

FAMILY FARE

LET'S TALK

Fred Rogers readies kids for school year

By Sherry Jones

The month of August brings about lots of changes, not only in the weather, but also with the beginning of school. For children who have not yet taken this first step, the prospect of going to school can be a very scary one, indeed, producing feelings of anxiety affecting both the child and their parents.

In order to make this first move from home a little easier for them, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* is dedicating an entire week of programs designed to give kids a more reassuring look at what's waiting in the school yard and beyond. Fred Rogers offers children a chance to get straight answers to questions about teachers, bathrooms and schoolmates. These five programs, airing the week of Aug. 19, are guaranteed to help not only the children face school, but the parents as well.

During the week of Aug. 26, Rogers helps little ones understand the concept of individuality. Using the simple theme of dress-up, *Mister Rogers* shows kids that no matter what they are wearing or how they look, it's the inside that counts. It's a five-part recipe to help youngsters learn what it is that makes them their own person.

August might mean the doll drums in some neighborhoods, but in *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* everybody is dressed up and ready to go.

Omar Sharif is successful at both acting and bridge

By Taylor Michaels

Q: I recently saw *Lawrence of Arabia* and was impressed with Omar Sharif. Could you tell me about him and some other movies he's been in? I would also like to know what year *Lawrence of Arabia* was made? —C.S., Vancouver, Wash.

A: The movie was released in 1962. It won Academy Awards for Best Picture, Director, Cinematography, Score, Editing and Art Direction. Sharif and Peter O'Toole received Oscar nominations. Interestingly, O'Toole's part was offered to Albert Finney, but he turned it down. Omar Sharif was born Michael Shalhoub on April 10, 1932, in Alexandria, Egypt. After making his Egyptian film debut in 1953, he changed his name to Omar El-Sharif. He married Egyptian film star Faten Hamama and they later divorced. His role in *Lawrence of Arabia* led to a career in American and international films. Sharif is also one of the world's leading bridge players. I found at least 37 other films he has done, so I can't really list them all. If you like his work, I would definitely recommend *Doctor Zhivago* and *Funny Girl*.

Q: My daughter is a big fan of Janet Jackson and Paula Abdul. Is there an address where she can send them letters? —P.H., Portland, Ore.

A: Both singers can be written c/o Virgin Records, 9247 Alden Drive, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210.

Q: I heard Bob Barker stopped hosting the Miss America Pageant because of a conflict with the show about furs the contestants were to wear. Can you tell me about this? Where can I write to Bob? —Janet Patin, Navaschoches, Texas

A: Barker is an avid animal-rights activist and objected to the furs the contestants planned to wear. You can write to him c/o Mark Goodson Productions, 5750 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 475-West, Los Angeles, CA, 90036-3697.

Q: I have a bet with my girlfriend that the actor who co-starred in *Back to the Future* as Michael J. Fox's father and high-school nerd in the past is also Melanie Griffith's co-star in the recent thriller *Pacific Heights*. I say yes! Am I correct? —Richard Weimore, King Beach, Calif.



Omar Sharif

A: No, your girlfriend is correct. Crispin Glover played the part of the father in *Back to the Future*, and Matthew Modine played the part of the husband in *Pacific Heights*.

Q: How can I get in touch with the people who work on *Sesame Street*? —Brian Povlsen, Burley, Idaho

A: Write them c/o Children's Television Workshop, One Lincoln Plaza, New York, N.Y., 10023.

Q: I would like to know more about Jason Gedrick and where I could write to him. —C. Hollifield, Morrisstown, Tenn.

A: I contacted the agency that represents him and they told me they didn't have a biography they could send me. So, I really can't tell you anything about him. They did say fans could write to him at the agency. Here's the address: c/o United Talent, 9560 Wilshire Boulevard, 5th Floor, Beverly Hills, CA, 90212.

Q: Please help. Would you have an address for Johnny Mathis' fan club? I would love to join and hear anything about this great singer. —Audrey Aurett, Selma, Ala.

A: I'm sure you can get all the information you want by writing to the Johnny Mathis International Fan Club, P.O. Box 2066, Burbank, CA, 91507-2066.

Send your questions about the world of entertainment to Let's Talk, Features Dept., P.O. Box 961009, Fort Worth, Texas 76161-1009. Because of the volume of mail, only questions of general interest can be answered.



Sally Kellerman plays the head of a modelling agency in *Drop Dead Gorgeous*, Wednesday on USA.