

arts/entertainment

# 'WKRP' star says show tries to relate to people

By Bob Crisler and Pat Higgins

What's it like working with Loni Anderson? Tim Reid, alias Venus Flytrap of "WKRP in Cincinnati," finds pleasure in going to work.

"She never looks bad, which is beginning to bug all of the other women on the set," he said.

Reid was in town Sunday to promote the first anniversary of the Centrum Plaza.

"WKRP" is produced by people with a genuine interest in quality, according to Reid.

"We're not progressing beyond sitcom, but we're trying to put sitcom in a perspective that relates to people."

One such episode centered around the Cincinnati Who concert tragedy of last year.

"It happened in Cincinnati, it involved a radio station in Cincinnati, so we couldn't just go through life without mentioning it, but of course the Networks didn't like it," Reid said.

"WKRP" has had its difficulties in dealing with the corporate power structure and its stubborn views on censorship. According to Reid, "They are like the government or any other large political entity. They are run by people who are not aware of what the masses are thinking."

Quality programming

"If they begin to focus on what you and I think, millions of other people would say 'What the heck is going on.' We're part of Mary Tyler Moore Productions and as far as production companies go, they're the new kid on the block," he said. "They seem to strive for more quality in programming. Most production companies consider quality an afterthought, and it shows when the show comes on the tube."

"WKRP" aims at a higher intellectual vein in its viewers than many other shows in its prime time bracket, and Reid is discriminating viewer in his own right.

"I'm not really a viewer of television, surprisingly," Reid said. "It's a shame for someone works in TV to say that, but I really only watch about two hours of

prime time a week—"Barney Miller" and occasionally "Taxi"—other than our show. I'm really not all that torn up about the rest."

Reid began his career as a stand-up comic, gradually working up through the ranks of the network bit player to his present role in "WKRP."

"I've done so many pilots I ought to have a license to fly," he said.

Reid's comedy background has carried through well to Venus Flytrap, who "is sometimes very close to who I am, and sometimes I don't even know who he is," Reid said.

Written some episodes

Reid is currently branching out to a different vocation as a screenwriter.

"I've written a couple episodes (of "WKRP") and I want to do some more. I'm really interested in movies and I'm working on several projects now, but I don't have anything definite lined up yet."

Reid made his commitment to visit Lincoln before the recent actors' strike was settled. Reid expressed regret over the settlement of the strike.

"I don't think that we won the strike. The networks were content with just showing reruns, but contracts come up again in three years and we'll be ready to negotiate then."

"WKRP" is able to promote progressive music on television, which has become quite rare with the syndicated nature of the networks. Reid listens to jazz, rhythm and blues and rock music.

"I'm not really into New Wave, and though I don't know if it's legal to say this, I do a lot of taping."

"WKRP's" forte is the character development and according to Reid, "Howard Hessman is a very hip guy who can relate to the culture very well, probably better than I do. I think our character development has been very interesting over the episodes."

Reid had the dubious honor of being named an admiral in the fictitious Nebraska Navy during his brief stay, to which he commented, "Damn the torpedos, full speed ahead."

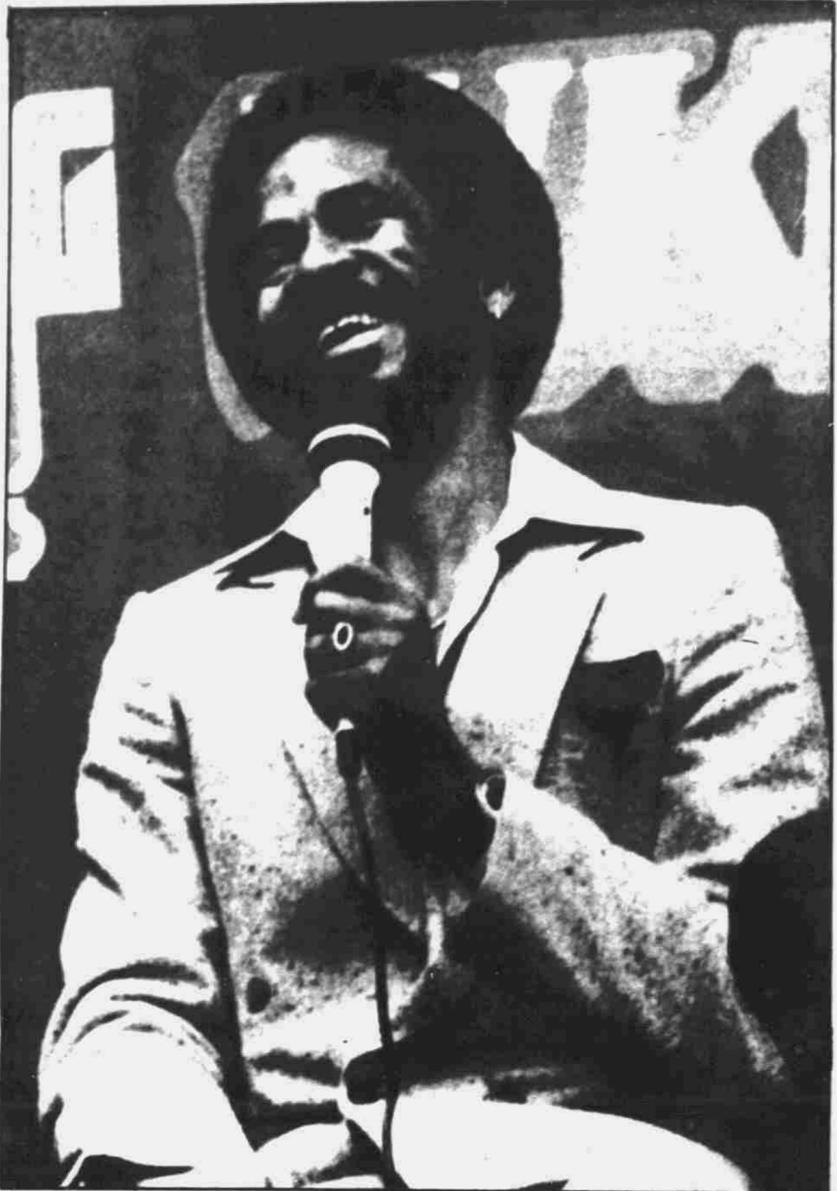


Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

Tim Reid, who portrays Venus Flytrap on the series, "WKRP in Cincinnati."

# Bargaining 'meter-ee' promises tacos and more

By T. Marni Vos

Lovely Rita Meter Maid

Nothing can come between us

When it was dark I towed your heart away

Standing by a parking meter

When I caught a glimpse of Rita

—The Beatles

Parking meter . . . an ugly word—like wisdom teeth, hernia, broke, time expired.

The parking meter was the brain child of Carl Magee . . . an ugly name—like Hitler, Judas, Matahari, Tim.

Parking meters gross \$252 million a year, needless to say a good \$12.50 of that is mine. I could have my own

"Are you familiar with 'Charlette's Web?' Hey, no, really, it's a beautiful name. Could I just call you Rita?"

"Rita, you look like my favorite sister and she would never give me a ticket. Do you really like this job? Because I'm a manager at Taco Inn and I think we could find a place for you—building tacos, taking orders, cooking beans. Why, in 20 years you'll have retirement, a bronze burrito and a two week paid vacation to Mexico—think about it.

"No, seriously, Rita . . . Wilber, I've been kidding around with you for about 20 minutes, I know I parked

at the handicapped meter, but the fact of the matter is I've had a crushed *cherchez la femme* for years. Since 1969, it was a tragic car accident. . . you're not buying this are you? And I don't blame you—the real fact of the matter is I have a handicapped aunt, she never gets out of the house. She said I could use this space. Not really, that's a lie. She has a remote control wheel chair—I'm saving her this space. She should have been here 20 minutes ago, I hope everything's all right, this 5 p.m. traffic is something else.

Meter-ee vs. meter-er

"Listen just between meter-ee and meter-er, are those guns really loaded? Do you know Bo Jangles?—Go ahead give me a ticket. . . if it makes you feel more like a meter-maid, go ahead. Without cars, where would you guys be? Out on the streets, that's where. . . never mind.

"Would you guys really arrest me for not paying a parking ticket?"

"The state of Nebraska vs. T. Marni Vos.

"The whole state? Get serious, I have friends out there. As a matter of fact, I think someone's using my name."

"Ms. Vos asked the officer if she loved her family."  
"It was a joke. It was their poodle, FiFi, I was wondering about."

Lovely Peter, tan meter man  
something has come between us  
When it was dark you towed my car away  
Outside the fence at Triple A  
I looked at my car in dismay,  
A love decayed. . .  
Peter and I would never play.

—T. Marni Vos

humor

newspaper, new socks, two efficiencies, a taco place of my own, buy friends, influence . . . meter maids . . . professors, go to "Fantasy Island," on \$252 million.

"Excuse me, ma'am? Before you write out that ticket, do you know who's car that is?"

Nothing.

"I didn't think so. Does the name T. Marni Vos mean anything to you? . . . How 'bout Theresa Marni Vos? . . . How about Vos? . . . some people call me honey. . . please don't give me a ticket. My mother's a drug addict, my father left before I was born, I have 16 brothers and sisters at home (we were Catholic). My only source of income is a paper route. I'll be arrested, sentenced, six months in the Big House. . . marked for life. . . not a lot of fun.

"Charlette's Web?"

"Wait. Wait just a minute, what do they call you? Wilber? You're kidding, seriously?"

