

## NBC brings back show with 'Down Home' flair

Co-stars Judith Ivey,  
Ray Baker glad to return

By Mary Ann Townsend

Like many TV shows of late, NBC's "Down Home" has been on-again, off-again. This week the comedy is on-again when it makes its season premiere Thursday and takes a regular time slot Saturday.

The show centers around a Texas Gulf Coast cafe/bait shop about to buckle under to urban-oriented developers, but not if Kate McCrorey has anything to do with it.

Renowned stage actress Judith Ivey makes her foray into series television as Kate, a woman in her mid-30s who is struggling with her values, trying to balance career advancement with the importance of family. She puts her high-dollar, fast-paced New York City career on hold and returns to her small Texas hometown to keep her family home and business from being bought out.

The original six episodes of "Down Home" first aired in the spring of 1990, then the cast was asked to take a hiatus. NBC liked what it saw, however, and retained the cast to continue production last fall. Now "Down Home" is a mid-season replacement for "The Fanelli Boys," which itself is on hiatus and being considered for a return next season.

Ivey is an established screen and stage actress, having appeared in nearly 20 feature films and on Broadway for 10 years, receiving two Tony and Drama Desk Awards in the process. She admits the commitment to making a series was a bit frightening.

"It meant giving up something," she said, "but it also means looking

forward and learning about a medium I've never done...It's an adventure. That ought to be good for a couple of years, if people watch it, just for me to learn about it."

For Ivey's co-star Ray Baker, the return of "Down Home" was doubly exciting. He's glad the show's back because he thinks it is a good one, and also because he'll still be getting a paycheck. That's especially important now since his wife, actress Pat Richardson, had twins -- a girl and a boy named Hoxanne and Joseph -- Jan 3.

Baker plays the obnoxious real estate developer and Kate's former boyfriend, who is trying to buy the McCrorey's cafe. For Baker, who has played mainly serious roles on stage and screen, "Down Home" is

an adventure into comedy.

"This is just a lot more lighthearted and a chance for me to get laughs, which is great. So that's unique," Baker said of liking his role. "Another thing is that this is a character that a lot of bad things happen to, and you love it. You like seeing bad things happen to this guy, and they do, every week. And that's a lot of fun, to sort of get pie in the face every week."

Ivey said as an actress she is attracted to roles that have something similar to her own in personality. She identifies with her "Down Home" character's perseverance and determination. "I don't take no for an answer, and I consider myself an independent person. I think I'm imaginative and creative and feisty and probably say too much for my own good sometimes, and therefore, cause trouble. And she's definitely going to do that."

THURSDAY



When a relative is rendered helpless by an automobile accident, Victor (Jimmy Smits) is faced with a difficult decision on NBC's *L.A. Law*, Thursday.

GET OUT OF  
THE DARK.

Consumer Information Center  
Dept. 10, Pueblo, Colorado 81009