

FAMILY FARE

LET'S TALK

Miniseries for kids out of this world

By Amy Schmidt

All is not right on the planet Mer. The Kingdom of Octopon is under siege, and its salvation depends on the heroic efforts of Ren, a 17-year-old warrior.

This is the plot of the five-part animated children's miniseries *Dark Water*, airing on Fox beginning Monday, Feb. 25. The series will run on consecutive days, Monday through Friday, pre-empting *Peter Pan & the Pirates* one week only.

Dark Water, created by Hanna-Barbera, is an otherworldly medieval-like fantasy land. Nintendo would be proud to have "The waters world of Mer presents high seas adventure, ruthless pirates and half-animal, half-human life forms to contend with. Ferocious battles are fought with poison sea urchins and alien starfish hurled with deadly accuracy from powerful slingshots."

Notable celebrities including Roddy McDowall, Tim Curry, Hector Elizondo (*Pretty Woman*) and Josh Benson (*The Little Mermaid*) provide the voices of some of *Dark Water's* animated characters.

"Beyond the program's entertainment values," says Hanna-Barbera's CEO David Kirschner, "who first envisioned the concept, *Dark Water's* storyline will stress the human qualities of perseverance, strength, grace, generosity and kindness. The series will appeal not only to the traditional daytime audience of kids, but also to their parents."

Richard Dean Anderson comes from artistic background

By Polly Vonetes

Q: What can you tell me about Richard Dean Anderson? How old is he? I really love his show *MacGyver*. Can you send me his address?—Kathie Bunnell, Park Rapids, Minn.

A: To Kathie and all *MacGyver* fans: I have recently received many letters asking about Richard Dean Anderson. So, all you loyal fans—this is for you. Richard Dean Anderson was born Jan. 23, 1950, in Minneapolis. His mother is an artist, and his father is a highly regarded jazz musician. He opted for an acting career only after his dream of a professional hockey career was shattered when he broke both his arms playing varsity hockey in high school. He studied drama at both St. Cloud State College and Ohio University.

Anderson eventually migrated west to Los Angeles, where he "paid his dues" working as a street mime and juggler and as a writer-director performer for theme park shows at Maraland in Southern California. His big break into television came when he landed the part of Dr. Jeff Weinberg on *General Hospital* (1976-77). Then, in quick succession, he landed roles on prime time before landing the lead in his *MacGyver* series. He terms himself "your basic jock" and favors active sports in his free time, ranging from motorcycling, skiing, and scuba diving and skiing to football and hockey. Whiskey, his 12-year-old Australian shepherd, is his constant companion and a permanent fixture on the *MacGyver* set. Write him: c/o Paramount Television, 5555 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90038.

Q: I recently read your column, and you answered a question about Linda Evans. It jump-started my memory back to My Favorite Uncle when she played a little girl niece to John Forsythe's "uncle"—the same man she was married to in *Dynasty*. Am I right?—M.S., Springfield, Mass.

A: You are partially right. Linda Evans guest-starred in one episode of *Bachelor Father* in October 1960. The series started John Forsythe as Uncle Bentley Gregg, a wealthy attorney who became the guardian of his teen-age niece Kelly (Soreen Corcoran) when her parents were killed in an auto accident. Linda played a friend of hers in an episode titled "A Crush on Bentley."

Q: I would like to know if Ron



Richard Dean Anderson

Pelzman of *Beauty and the Beast* married. Also could you include some background information on him?—Cathy Perin, Cottonwood, Ariz.

A: Ron Pelzman, 36, was raised and educated in New York City. He earned a graduate degree in theater arts from the University of Minnesota and his first starring role in a play was in *Quest for Fate*. Pelzman spent the last months filming *Beauty and the Beast* in the frozen lakes of Sweden, portraying a pretentious, pompous man. However, "this is the first time he's ever had to be afraid of a bear," he joked. He lives in New York City with his wife, Blake, and their two children.

Q: Could you tell me anything about Jane White, who plays on *Amica* as Thelma's mother-in-law? I went to junior high with a Jane White who wanted to be an actress, and I was wondering if she was the one. It was in Morristown, Tenn.—B.M.W., Hawkins Co., Tenn.

A: Jane White says she lives in New York City, the daughter of a man named Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP. Primarily a stage actress, she is perhaps best known for her role as the Queen in *Once Upon a Mattress*, which she also did on TV. She has been on screen since the '50s. I am sorry I haven't more information for you.

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.



Nothing abroad is sacred when Mark Russell's *England* airs Wednesday on PBS.