Gawlowicz '95