

## BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

### Cline Hijacks the Refrigerators of Z102.9's Schulte & Swann

BY ROB CLINE

Whenever I listen to Z102.9, one of the most popular radio stations in the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City market, one thing is immediately clear: I'm not the target demographic. For one thing, I'm more male than the target. For another, I increasingly must admit that I'm older than much of the Z audience. The "contemporary hits radio" format—CHR to industry insiders—isn't my format anymore. Indeed, the music that would have fit the format when I was growing up is mere moments away from acquiring the "oldies" label.

But I listen to Schulte and Swann, the popular Z morning team, regularly. And I know I'm not the lone demographic outlier who does so. Why? Because in their 12 years as on-air partners, Scott Schulte and Ric Swann have developed a friendship that informs their banter. And that banter is unusually smart and carries with it a clear commitment to the community.

So it goes without saying that I needed to find out what was in their respective refrigerators. In "Behind Closed Doors," CHR means "Cline hijacks refrigerators."

In the Schulte household, there are five people—Scott, his wife Marisel Del Valle and their three boys, Alex, David, and Anthony—and a dog named Chuck to feed. But Scott still opens his refrigerator for another set of hungry mouths.

"Half the produce I buy gets thrown into the woods for the deer."

Why such an ignominious fate for carrots, celery and the like?

"We buy stuff because it makes us feel good that we bought it. 'By god, I'm going to buy those! We're going to eat those!'"

And produce isn't the only category of past-it-prime food in the Schulte fridge. From the doors to the shelves there were a few items whose day had come and gone. Three cartons of expired Egg Beaters, for example. "They're not even good!" announced Scott, which goes a significant distance toward explaining why the egg substitute had perished on the shelves.

Most of the stuff in the Schulte fridge, however, looked plenty good, including the jars of corn cob jelly and rhubarb berry jam a friend made, as well as Marisel's homemade mango salsa.

Because Marisel hails from Puerto Rico, the Schulte family enjoys a variety of foods and spices from the island. Scott particularly praised the Alto Grande coffee, which boasts on its can: "The Coffee of Popes and Kings."

"When you see the white smoke coming out of the coffee-maker, you know its time for coffee," Scott joked. "A new cup has been elected."

Hot sauce occupies a significant amount of space in the shiny silver fridge. Alex, a sophomore in high school, has a taste for the spicy stuff, including a brand called Bull Snort, the label of which explains that it is, "Hotter than a buckin' mare in heat."

That, I suspect, means it's pretty darn hot.

Cold ones are a major presence in the black refrigerator of Ric Swann, as is Rockstar Juiced Energy Drink—"It makes a good mixer"—and Coca-Cola. It's a beverage-heavy icebox.

Ric, a bachelor who readily acknowledges that he doesn't really cook and that "comfort foods are my staples," has settled into something of a routine with the takeout food that often shares space with the libations.

"I order out, and stick the leftovers in there. I keep them cool until trash day."

Takeout was in short supply on the evening of my visit, however, because Ric began the New Year on the Atkins diet. Salad, carrots, eggs, bacon, and single serving Jell-o cups were in the mix, as was a jar of cubed Amana Ham.

A container of The Laughing Cow Original Creamy Swiss was also on display. I'd never heard of the brand, but according to the web site—[www.TheLaughingCow.com](http://www.TheLaughingCow.com)—the Bel Brands ("Cheese with a difference") product, has been a "French favorite since 1921." The Laughing Cow itself sports a pair of stylish, if a bit large for my taste, earrings...or something.

In the freezer, a single frozen pizza paid homage to the pre-Atkins routine. Notably, the appliance's Energy Star notice was still taped to the back of the freezer. That yellow piece of paper and the empty crispers in the bottom of the refrigerator made it clear that Ric's relationship to his fridge isn't terribly intimate.

"I don't know what the crispers are for," he said. "It's all a refrigerator, isn't it?"



*DJ Ric Swann is not always sure what he'll find in his fridge.*

Photo by Chris Lynxweiler