

'Uncle Joey' savors his 'roots'

COMEDY CLUBS



Dave Coulier loves playing "Full House" funnyman Uncle Joey Gladstone, but performing stand up comedy keeps him fresh and is as much fun as ever for him.

By Susan Steinmueller
staff writer

Dave Coulier is looking forward to doing his stand-up comedy act at the Mainstreet Comedy Showcase in Ann Arbor — not that he doesn't like his regular job as a co-star of ABC's top-rated "Full House" on Friday evenings.

In fact, he loves playing "Full House" funnyman Uncle Joey Gladstone, one of three men exploring the joys of "motherhood" as they bring up three young girls.

But performing stand-up comedy keeps him fresh. Coulier, whose roots are in stand-up comedy, says doing it is as much fun as ever for him.

"It's a lot of fun. I've been a comic for 12 years, and so I really enjoy it. That's the bottom line. I continue to enjoy it."

THE ENGAGEMENT also brings Coulier home for Thanksgiving. He is a St. Clair Shores native. The middle child of five, Coulier visits his family and girlfriend in Michigan at least once a month.

"Needless to say, I have a lot of bonus mileage," Coulier talked last week in a morning telephone interview from his North Hollywood home. "Full House" scripts had been delivered to his house at 4:30 a.m. that morning. At 8 a.m. he was busy going over them. The scripts are changed daily before the final taping on Thursday and Friday, he said.

HIS HOUSE, complete with hot tub, pool and leather furniture, reflects the success that Coulier, 30, enjoys. But he has paid dues. Coulier may have discovered his talent for comedy at Detroit's Notre Dame High School. There he gained a comic reputation from impromptu shows in the school cafeteria — he would sometimes find himself sitting around telling jokes for up to 30 classmates, he said. He also once put on a show in a local auditorium for 900 people.

When it came time to graduate, he decided not to go to college but to try and make a living using his comic talents.

HE WENT to Detroit rock station WABX-FM for six months of doing commercial voice-overs and writing advertising copy. Coulier then started doing gigs at local comedy clubs and became a regular at Comedy Castle and a now-defunct club called the Delta Lady.

"I kicked around Detroit. Anywhere there was a stage, I used to jump up."

In addition, he held a day time job at a drafting company to earn money to go to Los Angeles.

"My thinking was, if I'm going to starve, I'm going to starve where it's warm."

WHEN COULIER moved to LA in 1979, he started working as a door man and then a regular at the Comedy Store. Working the Comedy Store regularly was a "huge thing," he said, for a comedian who was the new kid on the block. Talents to cross the stage at the Comedy Store include Robin Williams and Richard Pryor.

"That was one of the minutes that really stuck out in my mind."

Coulier wanted to appear on a prime time television show. To do so he went to acting school for four years.

He kept his stand-up comedy honed while performing regularly on the Tonight Show and on such specials as HBO's Detroit Comedy Jam, Showtime's Laugh-A-Thon and the Arts and Entertainment network's Evening at the Improv.

IN ADDITION, Coulier did extensive voice work — something he still does. His is the voice behind several successful animated television series, and he incorporates his character voices into his stand-up comedy routine.

That all led to his "making it" on the "Full House" series — but it wasn't overnight success.

"People say 'oh, well, you made it in a relatively short time. I say, 12 years isn't that short. There were a lot of failures along the way."

Here are some listings of comedy clubs in our area. To let us know who is appearing at your club, send the information to: Comedy Listings, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

● **BEA'S COMEDY KITCHEN**
Skeeter Murray will perform along with Tommy Chua, Marv Walsh and Downtown Tony Brown Friday and Saturday, Nov. 24-25, at Bea's Comedy Kitchen, 541 Larned, Detroit. Show times are 9 and 11:15 p.m. For information, call 961-2581.

● **MAINSTREET**
Dave Coulier will perform Tuesday-Wednesday, Nov. 21-22, and J.J. Wall will perform Friday-Saturday, Nov. 24-25, at Mainstreet Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-9080.

● **JOEY'S LIVONIA**
Mark Sweetman will perform Wednesday and Friday-Saturday, Nov. 22, 24-25, at Joey's Comedy Club, 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia. Show times are 9 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday. For reservations, call 261-0555.

● **JOEY'S ALLEN PARK**
Jeff Hobson will perform Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 22, 24-25, at Joey's Comedy Club and Sport Emporium, 15246 Southfield and Allen roads, Allen Park. For information, call 382-7041.

● **HOLLY HOTEL**
Jef Brannan will perform along with Skeeter Murray and Chris Jake-way on Friday-Saturday, Nov. 24-25, at Holly Hotel, 110 Battle Alley, Hol-

ly. Show times are 8:30 p.m. with additional 10:30 p.m. shows Friday and Saturday. For information, call 634-1891.

● **LOONEY BIN**
Peter Berman will perform with Ruben Ruben and Kenny Mitchell Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22, 24 and 25, at the Wolverine Lounge and Looney Bin Comedy Club, 1655 Glengray, Walled Lake. Show times are 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 8 and 10:15 p.m. Saturday. For information, call 669-9374.

● **MISS KITTY'S**
Tony Hayes and Gavia Jeromestein will perform Friday-Saturday, Nov. 24-25, at Miss Kitty's Comedy Club, Long Branch Restaurant, 595 N. Lapeer Road, Oxford. Show times are 8 p.m. Thursday; 8 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 628-6500.

● **LOONEY BIN TOO**
Stunt Johnson Theatre will perform Friday-Saturday, Nov. 24-25, at the Looney Bin Too at the Hoagy, 1-94 and Haggerty, Belleville. For reservations, call 699-1829.

● **ANDREW "DICE" CLAY**
Andrew "Dice" Clay will appear 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 26, at the Palace of Auburn Hills, One Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. Tickets are \$20. The show is for mature audiences only. For information, call 377-8800.

● **RICHARD LEWIS**
Richard Lewis will perform 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2, at Royal Oak Music Theatre. Tickets are \$18.50. For information, call 546-7610.

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