

LET'S TALK

FAMILY FAIRE

Leigh McCloskey appearing in television commercials

By Polly Vonetes

Q: I have read with great interest your column in the Buffalo Times-Express and would like to ask for some information. It is in regard to Leigh McCloskey in the series Santa Barbara. Has he been dropped from the series? I haven't seen him lately on it. Also what was the name of the first movie he starred in? I think it had the word "midnight" in the title. Is it on videotape? In addition, do you have any background on him — age, birthday, family, other movies or series?

—Richard McLoon, Buffalo, N.Y.

A: Leigh McCloskey was born on June 21, 1955, in Los Angeles and made his acting debut in a PTA play when he was in the third grade. He recalls realizing that he wanted to become an actor when he was a sixth grader. Encouraged by his parents, he appeared in school plays at Santa Monica High and went on to study acting at Cal State Northridge. Then he headed for New York, where he studied for two years at The Juilliard School under John Houseman. He had roles in various plays before returning to Hollywood in 1975 to begin working in television, including the series *Rich Man, Poor Man*, *Phyllis*, *Medical Center*, *Streets of San Francisco*, *Blind Sunday*, *Dallas*; the television movies *Dawn*, *Portrait of a Runaway*, *Alexander: The Other Side of Dawn*, *Bermuda Depths*; and the feature films *Inferno*, *Just One of the Guys* and *Lucky Stiff*. I do not see his name listed as a cast member of *Santa Barbara* this year, however I see him frequently on commercials. His spare time interests include painting, sketching and sculpting. He plays the guitar, likes basketball and fencing, and is a pro football fan. McCloskey and his wife, Carla, an assistant director, live in Los Angeles.

Q: I am interested in writing ESPN, specifically *Bodies in Motion*. Do you know how I can write to them? Any information is appreciated. —Andrea Moseley, Marshall, Texas

A: Write to: Mike Soltys, Manager of Program Information, ESPN, Inc., ESPN Plaza, Bristol, CT 06010-9454.

Q: I am hoping you can help me as I am having no end of difficulty in finding



Leigh McCloskey

what I want. I want to know how I can find who has a listing of old movies that have been taped on VHS tape and possibly copies of them for sale. I suspect all of them have not been taped but I would like a list of those that were and how to get a copy. The particular one I am looking for at this time was a Clark Gable movie in which he was a western mountain man who had been surrounded in a small creek on open ground and was hiding in a group of trees in the middle of the creek. He shot an attacking Indian with the rifle ram rod. I live in a small city which has an incomplete index of movie listings and cannot seem to find the movie. The name of it may be *Across the Wide Missouri*, but that may not be it either. Can you help me? —Bill Strickland, Huntsville, Ala.

A: Leonard Maltin's *TV Movies and Video Guide* lists descriptions of movies and their availability on VHS. The book can be found in paperback in any store selling paperbacks. Another paperback by Tom Wiener, *The Book of Video Lists*, is available in many bookstores located in shopping malls. The Clark Gable film you are looking for could well have been *Across the Wide Missouri*, however it is not available on VHS.

Send your questions about the world of entertainment to: Polly Vonetes, Let's Talk, P.O. Box 17748, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0748. Because of the volume of mail, only questions of general interest can be answered.

'Body by Jake's' Jake begins acting

By Christy Bergshien

"The easy way out was to stick with *Body by Jake*, says Jake Steinfeld of why he decided to try acting in the new Family Channel sitcom *Big Brother Jake*. "I could have played it safe, but I wanted to extend myself beyond what people might have expected." The show airs Sundays, Tuesdays and Fridays and is the first comedy series the network has ever produced.

Steinfeld's path to stardom has been a circuitous one. He began a career as a bodybuilder and subsequently hosted the fitness program *Body by Jake* on ESPN.

In *Big Brother Jake*, Steinfeld plays an L.A. stuntman who returns to Brooklyn to help his recently widowed foster mom (Barbara Meek). She's got a house full of foster children, but unless she finds a male role model, social services will remove them.

Steinfeld manages to mix a little bodybuilding with his acting on the show. If he forgets his lines or makes a blunder, he gets down on the floor and does a set of push-ups, to the delight of studio audiences.

"When I first started working with Jake, I was concerned about his lack of experience," says director Gary Shimokawa. "He has been terrific, really better than I had expected. He works well with the kids in the cast, and he is great at taking direction and fulfilling it."

—TV Listings

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