

# Road Trip Nation Comes to DU

Erin Conroy  
Clarion features editor

It started out as a cross-country road trip in a lime green RV.

Three years later, it is the initiative of three college students that has expanded Road Trip Nation to include a public television series, a book, an interactive Web site and a grass-roots student movement on 100 college campuses.

The goal is to encourage students to look at nontraditional routes and explore their options by actively seeking America's top leaders, artists and other creative individuals.

Tomorrow RTN will be visiting the DU campus in their infamous lime green RV, of which there are now three that are touring the United States.

Students will have the opportunity to apply to be selected to go on the actual road trip that will be broadcasted on PBS in a 12-part documentary series. The application deadline is April 1.

"This is a great opportunity for students to get out there and find people of different walks of life," said Pat O'Keefe, the DU career counselor who has organized RTN's involvement with the university. "It's fantastic. I would love to take a road trip like this."

Three groups of three people will be chosen from various universities. There will be a short interview process for students, which will include a six-minute video and several essay questions.

As recent college grads, Nathan Gebhard, Brian McAllister and Mike Marriner decided that they were not sure what they wanted to do with their lives.

With degrees in business administration, biology, and communications, they decided they did not want to accept the conformity of the jobs that they were

in an eight-part series, "Destination Unknown."

A 12-part PBS series will be aired this summer, featuring three simultaneous road trips that involve student teams selected from the "Behind the Wheel" program.

The interviews, conducted in the summer of 2004, include the co-founder of the

Blue Man Group, Hugh Hefner, and the park superintendent of Mount Rushmore.

Students are encouraged to watch the first two series, which the DU Career Center currently has on DVD. These will also be aired tomorrow at 7 p.m.

in the Davis Auditorium in Sturm Hall while RTN conducts student interviews.

RTN will be driving around campus in the green RV during the day to promote the event. They are expected to park in front of the Shwayder Art Building at 11 a.m. to talk to students and catch attention, according to O'Keefe.

The event is sponsored by the Career Center, DUPB and the Department of Mass Communications and Journalism Studies. There will be free pizza and soda.

RTN has a three-year sponsorship deal with State Farm Insurance to fund the summer road trips and produce the television series.

RTN is also releasing its third book in May, *Finding the Open Road: A Guide to Self-Construction Rather than Mass Production* (Ten Speed Press).



Photo courtesy of Road Trip Nation

A lime green RV serves as the symbol of Road Trip Nation, an initiative to encourage students to look at nontraditional routes and explore their options.

expected to obtain. Instead, they wanted to focus on individuality and self-construction.

They bought a rundown 1985 RV, painted it a bright green and began to conduct over 80 informational interviews across the country.

These interviews included the chairman of Starbucks, a lobsterman from Maine, the director of Saturday Night Live, the first female Supreme Court Justice, the stylist for Madonna, the scientist who decoded the human genome and the CEO of National Geographic.

In order to pass this experience on to other college students, RTN partnered with college career centers across the country to run "Behind the Wheel."

In the summer of 2003 a team of students conducted interviews that were aired

## What Women Want

### Billy Collins recites his poetry at the Newman Center

Brenda Goates  
Clarion reporter

Billy Collins knows what women want.

Women and men filled the Gates Auditorium to listen to him recite his poems. "What women want," he surmised, "are similes."

"You are the bread and the knife, The crystal goblet and the wine ..."

Collins explains that the tradition of comparing women to sentimental objects has worked for men for centuries.

However, he does not always follow his own advice.

He has a tendency to juxtapose traditional sentiment with the absurd as in, "...It is possible that you are the fish under the bridge, Maybe even the pigeon on the general's head."

His mind-expanding metaphors also range from the absurd to the deeply moving, as in his poem, "The Lanyard."

Collins stands behind a podium in a pool of soft light on the stage. His voice is soft.

He is a handsome, balding English professor in his 50s with a polite and gracious manner.

Women hang on every word he says, and laugh almost too hard at the slightest attempt at humor.

He seems to be the sort of fellow you could find sitting in an overstuffed armchair in his library- reading a book, smoking a pipe, and wearing a cardigan jacket.