

Erika's World

Off the Cuff

Nov 4, 2010

Erika Slezak

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Dear Friends:

First, let me thank AJ and Kit for taking over the reins and getting our last newsletter online for all of you to enjoy. It has been a rough past few months with my father's passing, and I so appreciate those of you who sent me your condolences. Some of you had met my dad at past gatherings and luncheons. He was a wonderful mentor and friend, and I still remember him helping me stuff newsletters into the envelopes for Erika's club in the early 70s. And during that first year of the fan club, we published monthly newsletters!! I especially want to thank Erika for her constant support during this time, and throughout our many years of friendship.

I've thoroughly enjoyed the show over the past couple of months or so. Kim Zimmer is a welcome delight and a breath of fresh air!! Erika, I think, is one of Kim's biggest fans. I love it when anyone gets under Viki's skin – only Dorian has been able to accomplish that. That is why her scenes with Kim work so well and are so enjoyable to watch! Erika says a lot more is coming, and the story takes some twists and turns, so I know I'll be glued. Kim Zimmer had a huge fan base from "The Guiding Light," so let's hope her fans follow her to "One Life." I think the show is on a good path! The younger actors that have been hired seem to be working out well, and I feel that they are a good group of talented people. If the show continues to focus on the core characters, along with the younger set, then there will be something for everyone. "One Life" (unfortunately more often than not) endlessly uses their newer characters to death...so a mixture would certainly be refreshing! (Note to the-powers-that-be: Lots of us faithful viewers watch to see the Core characters!)

It's positive news that ABC has signed three-year contracts with Frank Valentini and Ron Carlivati. I do know that Frank puts his heart and soul into this show. So for him and Ron to continue in their roles is saying that ABC is committed to keeping the show on the air. I've been a loyal viewer of the show since it debuted in 1968, and will continue to do so as long as Erika graces our screen!

As most of you know, Erika will celebrate her 40th anniversary on OLTL March 17th. I'm thinking of asking Erika if she would be interested in attending a fan club luncheon in New York City sometime next Spring. I can't promise anything but will keep people informed if anything comes out of it.

Thanks again for your support of Erika and "One Live to Live!"

Regards,
Walter

Telephone interview October 26, 2010

The last time we spoke your “What If” web-episode was about to be released. Were you able to see it? What did you think about the finished product? Yes, I saw it on the link that you sent me, and then I saw it on air, and I thought it was terrific. I thought it was really sweet. Sue Johnson, who works with Brian Frons and is Vice President of Daytime, was there when we shot it, and came to me afterward and said, “I can’t watch this without crying.”

It was very moving. I thought that was so sweet. I got an email from her after it was released and she said, “I’m still looking at it and tears come to my eyes.” I thought that was really nice. Tony Geary is one of the most awesome guys in the world. He’s a gentleman, he’s a talented actor, he’s kind, he’s funny, he’s nice, he’s clever, he’s intelligent, and it was just a pleasure to work with him. Frank, who directed it, did a brilliant job. He directed all of them, so he was up to his ears in work, work, work, and yet he took all the time needed to explain clearly what he wanted from us and to answer all of our questions. He was just wonderful. He’s a really good director anyway, but he was really clever with this, and he made it very interesting. He was very concerned about the lighting. We used these new cameras, called Red Cameras, and they give a whole different look to it – the look of film. Frank was just brilliant with everything, and I thought the whole experience was so pleasant.

How long did it actually take? I have to think back. I had an 8:00 a.m. hair and make up call. Susan (Lucci/AMC) and Maurice (Bernard/GH) were up first and then we went to work somewhere around 12:00 p.m. and we were completely finished at 2:00 pm.

Oh, that was quick. Well you know, that is Frank and Daytime. It’s got to move. He had more to do after we were finished but, we were done by 2:00 p.m., and I know because I had a 4:00 p.m. flight.

You were also at the beginning of your summer vacation. Did you do anything special? No, we just kind of chilled here and we spent some time in Vermont. We just took it easy. You know, my back – which thank goodness is fine – it is still healing, as it takes a full year. So, I have to be very cautious as to what I do. For instance, we have some ATVs (all terrain vehicles) up in the country and I can’t ride on one yet because it is too bouncy. We really just relaxed and took it easy. We played with the dogs and we took walks, which I am allowed to do with no restrictions. Bending and lifting are still big things though. At first I was told not to lift anything heavier than a quart of milk, but now I can lift a little more than that.

a viki moment to remember



Don't expect anything original from an Echo

You haven’t had any problems since the surgery? Well, it still pinches and pulls when I lift something heavy. I probably shouldn’t do it, but I am so used to being completely free to do whatever I need to do.

It was still the best thing you did, right? You don’t have any regrets? It was really needed – I couldn’t walk!

We heard you spoke with Kim Zimmer a couple of times before she came on the show. And her first scenes were with you. How has it been since she has started back with the show? It is delightful – absolutely delightful. You know, I said to her, “I can’t wait to hear that big ol’ laugh of yours!” She’s just a joy and she is so professional. She knew exactly how to do it and what to do. It was a little different for her because she has spent the last couple of years practically on location. She said, “Oh, it is so nice to have a studio.” And she’s just been wonderful. We have had a lot of scenes together – very fun scenes. She’s been working with Robin a bit and they’re having a great time. The whole thing has just turned out well. She and Brian Kerwin get along brilliantly. Yes, the whole thing is just working out really well. I like the story – I like where it is going. It gets much more complicated,

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of course, as time goes by, but I like it.

Good! I know I have been enjoying it.

They've pulled up some old footage from the 80s when Kim was originally on the show – have you seen those scenes yourself? Yes, I have – two flashbacks. Kim and I both heard that they were going to do that and we both said – Oh, my Lord, do I really want to see that? Big hair on her for sure!



And short hair on you and freckles. Very short hair and freckles – and we were a lot younger – but the scenes were good.

They were very good. They worked back then, and you can see by them pulling those scenes and inserting them, it has made it interesting to see where they are going with the story. Well, you'll find out! It's very complicated.

Have you started to get Jean Passanante's work yet? Yes. Jean has been working since June (I think), which is when "As the World Turns" production shut down. They had that much in the can when they went off the air in September, because they had finished shooting somewhere at the end of June or early July. So she came to us then, and yes, she has just been wonderful. She is a breakdown writer but she sits in on all of the meetings, and apparently has had some very good ideas. The whole Echo story, which I love, was Ron's idea. Jean is very, very intelligent and very savvy as to this business. And so she knows how to direct things and where to go. I think she is going to be a great addition, and already has been one to the writing team.

And she's really known Viki because she has been involved with the show previously, so she knows your character. Absolutely.

This is the first story that Ron has written for

you since the Paris, TX stuff – a story where you are truly featured – right? Yes, exactly.

I was watching the show this week and noticed that Erika was wearing a bandage over her temple, and Viki mentioned to Dorian that she had had a skin cancer removed. Was that part of the script or was it real life? That was real life. I had a little pre-cancerous thing, and I'm not sure what it is called – a lesion or something. It was a little bump on my right temple that wasn't going away. I spoke to the dermatologist and he cryogenically tried to remove it – they freeze it with this stuff, and anyone who has gone to a dermatologist knows what it is. If it didn't go away after freezing, they would have to biopsy it. So, a couple of weeks later, it hadn't gone away, so they biopsied it and said it was a basil-cell skin cancer, which is a pre-cancerous condition. In order for it not to advance and become cancer, they removed it in what was a very simple procedure. What they do is a fascinating procedure called Mohs surgery, where they take a very, very thin layer off the top and put it under the microscope to see if the pre-cancerous cells are there. If they are, they go in and take another very small thin layer and inspect it for the bad cells. The process continues until they see no more basil cells. The process can take any length of time, and usually it takes 5 or 6 layers' worth of testing, but with me it was only 3 layers, as the third layer was completely clean. It is a minimally-invasive surgery in that they don't have to cut deeply. If you went in and just had them cut out the lump, they would have to go deep just to make sure they got it all. In this case they didn't have to go deep; they cut as little as possible. They stitched it up and you can barely see the scar now. It was done the end of August so it's not even 2 months, and you can hardly see it – it's a tiny little scar.

The advances they have made are amazing. It is truly a wonderful thing!

So, everything is OK now. Yes, everything is just fine. I'm actually going tomorrow to have it re-checked.

Will we see heavy dramatic scenes and a real

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story between Viki and Charlie, or will the re-emergence of Echo be all about Rex and Echo? Oh, it is a bit of everything. It draws a lot of people in, which is good. Rex and Echo are a part of it. There are big scenes between Viki and Charlie, and they get progressively bigger. We are nowhere near the end of this. And because of it, Brian and I have had a lot of scenes. The thing is, we bounce around so much in the shooting – we will shoot an episode tomorrow (Wednesday) and then on Friday we'll shoot an episode from 4 weeks from now – and so it is hard to keep track of the story. They now do it this way to save time and money because the sets are already up. It saves money as they don't have to keep taking the sets up and down all of the time. It's just hard to track the story, that's all. But yes, there are lots of good scenes.

Can fans expect major drama that directly affects Viki, so you can strut your stuff instead of being in the background of storylines as you have the past few years? I don't know, because I don't know how far this story is going. There is very good material for me. It is not like getting a new heart – not that kind of story – but there are some very big scenes, and big decisions to be made, I think. And as I say, because we are bouncing around so much, I don't know how manic it is going to get in the next few weeks, ok, but I'm assuming there will be very good material.

Are you optimistic for the future of One Life to Live? Very! I was speaking with Frank yesterday and we were number three for the last three weeks.

I know...this is fabulous! The show is doing very well. Somehow, and I don't know why, there have been these cancellation rumors. But it is rubbish – we are not getting cancelled. They invested a great deal of money in the move and in the equipment, and they are paring down expenses as much as possible so that we can stay on the air. We are actually, starting today, going to a new format – a wide screen format. That costs a lot of money. They would not invest in us if they were going to turn around and say, "Oh yes, you guys are gone." They just are not going to do that.

What is this wide screen format? Umm... hello?! You are sooo talking to the wrong person. But whereas there used to be a square format, now we are in a rectangular format. It is to accommodate the picture to wide screen TVs.

Like letterbox? Letterbox??? Sorry!

It's not high def – that is different. It is not quite high def but it is going to accommodate the wide screens. People have these big wider screens now.

What would you like for Viki to experience in the future? Oh, me? I want lots of husbands! I would like for her to continue on her path wherever it may take her – to be very involved and to keep going. You know, we have a new Joey.



Tom Degnan

Photo by Steven Bergman

What is his name? His name is Tom Degnan. He is a most delightful, charming, adorable man. He was apparently on "As the World Turns." I don't know if he was a contract player, but he played a character there. It was Margo's son, because Hillary (Nora) heard about it and she said, "Oh my God, he played my son!" But he did not play him when she was there.

Who is Margo? Margo was a character on "As the World Turns" that Hillary played before she came to OLTL. I gather that Margo was a very central character for a long time, but I didn't watch the show, so I don't know. He played a character named Adam, but it was only over a period of several months, I believe. He is very big and strong – tall. He's got the incredible warmth and sweetness that Joey should have, because there has to be a difference between Kevin and Joey. Dan Gauthier plays Kevin brilliantly – he's Kevin and he is more the Buchanan. Joey is more like Viki. He takes life as it comes to him, and he always looks for the good in people, where Kevin is much more suspicious. Tom has this wonderful quality, I think. And the show has just hired Terri Colombino to play a character

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named Aubrey, who comes back with Joey. And I'm not going to spoil it by telling you what goes on, but Terri is absolutely delightful – and what a pro. She's just wonderful.

That was the next question... we heard you screen tested Terri Colombino. How did that go, and has she started working yet?

Yes, I did. I screen tested actually with 9 girls. They had an amazing array – they had a lady who was Indian, from India, and they had some Spanish ladies, and I can't tell you that one was better than the next because they were all really, really good. Some of them had been in daytime and some of them had not. Terri was their choice. She's what they were looking for, but the other ladies were all absolutely wonderful. And I enjoyed it enormously. I didn't think I would, you know - doing the same scene 9 times or 18 times in a row – but it was an interesting experience for me because with each person you have to react according to what they are doing. It gives you a slightly different performance each time.



Terri Colombino

Photo by Steven Bergman

You had a good feel when Terri screen tested?

I had a good feel for all of them. You know, I went back afterwards and Frank said, "How did that feel?" And I said, "I couldn't pick." It's according to what they were looking for in the long term. Anyway, Terri started – we were dark last week – so she started the week before.

Will Viki be working with her? Since she is Joey's girlfriend I'm assuming you would.

You'll see. But yes, I'm working with her. In fact, I'm working with her on Thursday.

Is Joey still a priest? Or is that giving away too much?

No, no, no he's not a priest. Well, he was never a Catholic priest. He was an Episcopalian priest. No, he's not. We don't know what Joey does. He's at a loss; he's still looking for what to do in life.

Like everybody! Yes.

Why are Kelly and Jessica both working for The Sun? It seems like they would rather work for Viki than Todd. Jessica works for The Sun and has for a long time and I don't remember why, but there was a reason. Kelly works for Todd to piss off Blair.

I have not seen any recent photos of you, so is there any reason why not? Will you be having any new photos taken soon?

They have not asked me. You know we had that stuff over the summer, but I hate having my picture taken, so I'm kind of hoping not.

Your last set of pictures was very nice. Yes, Donna at ABC took those and they were really terrific.

But no new opening photos for the show? I don't know. I think Frank is doing a new opening, but I'm not sure whether he is going to replace pictures. You know what? It all costs money.

And you haven't done any of the bumpers like some of the people have. No, but we're going to be shooting those.

I'm happy that all the vets seem to be getting a storyline! I have missed Viki and Charlie. It's great to see you both back on screen. Having Echo back has seemed to bring out a side of Viki we don't see often. She seems to want to get down and dirty. Would you like to see more of that in Viki? You don't have to go as far as Clint, but you seem ready to fight for Charlie.

Oh, yes, absolutely. I think Viki has grown up; she doesn't have to be nice to everyone anymore. When she sees a threat on the horizon, she is going to tackle it and take care of it. The curious thing is that they have written a wonderful twist where Dorian is on my side.

We saw one show where she said she would be there for Viki which sort of surprised everyone.

It surprised Viki more than anyone and made her very suspicious. Do I want this woman on my side? Robin and I have had some very good scenes.

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Viki has made a big deal out of Echo chasing after Clint and sleeping with Clint. How does Viki justify sleeping with Sloan? She did the same thing. Yes, but Viki told Clint about it. We were sort of on the verge of separation and told him I was going away for the weekend. And I said, "If you want me to stay, tell me to stay." And he never did. That was Linda Gottlieb (ex-executive producer) who wanted to break them up.

Will this new storyline lead up to Viki/Charlie being apart again? I have no idea. I know that Brian is going to be gone from mid-December until the end of January. I think he is going to pre-tape before he leaves, and post tape when he gets back. He's going to California to do a play in San Diego or someplace. He loves doing that. Good for him. I'm not sure if they are going to write him out or just work around him, because he will be back I think on Mondays – so he won't be gone completely. *(Asst. Ed. Note...I live in Northern San Diego County, so I'll try to find Brian's play and report back!!)*

Do you think the show will do a cat fight with you and Echo? Um....I hope not, because I don't like doing that.

Your back can't handle it either. No my back can't handle it.

I noticed that Judith Light (ex-Karen Wolek) is in a new show on Broadway called "Lombardi." (Based on the life of Vince Lombardi.) Have you been able to see it? No, I haven't. We were invited awhile ago because Danny Lauria is playing Vince Lombardi and he is an old pal. You know he was on One Life to Live...but no I have not had a chance to see it yet. *(Walter's Note: Dan played killer pimp, Gus Thompson, on OLTL in 1984, and later went on to play the father on "Wonder Years.")*

Would you like to see Judith's character, Karen Wolek, re-introduced into Llanview if she was ever willing to come back...even for a short term story? Sure, she's a wonderful actress. I don't know how they would do it because that whole family has vanished. There's no more Larry. If she came back it would be very hard to attach her to anybody except for me, as we were

old friends. She'd have to come back to cause trouble, and she was never like that...that was not the character. I think it would be a wonderful thing. I doubt that she would ever come back though, because I don't think Judith is interested in doing daytime anymore.

I would like to get Mike Storm (ex-Larry Wolek) back. Oh, yes. Mikey.

A fan wrote...First of all, I want to say that I am enjoying the Viki/Echo scenes. Top-notch Erika as always! I see where Dan Gauthier is returning – are you excited to have him back? I love Dan. I wish he were there every day of every single week. He's non-contract right now, but hopefully they will bring him back much more frequently because I think the man is a wonderful actor. He's a wonderful person. He's just so good to have around, and he plays Kevin so perfectly.

Yes, he knows that character. Yes, he gets it, and that's not at all who he is, but he gets it.

If Erika, in all her power, could cast any actress to play her character's mother, Eugenia Randolph Lord, who would it be? Be it flashbacks, or for any reason that OLTL would research Viki's maternal line, might I suggest Angela Lansbury? Oh that would be brilliant, or Judi Dench, my favorite actress in the whole world. Could it get better?

What is your opinion of the scene when Clint and his men beat up Ford? (After Jessica tells Viki and Clint that Ford may be the father of her child, Clint and his guys go beat up Ford.) I personally think that that is exactly what a father would do after finding out what Ford did to Jessica. Knowing full well that Jessica thought that she was 17 years old, that's rape. And I'm surprised Clint stopped at that. I don't know that you can condone it, but at the same time, that is a very natural reaction for a father who loves his daughter – to say how freaking dare you do this to my little girl.

Especially since he knew that she was not in her right mind. That's just it; she was out of her mind.

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Will Viki figure out that Clint is behind David Vickers going to jail? I don't know. It's a pretty well-kept secret...the only other person who knows it is Rex, and Rex is living under Clint's thumb right now.

Very much so. My personal opinion, even though right now it looks like Charlie may be Rex's father, is that it probably will be Clint. I don't know – they have not let me know. Have you seen scenes between Clint and Echo?

They've just aired - two I think at the bar and one at his office. Oh, OK, I think you are going to get an answer to that very soon.

Right now they are ending the Evil Eli storyline – Eli just got shot. Oh, yes – bad guy.

Matt Walton is a good actor though. Yes, and he is a very nice man too. Matt's the one that does all of those Optimum commercials.

That's what a friend told me. We don't get those here in Boston. Oh well, he's wonderful in those too.

No matter what happens, and even though they have a comfortable friendship, I think Clint will always love Viki down deep. What do you think? I guess we'll see. I think so, yes, and I think she still loves him to some extent too. He was a very important part of her life for a long time. But we'll see – frankly I can't answer the question because I don't know. Why don't you call Jerry and ask him.

Do you have a relative living in Chicago, named Carol Slezak who is a sports columnist for the Chicago Sun times? I haven't a clue. If I do, I have never met her. There are a number of Slezaks around, and various people write to me and ask if we are related. I don't know. My father had one sister and his father was an only child, and his father was an only child. So in the direct line, of going back 4 generations, no we are not related. When Victor Slezak was on the show, we talked, and he said he had researched the family tree and that his family comes from the same town that my grandfather came from. So it is entirely

possible that back 7, 8, or 9 generations, there very well may be a connection.

Now Margarete Slezak never had children. My father's sister? Oh yes, she did. She had one daughter named Helga. But they wouldn't have the name Slezak, it was Winter because she married and took another name so the name Slezak has to come through the male line.

Is she still with us? No she died in the 50s.

Her daughter, Helga? No, she also died.

There has been talk about Roger Howarth possibly returning to the show now that his show, "As the World Turns," has gone off the air. Have you heard anything or talked to him recently? It goes on and on and on. It would be brilliant if it were to happen. I don't know.

And that's not to take anything away from Trevor St. John. Listen, if Roger came back, it would be a hell of a good story for both of them.

Yes it would. It would give Trevor something completely fresh and new to play. If Roger Howarth were to come back it would be brilliant for the story for both of them, something to play. And it would give Viki something to play – who is the real brother?

They announced recently that Frank and Ron's contracts have been renewed for three years – that's got to be encouraging behind the scenes. Yes, absolutely. I didn't know that, but good for them.

OLTL beat out the "As the World Turns" replacement – the new talk show ("The Talk") that is supposed to be like "The View". That's fabulous news! Yes it is.

Did you see "underneathmybed," the play that Florencia Lozano (Tea Delgado Manning) wrote? No, I didn't. We don't live in the city and Teddy has been so ill that we can't leave him for any length of time because he takes so many pills. And because he takes so many pills, he has to go out a lot. So, we haven't spent any time in

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the city other than what has been necessary.

Isn't it amazing how we plan our lives around our animals? You have to. They mean a great deal.

Do you have any new favorite TV Shows?

Yes, I've watched "Undercovers," and I love "Boardwalk Empire" – my wonderful John Rue, who played Moe on OLTL, is in it. I'm still watching "House," though I was really annoyed because last night was a repeat.

Do you still watch "Dancing with the Stars?"

Yes, off and on. You know, they stretch it out too much. I started to watch it and thought, "Why are they doing highlights from all of the last seasons?" It is because they are trying to fill two hours. OK, fine. I took off my makeup, got ready for bed, and then I went to sleep.

Do you keep up with "Castle?" Yes, I Tivo it and watch it. Michael keeps up with everything.

What is Amanda doing? Amanda is doing well. She is working a great deal. She's gone back to classes. She's pulling it all together. Her birthday is this Friday and she is coming home.

How is Brian? Brian is doing very well, thank you.

Do you ever get to catch the other soaps while you're home? Has any particular actor or actress caught your eye?

No, I don't watch other soaps because when I am home I have so much to do. But when I judged the Emmys a couple of years ago (I judge every year), I judged Best Actor Category. I saw one of most talented young actors I have ever seen. Of course, everybody had heard of him except me, because he was in some funny movie. His name is Daniel Cosgrove. He's just a wonderful actor, and I wish that he could come to our show, but apparently he is at "All My Children," or is going to.

Your nephew, Tobias Slezak, is an actor—have you seen him in anything? I read that your other nephew, Alex, is a television writer

and has written scripts for Stargate Atlantis. Are these Ingrid's children? Do you ever get to see your sister and brother and their families? Are your kids close to their cousins? No they are not at all. Both Toby and Alex live in Canada. Toby is actually getting married in January. Alex and his girlfriend just had a baby in August. Toby still does some acting and I have seen him in a couple of things. In that series Anne Heche did, "Men in Trees," he played her ex-boyfriend. He was very good, but he is actually studying to become an architect, which is what he decided he really wants to do. I saw my sister when she was in town over the summer. It was a horribly hot day and I picked a really nice restaurant that I really like. I figured there would be air conditioning and it will be freezing, so I wore a jacket. Brian wore a jacket and tie because she and her husband were going to be there. Her husband is just the most charming man. I hadn't seen my sister in a couple of years. It turns out that the restaurant had gone green and had turned off their air conditioning. And we died – it was like 85 degrees indoors and we were dying. So we're not going there anymore. We had a really nice dinner, and Amanda was there.

So, Ingrid is a grandmother now? Yes she is. The baby was born August 9th – Chloe, beautiful baby.

When Laurence Fishburne was on OLTL, do you recall if Viki had scenes with him as a young Josh Hall? Yes, we did. He grew up and got so tall.

Now he is on CSI. Yes, he's a wonderful actor. He left OLTL and he was going to come back six months later. He went off to do "Apocalypse Now" and apparently the film stretched out so long – over years. By the time he came back he was a full grown man.

Tell us about your new kitty, Emily. Emily is wonderful. Emily is so feisty and so tough – like a street fighter. She is cute though. She has discovered making the bed, which is a great highlight of her day. She mostly sleeps on the

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bed, pushing up against me and Lucy sleeps on the other side pushing against me so I don't get a lot of sleep. But Emily is a hoot. She is not quite 6 months old, and she's all black with one white spot on her chest and one white spot on her tummy. I love her dearly. She's quite different from Lucy. Lucy is a very affectionate, loving, sweet cat, and we hadn't had any cats like that before – we always had kind of independent cats. Emily is like – get out of my way, I'm busy, I'm busy, I'm busy.

Does she get along well with Lucy?

Yes. When we first brought her home, Lucy was petrified and it took around 3 days, and now Lucy thinks she is her baby. She licks her, she cleans her, she plays with her, and she also disciplines her.

Is she named after the famous redhead (Lucille Ball), or just a name that you liked? Just a name that we liked.

What are the names of your other animals? For people who don't know. Teddy is a bearded collie who will turn 11 in November, and Molly, who is 9, is also a bearded collie.

There are a few actors in daytime who have written books. Have you ever thought about writing a book about your family's rich heritage and your career on OLTL? Yes, I guess I have. Several people have, over the years, approached me – publishers and agents – and said, “Oh, we'd like to take you to lunch to discuss writing a book.” So, I've said ok, fine – we go to lunch and they say, “So, the book obviously has to have all of the dirt.” No thank you. I can't write these books until everybody is dead and I'll be dead too. I'm not going to do that. I'm not in the business of gossip-mongering. And you know, there are things that have to be kept quiet. So, yes, I think about it, but then I think I don't remember that much. Maybe someday I will, but it isn't in the cards now.

But it is something you would think about? I guess, but I would have to write it myself. I don't know that I would be comfortable having someone else write it because they always try – especially

when you are in show business – they try and angle it so that it is a like a politician – bad on the other guy.

And obviously they want the dirt. And I'm not willing to do that. *(Asst. Ed. Note...GOOD for you! Your dad's book was wonderfully entertaining and he took the high road – I'm sure there would be an audience for yours too!)*

When the show was on for thirty minutes back in the 70s, how long did it take to tape a thirty-minute episode? Did you stop and re-tape much? No not at all. We started rehearsal at 8:30 in the morning – we had a great deal of rehearsal – we broke for lunch, we had hair and makeup, and then we had a run through, and then a dress rehearsal after lunch and we started taping exactly at 4:15 pm and stopped taping exactly at 4:45 pm – in real time, which we had to do. And that was that. It would take from 8:30 am to 5:00 p.m. because you had to wait for all of the tapes to be cleared. I don't remember stopping more than maybe 3 times in all of those years. We just didn't stop.

Holy-moly! Well, you had to know your lines! There was a lot of rehearsal and there was nothing of that “Let's go back and change your hair.” No, just do it.

Did you have teleprompters? Yes, but when we had Paul Rauch as the producer, that's when we lost the teleprompters.

And how long did it take to tape a more complicated 30-minute episode—for example a wedding such as when Viki married Steve? It took a half an hour!



Viki marries Steve Burke

Are you kidding me?

We had to! We only had tape machines for 45 minutes. The tape machines belonged to Sports. Sports would lend them to us for 45 minutes – from 4:15 to 5:00 p.m.

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Wow, so it had to be in the can during that time. That explains it. You didn't have the tape machine so you couldn't tape longer.

Do you watch any of your performances? Do you critique yourself? I don't really watch a lot. I find it is almost pointless. Sometimes I watch but not a lot – because it is done, you can't change it and it is just frustrating to say, "Oh my God, why did I do that, or how stupid!" But sometimes I watch – though it takes a lot of time.

Do you have a favorite location shoot that you were involved in over the years? Yes, I loved doing the Heaven scenes when we were in another studio, and I loved Vienna, which was beautiful.

Do you and Brian (or you yourself) socialize with anyone from the show (past or present)? Not really, no because everybody lives too far away.

What would be your opinion if OLTL went back to a thirty-minute format? Bold and Beautiful is successful doing thirty minutes — do you think that could work for OLTL? Obviously a lot of people would lose their jobs. Sure we could go back to a half an hour but I don't know what the point would be.

You've seen a handful of executive producers come and go throughout the years. What do you think makes a good producer? You have to have the ability to look at the production from every single point of view – from the actor's point of view, from the director's point of view, from the lighting director's point of view – you have to understand what everybody is doing and you have to understand what the medium is about and understand what the audience wants and also have to understand what the head of daytime wants. It is not an easy job. Frank is doing a wonderful job but I think that is because Frank has done so many of the jobs – he was stage manager, an apprentice, a slave to Paul Rauch, a director, and still is – and he looks at it from every point of view. You also have to be very creative and you have to know when to step back and let somebody else do his or her job.

With the holidays fast approaching, do you have a favorite Christmas film that you watched as a child, that you still watch today? No – what we watch is National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation.

What do you and Brian typically do on a Saturday evening? Sometimes have friends over – most of the time we have a little dinner, watch a little TV, read, and go to bed. We're not big social people.

I recently saw you in a repeat of "Full Circle." Did you enjoy doing that film and would you like to pursue other outside projects? Yes, I did enjoy it. I found it very different from doing daytime, because they spend so much time doing it. But it was fun.

Anything in the foreseeable future? No not right now.

Both Bree Williamson and her character, Jessica, were pregnant, and Bree has had her baby. That's right, she has! She had a boy, and his name is McGregor Edward Roberts. I haven't seen him but I understand that he is absolutely beautiful - no surprise there. I saw Bree and her husband, Michael Roberts, very briefly at Casino Night. She looked great, but there were so many people there, and when I went to talk to them, I couldn't find them.

This was at the annual ABC Casino Night, right? Yes, Casino Night is an event that the sales department sponsors for all their advertisers. It is a chance for everyone to mingle and they always invite the casts of their daytime shows to participate. They have gambling tables there and give you fake money to play with. It's usually a zoo but this one was a really nice event because it was in a much larger space so there was room to move around, plenty of good food and drink, and lots of people to talk to. We had a wonderful time.



Erika and Brian
at ABC Casino Night

Photo by Steven Bergman