

## FAMILY FAIR

## LET'S TALK

### High school boys confront problems

By Anne Wheeler

Two teenage boys face very different dramas in afternoon specials presented on CBS and ABC this week.

On Tuesday, Jan. 8, Christopher Rydell stars as a handsome, seemingly perfect valedictorian who is tormented after he and two friends leave the scene of a hit-and-run accident. His father complicates matters when he encourages the boys to remain mum about the incident. In the CBS *Schoolbreak Special*, "Lies of the Heart," the young man's guilt increases when he becomes involved with the daughter of the hit-and-run victim.

Charles Frank (*All My Children*, *The Right Stuff*) stars as the teen's misguided father. Brooke Theiss (*Just the Ten of Us*), Tricia O'Neil and Jennifer Gatti also star.

Then on Thursday, Jan. 10, the ABC *AfterSchool Special* depicts a family coping with mental illness. Wil Wheaton stars in "My Dad Can't Be Crazy (Can He?)" as a high school sophomore who fears his father's increasingly bizarre behavior is a sign of serious mental illness.

Don Murray plays the boy's father, whose erratic behavior has cost him many jobs and forced the family to move from city to city. Loretta Swit plays the boy's mother, who finds that the bureaucracy in seeking assistance for her husband is just as daunting as trying to convince him he needs help.



Mariette Hartley is determined to make it to the top of *WIOU*, broadcasting Wednesdays on CBS.

### Dirk Benedict discovered acting on a college buddy's dare

By Polly Vonetes

**Q: What can you tell me about an actor named Dirk Benedict? How old is he? I am a real big fan. Please answer, don't let me down!** —Jo Burkhardt, Marble Falls, Texas

**A:** Dirk Benedict was born in White Sulphur Springs, Mont., on March 1, 1944. There was nothing in his hometown to turn a young man's fancy toward Hollywood or Broadway. Instead, his time was filled with hunting, fishing, skiing and high school athletics. He discovered acting when, on a dare from a fellow Whitman College freshman, he tried out for the lead in the school's production of *Show Boat*. After graduating with a liberal arts degree, he enrolled at the John Fernald Academy of Dramatic Arts in Rochester, Mich., for a two-year training program. He later moved to New York where he appeared in several plays on Broadway and with a touring company. His first movie was *Georgia, Georgia*, filmed in Sweden. He starred in *SSSSSSSS* and *In With Twigg*. He made his television debut as a guest lead on *Hawai Five-O*. Benedict was quickly acknowledged by the television industry as one of its most promising newcomers. His television series include *Battlestar Galactica*, *Chopper One* and *The A-Team*. He makes his home in the San Fernando Valley area, of Los Angeles. A licensed pilot, he spends his leisure time flying.

**Q: How do you find out about how to join a fan club? The one I'm interested in is Larry Hagman's of *Dallas*.** —Ginger Jensen, Miltonvale, Kan.

**A:** You can learn all about the various fan clubs by writing to National Association of Fan Clubs, 2730 Baltimore Ave., Pueblo, CO 81003. The association has more than 1,500 listings of your favorite stars.

**Q: I have tried everywhere to locate some information on an actor named Anthony Denison who starred as Ray Luca on *Crime Story*. I would like to know how old he is, what state he lives in, and what other acting jobs (movies) I could see him in. Also, what has happened to him since *Crime Story*? Please print this, I have tried on my own — libraries, video stores, etc.** —John Scheets, Salem, Ohio

**A:** Anthony Denison was born in the Bronx, N.Y., Sept. 20, 1953. He is a college graduate, having supported himself through college by running his



Dirk Benedict

own construction company. Upon graduation, he set out to define his role in life. He worked as a chauffeur, theater manager, newspaper editor and promoter of chess and backgammon tournaments. He became involved in performing with the Community Experimental Repertory Theatre, a professional touring company in New York State, while selling life insurance for a living. After 10 years of working regional theaters and daytime television, his rise to stardom happened almost overnight. Forty-eight hours after his first audition, he was on a flight bound for L.A. and his role in *Crime Story*. His TV credits include featured roles in the daytime dramas *The Edge of Night*, *One Life to Live*, *Ryan's Hope* and *As the World Turns*. He continues appearing in live theater and made-for-television movies. His new dramatic series, *Indict*, over will be previewed this Monday on ABC. The series will premiere on Saturdays, Jan. 12. He and his wife, actress Jennifer Evans, make their home in New York City.

**Q: Where can I obtain a listing of all the movies in which Ronald Reagan has appeared?** —Mary Zahn, Shawano, Wis.

**A:** Reagan's film credits list 53 movies. There are too many for me to list for you. I suggest you look in your local library for *The Film Encyclopedia* by Ephraim Katz; it will give you all the information you seek.

Send your questions about the world of entertainment to: Polly Vonetes, Let's Talk, P.O. Box 17748, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0748.