

## Prince William man jokes his way to NBC TV show host



**Reno Collier, who attended school in Prince William County and later Fishburne Military School in Waynesboro, has risen on the comedic circuit to become the host of NBC reality show "Great American Road Trip," which premieres Tuesday at 8 p.m. (Photo: NBC)**

**A**ndy Collier had a proposition for his son Reno when he graduated from Fishburne Military School in the late 1980s.

Finish college and Reno's dream of becoming a comedian would get a boost from his father. Stop short of a degree and Reno could forget about any financial assistance from Dad.

Four years later, Reno had that degree from Elon College and soon thereafter, had an expense-paid trip to comedy school in Atlanta.

"When he told me he was going to be a comic, he was afraid I would tell him to forget it," said Andy, a Woodbridge resident. "He was convinced [I was serious] when I enrolled him in the [comedy] school."

Nearly two decades later, Reno, 38, had made it big time. For the last five years, he has been opening up for the wildly popular Larry The Cable Guy. He's also appeared on NBC's "Late Friday," HBO's "Politically Incorrect with Bill Maher," "The Martin Short Show," VH-1's "The List" and Comedy Central's "Premium Blend."

And starting July 7, Reno will be hosting a new show on NBC called "The Great American Road Trip." The show will feature seven families traveling on Route 66 together in their own RV's. For eight weeks, they will compete in challenges that take place at landmarks across the country.

Reno's roots are in Prince William County. He attended Vaughan Elementary School and Rippon Middle School in the 1980s before eventually attending Fishburne, located in Waynesboro.

Andy said he is not surprised by his son's fame. As is usually the case with professional comedians, Reno was a class clown both in school and at home.

"Sitting around the dinner table, our stomachs would hurt," Andy said. "Not from eating, but from laughing so hard."

While at Fishburne, Reno's humor and sarcasm got the best of him despite being a good student and capable leader, said Andy. After taking his company to first place in military preparedness, Reno was yelled at for not being tough enough on his company.

So Reno turned, stood at attention and told the his superior, "Sorry, sir. I was too concerned with results."

While that bit of tongue-in-cheek humor sometimes got him into trouble in school, now it's making him a lot of money.

"Some dude named Larry the Cable Guy will be there too," Reno said about his July 4th appearance at Cornhusker Stadium in Lincoln, Neb. on his Web site. "For some reason they are making me open. I think he is nervous or something and needs to watch somebody else do it before he goes up." ■

Collier's career began at the Punchline Comedy Club in Atlanta where he tended bar to supplement his day job as a Phys Ed teacher. In 2004 he joined Larry the Cable Guy on the hugely successful "2004 Tour of America." He has also performed with the legendary Jeff Foxworthy and Bill Engvall. In January 2007, he re-joined Larry the Cable Guy for his successful arena tour currently spanning the United States and Canada.

**WANT TO WATCH?** > The show airs each Tuesday at 8 p.m. on NBC, beginning July 7.

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