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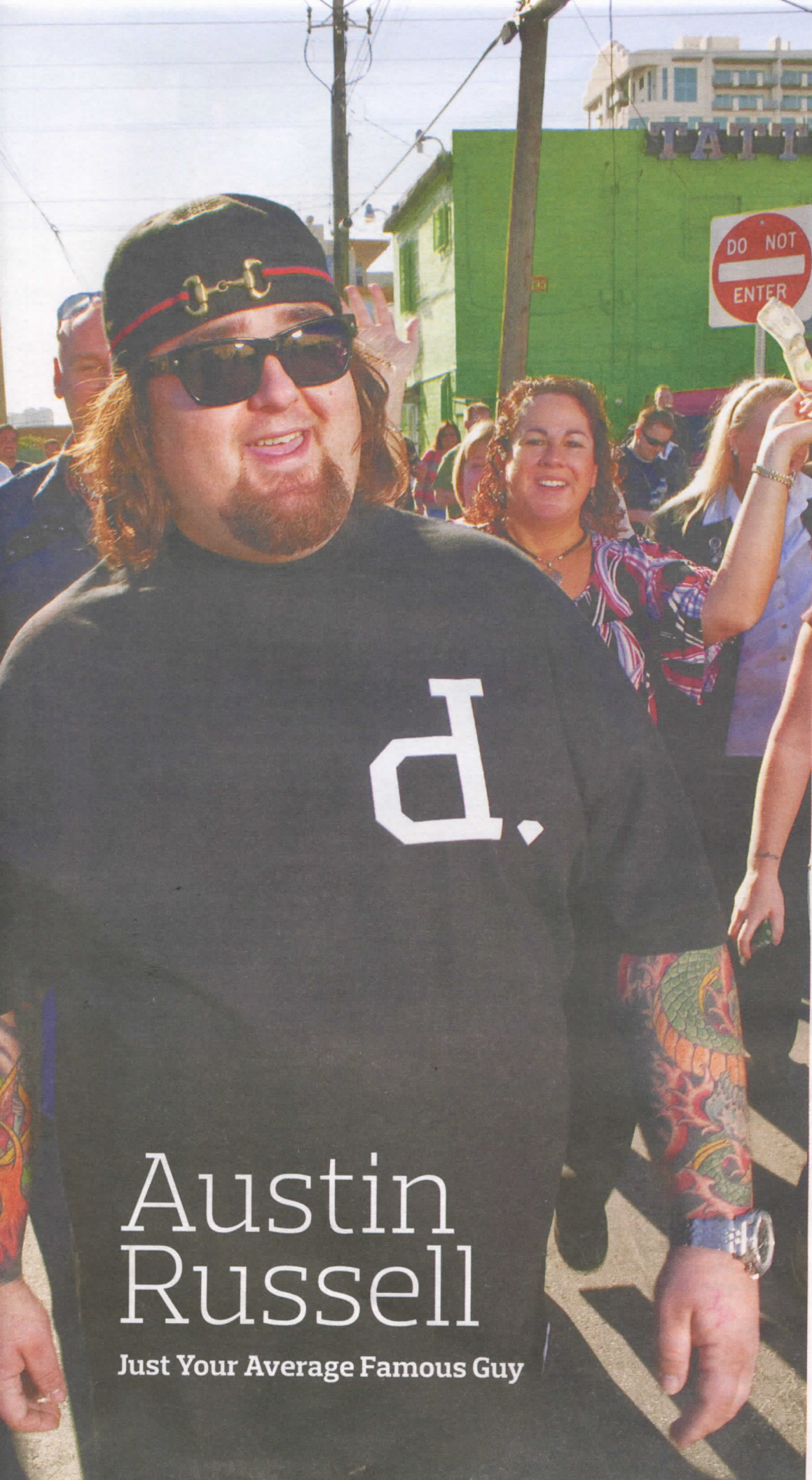
Jan. 27 - Feb. 2, 2011

THIS WEEK IN YO

Intriguing Peop 2



Austin "Chumlee" Russell
reality show star



Austin Russell

Just Your Average Famous Guy

Austin “Chumlee” Russell doesn’t mind if you think he’s the village idiot. In fact, that stereotype has made him famous. The affable Las Vegas native plays himself up to be a lovable doofus on the surprise hit reality TV show, the History Channel’s *Pawn Stars*. And viewers love it.

“I say that everyone can relate to me as their dumb relative or the black sheep of the family,” Chumlee says. “That’s the only thing I can figure out. I don’t know why else people would like me. I’m just a regular guy.”

Or he was a regular guy until the summer of 2009, when his job at the Gold & Silver Pawn Shop at 713 Las Vegas Blvd. South became the stuff of dinner conversation across America. “It went from nothing to I can’t go anywhere without people stopping me,” the 28-year-old says.

When not playing himself on TV (Season 4 is now being filmed), the Pawn Star fills his free time collecting shoes (he owns more than 150 pairs), “hittin’ switches” on his ’86 Buick Regal (which he has outfitted with hydraulics on the front and back) and planning out his future career.

“I’d like to try to work out some type of stand-up comedy,” he says. “Although I don’t think I’m that funny, I do believe I have really good timing.”

He’d like to stay in the entertainment industry, perhaps with a solo spin-off reality show. “Most people say they want to see *For the Love of Chum*, but I don’t think I could do it.” Instead of something pawnshop-related, he’d prefer a comic show about what goes on in his life, something along the lines of MTV’s *Rob & Big* reality show. Or he’d like to star in a children’s program.

Whether it’s his endearing combo of quick wit and slow speech or his intricate knowledge of the things he loves (ask him about sports, video games, punk rock, skateboarding), it eventually becomes apparent that Chumlee isn’t that dumb after all. He has an opinion on that, too: “When it comes to book smarts, when it comes to going to college, when it comes to taking a test, when it comes to knowing something, I’m not the smartest guy. I was raised and I grew up in the streets of Las Vegas, and I probably [have] more street smarts than 90 percent of people you’ll meet—with a little bit of book smarts. It goes a long way in a town like this.”

— Cindi Moon Reed