

Erika's World

Off the Cuff

July 7, 2007

Erika Slezak
Official Fan Club

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Dear Friends:

Welcome to "Erika's World" – our July newsletter, and our second online edition! The March edition of "Erika's World" truly hit cyberspace like gangbusters – read by lots and lots of fans (and critics!). I was floored by the number of hits that were registered on our website!

I was fifteen years old when I first met Erika Slezak. It was in the spring of 1971, and just shortly after she had joined One Life to Live. I asked her then if she had a fan club, and she replied, "No, I don't. My father (who was character actor Walter Slezak) had fan clubs, but I never knew much about them." I explained a little bit about what would be involved, Erika agreed, and here we are now – some thirty-five plus years later!

Up until just the end of last year (2006), our newsletters were on paper and all communications and photographs were sent through the mail, so there were annual fan club dues in order to cover our printing and postage costs. Now, with very little being done through the mail these days, and technology being what it is, we have changed with the times. However, we have received many emails asking us how to "join" Erika's fan club. We are still a "fan club" in the sense that we are all fans of Erika Slezak, but there is technically nothing to "join." There is a nominal fee for us to maintain the website, but there are no longer any dues for you to pay in order to enjoy hearing from Erika, and seeing pictures that our good friend, photographer Steven Bergman, has captured. We are happy to post the newsletters online for everyone to enjoy!

If we already have your email address in our database, you are considered a member of Erika's "Online Fan Club." The benefit is that you will receive an email encouraging you to submit questions for the next newsletter, or telling you when a newsletter has been posted, or when there is any ERN ("Erika-Related News") to share with you (ie: an appearance on a television show or an announcement about Super Soap Weekend, etc.) So if you would like to be part of Erika's "Online Fan Club," please send your email address to erikaslezakfc@yahoo.com We do NOT share your address with anyone – it is strictly for fan club news.

I can't thank Erika enough for her involvement in the club. She takes the time to answer questions from all of you, and what you read are HER words – not a magazine's interpretation or spin on what she has said. You know, a lot of "stars" crave the spotlight and try to make sure that they are in it often. Erika has never been like that, as you can tell when you read her answer about the show's credits.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

But she IS a HUGE star, as evidenced by her longevity on One Life to Live and the record number of Emmy's she has been awarded for her talent. And yet, she still takes her time and gives it to us, the fans, this way. (Granted, there is now a much larger audience online, but for 34 years she did this just to make our relatively small fan club happy – not to be in the spotlight.) She takes time for a phone interview, and then takes time to make sure that what we have in print, has come across correctly and can't be misinterpreted. I'm grateful to Erika for that and so much more!

For those who have not watched Erika's video interview at the Archive for American Television website, you may want to do so.

<http://tvinterviewsarchive.blogspot.com/>

It's a wonderful in-depth interview (approximately two hours). I've known Erika for years and there are some things that I heard for

the very first time while watching the interview. This is a real treat for any Erika Slezak fan (or fan of her father's or grandfather's)! It is in 4 sections so you can watch and savor it in pieces, at your leisure.

For those of you who don't know, the magazines have already reported that Phil Carey's character of Asa will pass away, and the 10,000th show, which Erika mentions, is Asa's funeral, and that is why the past characters are returning.

At this time, please let me thank AJ and Kit, our online "officers." Without their assistance and dedication, we would not be online. The three of us have been working on the newsletters for years, and above all, they are my friends.

Walter Miller

photo gallery



Erika arriving at SoapNet party the night before the Emmys



Erika and Brian on the Emmys' red carpet



Erika on 2nd day of interview



Buchanan kids reunited — John Loprieno [Cord], Nathan Fillion [Joey], Melissa Archer [Natalie], Dan Gauthier [Kevin], Bree Williamson [Jess]

Telephone Interview July 2 - 3, 2007

You have great scenes with Tuc Watkins (David Vickers)! You seem to have wonderful chemistry, and it looks like such fun!

Tuc is one of the most delightful people that God has ever put on this earth – one of the most charming and talented actors. It was so much fun playing those scenes with him because he is inventive, he is clever, and, as I said, he is so talented. He brings so much to EVERY scene, and most of what you see on screen was created by the actors – by Tuc. You know, it's there in the writing a little bit, but most of it is what Tuc brings to the scenes. I miss him, and I'm hoping he will come back frequently – often, often, often!!!

He's going to be a Buchanan I'm assuming...or at least that's what it looks like. I don't know – that's what it looks like, but you never know, because we have a new head writer.

Do we see any more? On Friday he asks Viki to sleep with him. I don't know exactly where you are in the show.

Well, he said "Let's go to bed," and you are sitting on the bed with him. (large laugh) I'm not going to spoil it – but no! They are delightful scenes, and I so enjoyed them. That was right after he came out of the shower.

Yes, you're right.



How did they get Nathan Fillion (an ex-Joey) back for the 10,000th show?

I think Frank Valentini worked some sort of miracle! He asked him! He was concerned that he wouldn't be able to do it. We're shooting the scenes today and tomorrow.

Nathan is so sweet and wonderful and exactly as he was when he left – he's just 10 years older – that's it! But I said, "You are so good to do this."

a viki moment to remember



Simply Apoplectic

He said, "Oh, no I was really excited and thrilled to be asked!" Well you know, that's just delightful – this is a boy that is going to have a HUGE career. He's building up, and up, and up, and everything he does makes him better known and better known in the industry and better known to the audience. And he is sooooo talented. He can only get better from now on! He told me he may be a new character on Desperate Housewives – 10 or 12 episodes or something like that. (Ed.Note: Nathan is wonderful in the movie "Waitress" and he has a great blog in his MySpace page. <http://www.myspace.com/nathanfillion>)

Good for him! Yes! And he's doing another film right after he leaves here tomorrow.

It was a coup to get him back! It was wonderful, and Dan Gauthier [Kevin] is back, and John Loprieno [Cord] is back, and Jimmy DePaiva [Max] is back – it's a thrill – it's like going back 10 years. Just wonderful!

Is Ron Carlivati writing the scripts that you are now taping?

Oh, yes. Ron wrote – well, I'm not sure how much Dena had to do with this – I know Ron wrote the breakdowns for show # 9,999 and the 10,000th show. He wrote those completely on his own, and they are wonderful! They are so sweet and so special, and they have so much to do with the history of the show. It's wonderful!

So the scripts you have from now on have Ron's name on them.

Well, no – they don't put the head writer's name on the scripts anymore. They used to. They just put the breakdown writer and the scriptwriter. I don't know how much Dena had written in advance, and she's only been gone since June 4, so we're a month ahead. I'm sure that some of her work is still in the hopper here, but I really don't know whose is whose. It's hard to

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

tell. But I do know that Ron wrote the breakdowns for both of these shows, and Leslie Nipkow wrote the scripts. And they are wonderful – just wonderful.

Emmy week – how was your trip to California?

It was horrible. It was absolutely horrible. I will say flat out that the Emmy show was the worst I have ever attended. It was endlessly boring, and I know this is going out on the internet, but it was boring, and it was not well done, and I found some of the presenters questionable to say the least! It was CBS's attempt to plug their own people, but there were many that are no longer involved in daytime. Mario Van Peebles was on our show for 6 months about 28 years ago. Why would he introduce the clips from OLTL, other than the fact that he is probably on one of CBS's nighttime shows? Frankly, I thought it was an insult. I thought it was insulting that Kim Zimmer did not present best actor. I know she introduced the Guiding Light 70 years thing, but she won the Best Actress Emmy last year, and it is traditional that they present the Best Actor award the following year. And to have Eva LaRue, who is no longer on daytime, present best actor, was an insult. I know she is on a CBS nighttime show – but it was wrong. And I think they've put far too much focus on the fans doing the YouTube thing. Apparently they didn't show anyone in the audience, and they (CBS) had no red carpet before because they were re-airing the final episode of The Price is Right, which is fine. But they did nothing to celebrate what we were there to honor. It was all very cute to have fans do their things on YouTube – saying I want to be this character etc., but that had nothing to do with the Emmy Awards...nothing. I was bitterly disappointed with the show – and I was also sorry that we didn't win anything, but that was beside the fact.

To have that Mario Van Peebles introduce the show when you are in the audience and Robin Strasser is in the audience – give me a break!! Listen – almost EVERY ACTOR on One Life to Live was in the audience and our

PRODUCER was in the audience, and people who have been connected with the show for years were in the audience -- that was insulting!

How long were you there? As short as possible. We arrived Thursday and went to the SoapNet party, which was actually fabulous. The SoapNet party was terrific. It was at a place that was close to the hotel, but far enough away that you couldn't really walk. It was over a mile away and we were all in high heels, so our executive producer, Frank Valentini, had arranged for a car to come and pick Brian and me up and take us to the party, which was incredibly nice of him. So we got in the car and I had sort of looked at the map and knew when we left the hotel we were to make a right turn then a left turn then a right turn. And the car turned left out of the hotel and I thought, "Oh well, he obviously knows the streets." I had said to him when we got in the car, "You know where we are going?" And he said, "Absolutely, you are going to Boulevard 3." So I said, "Great, fine." But he turned left out of the hotel and we headed north for blocks and suddenly we were across over by the Hollywood Bowl and I knew it wasn't this far. And then suddenly we were on the freeway and my husband jokingly said, "Well, I figured we'd try to walk, but I thought it was a little too far." And the driver said, "Oh, yes, it is much too far. It's about 90 miles!" And we thought he was kidding!! And we asked him where he was from and he was from Russia. So Brian thought, "Well, that's a funny Russian joke," but the driver said, "Oh no, it IS 90 miles." And we said, "No, it's around the corner." And he said, "No, No you are going to Bakersfield!" We both said, "WHAT?" We said, "No, we're going to Sunset Boulevard!" He said, "In Bakersfield," and we said, "No in Hollywood!" So we had to get off the freeway and go all of the way down through the mountains because we were already 15 minutes on the way to Bakersfield!!! (Asst. Ed. Note: I'm shaking my head, my jaw is dropped, and all I can say is, "Oh My God!" Bakersfield is an agricultural center, not an Emmy-party center!!!)

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

But the SoapNet party was WONDERFUL. There were soooo many people to see and say hello to. It was a very nice venue and they had lovely food and drinks. There was lots of circulation and they had hired people to be living statues. I swear to God that I walked in and I thought they were statues, and then one of them moved and scared me to death. Michelle Stafford almost knocked one of them over! It was a really, really nice party. You could talk to people – we saw hundreds of people. I had a long lovely talk with Linda Dano [ex-Rae Cummings] and all kinds of people. It was almost worth flying to California just for that party.

And then on Friday, we just got dressed and got ready – the thing started at 5:00 pm in Los Angeles. So we were ready, we walked the red carpet, saw the press, and I did a little interview with SoapNet – with the delightful Chandra Wilson, Miranda Bailey from Grey's Anatomy. She was just Fabulous.

Chandra is – she's a huge fan! Apparently yes! I said to her afterward, "I'm so glad you were nice, because I was a little afraid of you!!" (laughs) She laughed. She is so sweet and so cute. She was a wonderful hostess there.



Erika and Chandra

Then we went into the Emmys and the boredom began, and unfortunately we didn't win anything, which was massively disappointing. But you know, I've been through shows where we didn't win anything, but at least the show was entertaining. They did nothing to celebrate daytime. They showed nobody in the audience. We got back here and Laurie, my hairdresser, asked, "What did you look like? I never saw you not once!" Not that they should focus on me – but pan the audience.

I saw Brian and I just assumed you were right

next to him. You saw Brian because he was sitting behind Alex Trebek, who was charming! We chatted with him before hand a bit and he was totally charming. He had his 13 year-old daughter with him.

The dinner was afterwards. Unfortunately, the show ended about 7 o'clock LA time, and we all tramped up through this maze of escalators to the dining room, which was not open. We stood there for at least a half an hour. They did have bars there, so everyone kind of got a drink. So for a half an hour we all stood around cooling our heels – and hurting in high heels, and finally we went into the dinner, which was fine. We sat there and chatted, and by the time Brian and I left, we had been talking to a lot of people, and dinner was almost over. And frankly, I was too tired and too fed up, so we didn't even go to the after party, though I heard it was terrific.

And the next morning we got up, boarded a plane and came home. We were very glad to come home. I felt really...like I wasted a weekend. We went out there to support Frank, and to support our three actors and directors who were nominated and who I felt deserved to win. Heather Tom [Kelly] and Renee Goldsberry [Evangeline] are fabulous, and I wanted them all to win, but I really felt that Dan Gauthier got robbed because I know the work that Dan did. Anyway – we can't have it all.

I loved your dress at the Daytime Emmys...did you have assistance in choosing the dress or was it chosen by you? No, I am my assistance! I went shopping and I bought a dress. It happened to be the same designer (Catherine Regehr) that did my dress for the last two years. I didn't ask anybody to make me a dress this year, but I happened to be at Saks, I saw this dress, I tried it on and said, "Yes, please!" And I paid for it!

I saw it on SoapNet – what color was it? It was a gun metal gray. It has a real sheen to it so it looked silvery gray.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

How do you feel about Ron Carlivati replacing Dena Higley? Well, obviously I'm delighted. I had no idea that my comments would create such a furor, because in the past, this interview has only gone to our fan club in print, and because I don't spend a lot of time on the internet, I certainly wasn't completely aware of how quickly things spread, and the access that people have to it. So I was a little horrified that the interview should have caused such a fuss. I'm not sorry that I said what I did. I spoke to Frank and I apologized and said, "I hope I haven't gotten you into trouble or anything." And he said, "No, no, no."

Did he read it? Yes, he had by the time I spoke with him. He was actually on vacation when it came out. My son called me and said it was all over ABC and that it had been forwarded to everybody under the sun.

Who did that? Somebody found it and sent it to everybody in daytime. So I thought, "Oh, dear...I'm in hot water now." I'm not sorry I said what I said, but I hope it didn't cause trouble for others.

Needless to say, I'm very, very glad that Ron Carlivati is our head writer. One of the nicest parts of the trip to Hollywood was when we were at the airport waiting to get on the plane to go to California, Ron was there. There were a bunch of us on the same flight, and we had a chat for about a half an hour. I hadn't seen Ron in probably over a year, and we had a lovely chat. We didn't talk much about the show, just about lots of things. He's a delightful man. He's very smart and he is so excited about this opportunity and what he is going to do for the show. And frankly, I am very excited for him and with him. I think he knows the show so well. He knows the history of the show and he's very concerned about the history of the show and taking the characters that are on the canvas and using them...which will be wonderful.

Do you honestly think that we'll see some storyline for Viki? I believe so. Well, you know

I'm on vacation for all the rest of the summer. It starts after tomorrow, and I'm gone until Labor Day, so, you won't see anything with Viki until mid October.

Oh wow! We'll miss you! Oh, thank you. On the air, you'll see me on the show until mid August and then I leave in August (on air).

How are they writing you off? I'm not going to tell you because I think it is terrific. It's very, very smart.

Oh good, it's about time - when's the last time we saw something like that?

Thank you so much for answering - you are awesome! Given your sometimes hectic work schedule, how often do you usually stay in your apartment in New York City? Oh, it depends. It's not so much the work schedule, but what Brian and I have to do - if we want to go to the theatre or the opera or want to have dinner with friends or the kids or something, then we'll stay in town. It's not really centered around my work schedule.

As a fellow pet owner/lover, what pets do you have, and how are they doing? Have they adjusted to the move? (laughs) We have at the moment 2 Bearded Collies - Teddy and Molly. Teddy is 7 and Molly is 5. Teddy unfortunately was diagnosed with a heart murmur in February and he is now on pills. He has to take pills twice a day but he seems to be doing very well. Molly is fine. Both of them are very, very frightened of thunder and fireworks. I'm not looking forward to tomorrow (the 4th of July). Our pussycat, Gracie, whom we had for 19 years, passed away in February. And right now, that's where we are.

So no kitties? Not now, but just the other day we were saying we miss our pussycat. We'll be traveling a lot in the summer so maybe in the fall we'll get one.

Any special plans for your summer vacation this year? Yes, we are going to London for a

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

week and then we are going to Africa for 2 weeks.

Wow, Africa! We're going as a family. Amanda and Michael are coming. Michael is going back to school to get his MBA and he is going to Oxford University.

Oh, my word!!! We're massively, massively proud of him.

As you should be! Congratulations! Thank you. He got into Oxford University, which was quite a coup. And he's thrilled and we're thrilled. So we're going to London for about a week in August. We'll go down to Oxford and he'll have to find somewhere to live. We'll go to the theatre and hang about, and then we are going to Africa for 2 weeks.

Do you like to shop? What are some of your favorite stores? I do not like to shop. I hate to shop. I shop about twice a year, and when I shop, I usually go to Saks or Bloomingdales and I buy a lot of stuff so I never have to go again. I really don't like it. I shopped about...let me think when it was...I think in May. I went to Bloomingdales and I bought a lot of summer clothes. You know, I buy at the wrong time of the year. In May and June they are already showing fall clothes. But I have very nice people helping me and they shipped everything home and it was good. So, now I probably won't go shopping until Christmas.

What was your reaction to the intense interest in your first online newsletter? I was quite astounded. I really was. I don't go on the internet – I don't go on the websites. I use the internet to answer email and I don't even do that most of the time because I'm still afraid of the damn thing. And I go and look at the cartoons on Yahoo and that's about it. And I can check the weather. And I've learned how to go to Mapquest, which I find very useful. (Asst. Ed. Note: Erika – pull up Google and click on maps – even easier than Mapquest!) Other than that, I use my computer to pay bills and write letters.

That's it! So, I was – and I mean this – I was completely dumbfounded by the extent to which this had an effect on people. The number of people that it reached – I was quite bowled over. I probably would not have been as candid with you when we talked, had I known the far-reaching aspect of the internet. I would have been much more circumspect. But as I said earlier, you know, we've always done the interview, it's been on paper and it goes to our fan club and it is what I think. But if it is going to the whole world it's a little different. (Note: We did pass everything by Erika before we put it on the website, but like she said, she had no idea of the far-reaching effect of cyberspace.)

But you are not sorry for what you said basically. No, I'm not sorry about what I said because what I said I think was the truth – how I feel. I'm sorry that it got so widespread so quickly.

Do you think that had something to do with Dena Higley's firing, or do you think that was something that was going to happen anyway? Oh God, I hope not. I would feel awful about that. No, I think Frank and the executives at ABC were beginning to see a change was needed. I can't speak for Frank – I have no idea exactly what precipitated it. But I sincerely doubt that my words had anything to do with it because, and this may sound dopey – but I am just an actress on a show, and they are traditionally known for not listening to actors. Possibly it put something in somebody's mind, but I think these plans were made way before that. I really do.

When you're in the background of a scene, what are the actors saying? Are they staying in character or talking about dinner plans? We're not actually supposed to be talking because that would interfere with the sound track. But if we were talking, yes, we would be talking about dinner tonight. No, we don't talk in character.

What rule of etiquette do more people need

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

to follow? Good manners. People do not have good manners anymore.

Long time club member, Alyssa, is turning 35 on 7/31/07, and as something to look forward to, she is wondering if you will be airing on that day, or will be on a lot during July/August. I have no idea, and even if I knew – with world events the way they are, it shifts days around. And the way we shoot the show now – we tape sections of three or four shows a day, and you never know what's going to air when. But Happy Birthday Alyssa!

Please tell us all the good things about the new head writer for OLTL, Ron Carlivati. Ron is number one – a very smart man. He's a lawyer who decided after a few years of practicing law that it was not for him. And he really wanted to write for daytime. And he came to New York -- what you should do is interview him because it is a wonderful story that I heard at the airport that day – how he got this job. And he sort of started at the bottom, but he's been connected to the show for about 11 years. He used to watch the show before that. He loved the show and he was very enthused about the show. When he got the job as a writer's assistant, he was able to see it from a whole other perspective. So, he has known this show inside and out for 11 years. And he's been writing for us for years, in various capacities – as a script writer, a breakdown writer, a co-head writer and now, thank God, as head writer. He's so familiar with the medium – with the requirements of the medium and with this specific show and all the characters. And that makes him the ideal head writer. He's unbelievably nice and charming and very smart. I think we are very lucky to have him.

Well, knowing history of the show, and respecting it, is half the battle. Yes, you're right.

Thanks for all the continued great work as Viki. I do find it hard to watch though, since Viki has no story, and is used so much for plot points and little else. I will admit, I totally

wanted Clint and Viki together and hate that they have disrespected history to put Clint with Dorian and used Viki as a prop for it. Even worse, all this David/Viki stuff is more plot points of using Viki for that absurd couple of Clint/Dorian. My question is, will Viki ever be away from just being a mere plot point, and have a story for herself? Well, the answer to that is hopefully in October (on air). When I get back in September – it won't air until October, but I believe there is going to be story.

Dear Erika, I really enjoy the show and I have been watching since its debut in the late 1960's. I started watching it with my grandmother and I have been watching it ever since. You are a great star and performer. I was wondering if you ever see any of the great past stars that were on the show with you, such as Luna, Tina, Max or the Medina women. I was wondering if either of the Medina women or Luna was coming back for this special show I keep reading about. Hope to hear from you and keep up the good work. I like the idea that you and David are working together. You make a great team. Have a good summer. Thank you. No they are not coming back. They are bringing back the immediate family – the boys, Cord, and Max, who was sort of a Buchanan at one point in the past, and Alex (Tonya Walker), one of Asa's many ex-wives.

Can you PLEASE get Ron and Frank to have the teens (and even others) use correct grammar...if only the simple stuff - "me and Cole," etc. (I was JUST about to write this when Viki or Erika corrected Nash or Forbes in the hospital hallway! Was it scripted or not?) No, totally unscripted. He said it, and I said to him in rehearsal that it was incorrect. And he said, "Oh, I'm going to say it." And I said, "Fine, then I'm going to correct you." (laughs) Because that was Viki's thing when Jessica was little. She used to correct her. But yes, I find it appalling that many people do not speak grammatically proper English. (laughs)

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

It's good that you corrected him. It was a cute little thing between us.

Were you surprised that your words from the last newsletter somewhat became "the shot heard round the world?" Yes, I was very surprised.

Did Brian Frons comment on your candor? Brian has not said anything specifically to me about it. No. I actually saw him at the SoapNet party – he was charming, very affable, warm, and greeted me.

It was Brian and Frank's decision to let her go. Not mine, OK. And I think that needs to be made very clear. I simply expressed an opinion, but I don't run this show, I never have and I never will. Brian Frons is in charge and Frank is our executive producer and they make those decisions. Any decision was made by them, not me.

There isn't any reason that Brian should not be nice to you. Oh, Brian has always been very generous. I actually had the chance to get to know him two years ago at the Super Soap Weekend in Florida. Up until then, I had only really seen him in formal situations. You know, suit and tie at the studio – how do you do and hello. And I really never had the chance to know what kind of a person he was. And at that first Super Soap – there is a green room area, and Brian was there all day in his sandals, shorts and a t-shirt...chatting with all of the actors in a very informal way. He saw me at one point and said, "Come on, I'll buy you a cup of coffee." We sat and we chatted for almost 45 minutes or so. And I came away from those 45 minutes thinking that this is a very nice man. This is really a good guy who is working very hard to do his job well, who has a family, and who cares about them, and has a lovely sense of humor.

Are you going to SSW this year? Oh, I have no idea. You have to be invited and the invitations don't go out until around September.

What are you listening too? My IPOD is still the same. It's got all classical music on it.

What are you reading? I've read a number of books. You know me, I'm bad with titles and authors and things. But right now, I'm reading a wonderful biography by Alexander Waugh about his father, his grandfather and so on – it's a wonderful book called *Fathers and Sons*. Beautifully written. Of course growing up, I had read a lot of Evelyn Waugh's books so I find it very interesting now. And I just read a new Larry McMurtry book – I love him. I've read all kinds of stuff – Jane Smiley, and the new Michael Chabon story called the "Yiddish Policemen's Union," which is fabulous (laughs). He wrote a wonderful book – you know I'm bad with years too – I want to say 5 years ago, I'm sure it was longer ago – called "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay," which won the Pulitzer Prize. It's a wonderful book and this one is equally as wonderful.

That's great. Now do you sit down and read a book from cover to cover or do you put it down and come back to it? It depends on how much time I have. The Larry McMurtry book was shorter. And I love him so much that I'll just sit down, put my feet up and read that in 2 days. This biography – I'm enjoying it, so I'm taking my time with it.

If you were on a nighttime Soap, what women would you like to play and why? I have no idea. I'd play whatever anyone wanted me to. I'd like to play a villain. But they don't last very long.

Well, look at Dorian... True.

Do you want Viki with Clint or would you like her to start an affair with David? Love you Erika!! You know, right now, because of what they have done, he should stay with Dorian. He should wallow in his misery. (laughs)

Can you please comment on Trevor St. John? I don't think I have ever heard you say one word about Trevor and he said something

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

very nice about you on his website. He said, "No discussion of great women on OLTL would be complete without Erika Slezak. Having the opportunity to be the brother of a daytime legend – it doesn't get any better than that." Well, isn't that nice of him. Trevor and I get along fine. We don't work together that much you know. He's a kind of quirky, very interesting actor. I think he is very talented. And he is now a new daddy – which is wonderful. He is also going to appear in the pilot for a new show in the fall for ABC.

He had a son, right? Yes, a son – and he is as pleased as he can possibly be. And he showed me pictures of his boy, Aidan, and oh my God is he beautiful. His wife, Sara, is lovely, and Trevor is a handsome man.

Does Erika have any hobbies? Who has time for a hobby?

Are you a bargain shopper? (laughs) No. (laughs) My husband is a bargain shopper.

Brian is doing well? Yes, thank God – Brian is doing well.

Will we see Viki working at the Banner again. I have no clue what Ron has planned, I really don't. So I can't say anything about the future because between you and me and the world – I don't know! I know that Ron has said that he has a story for me but that is all he has said.

I was watching SoapNet and Days of Our Lives credits were rolling, and I noticed that they put certain actors first in the list – like Deidre Hall, but on ABC shows it is always alphabetical. Do you think that will ever change? I have no idea.

On CBS shows, they let the audience see the character names and the real names of the actors in the opening credits, and I think in that way, they honor the actors. That's not something that has ever concerned me. It's never bothered me so I've never done anything about it.

I'm fine being listed alphabetically.

David Pressman has an interesting interview in the Archive of American Television. He has about 9-10 chapters in his interview, and he speaks very nicely of you in chapter 5. He's led a remarkable life! Yes, David has led an interesting life.

Who suggested that Baby Brennan's nickname become Bree? Hello!?! I don't know. It's idiotic and confusing to say the least. And who decided to name the kid Brennan Brennan?

What did you think of Soap Opera Weekly's headline, Emmy Winner "Trashes" her show? OK, well, I never saw it but I did hear about it and I found it sensational – in a bad way – and gratuitous. That wasn't at all what I was doing. I was not "trashing" my show; I was expressing my opinion to the content of the stories. It had nothing to do with trashing the show and I think anybody who knows me knows that I have had an incredible loyalty to the show for 36 years – I would never do that. I expressed an opinion as to the writing. But that's how they sell magazines – with a sensational headline – so there you go.

Are you friends with Carolyn Hinsey? Sort of! We know each other, but I mean we don't go to dinner together. Actually, I like Carolyn, she's very nice, and she's incredibly funny. That's her job – to sell the Soap magazines.

Is there any chance that OLTL could get Mark Derwin to return? Ben could have been kidnapped or he could play his identical twin. I have no idea. I don't even know that he's interested in coming back.

Do you have confidence in Frank Valentini – that he will finally do right by you and fight for your character? I have ENORMOUS confidence in him and in our new head writer.

Did Erika have any comment on the death of New York "Landmark" Kitty Carlisle Hart?

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

(Also, way to go Erika - - so glad to read there is a NEW head writer!)

Thank you. Kitty was an old friend of my parents, but I never met her. She had a good long life – what more can I say – and we unfortunately all have to go at some point. She managed to last a long time and she had a WONDERFUL career and was very productive and very involved with a lot of things, which was good for her and good for the city. (Ed. Note: Kitty also attended Erika's alma mater, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.)



After the tragic Virginia Tech shootings, OL had to rewrite a storyline involving the teens. When will daytime and OLTL learn that fans want to see ROMANCE, not more of the horrible things that are going on in the real world. What are your thoughts? Ok, it was a terrible story to begin with. I don't know why you have to rehash something as bad as that. And I'm glad that they re-shot it. When are they going to learn? I don't know – hopefully, they've learned now.

Can you tell us your favorite backstage moment through the years? (Something that happened that was so fun or funny, you always remember it?) There have been sooooo many little incidents – amusing incidents over the years I can't even single one out. Just a whole bunch of lovely, delightful, pleasant memories – I can't think of one now!

I've been watching since '68. Do you have a favorite era from the many years that you have been with the show? By the way, we think you are great! Thank you. My favorite era? No I don't – well, I suppose that the 90's when I had lots of story and I was very busy.

Which other characters or actors do you wish would come back to the show? Do you think Tina will ever resurface? I don't know. There are rumors about that, but I have no idea. I would love obviously for Dan Gauthier to come back. He's a wonderful actor and it's a wonderful

character and I hope they will bring him back – but I don't know whether they will or not. All these questions are not things I can answer, because I am not running the show.

I grew up with Viki and her kids. My favorite relationship has always been Viki and Kevin. Is there any reason to hope that they will remember Viki has children other than Jessica and Nat? I can't even answer that (laughs).

I'm so happy OLTL got a new head writer and hope you get a storyline with Robin Strasser going again. Also I miss the friendship between Viki and Nora. Will we see you two connect soon? Thank you!!! Yes, I think you might.

Will we see Viki working at the Banner again? I haven't a clue – don't know what is going to happen in the fall.

What were your thoughts about Phil Carey and his departure from the show? Oh, I'm



very sorry that he didn't want to come back – and it was his decision. He's a very important, huge presence on the show – both Phil and Asa. And I was very sorry that he decided to leave, but I understand as well. He's had health problems in the past. He will be greatly missed. I think the show is dealing with it in a very good way.

Many of the actors' headshots in the opening have been updated. Do you know if they are going to be doing anything with yours? I have no idea. They are re-shooting a lot of stuff in July but I'm going to be gone. So, I'm not going to do it in July, I will probably do it in the fall when I get back.

Were you a fan of the late Beverly Sills? Oh, yes, very much so – very much so!

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

The “People Will Talk” reference in yesterday’s show (the movie your father was in and Viki comments about him indirectly) – how did that come to be? It was written! I swear to God it was written! We have a scriptwriter who threw that in as part of my own history! I thought it was as sweet as anything. I was completely surprised when I saw it in the script. It was written by Carolyn Culliton.



Publicity photos from “People Will Talk”
www.carygrant.net

Wow that is so nice to hear. She was on the ball with that one. I thought for sure that you and Tuc did some adlibbing with it. No, that was written in!

Do you know what episode number you started on your first day on the show back in 1971? I tried to figure it out yesterday actually. I think it was somewhere around 700.

So I think it is pretty fair to say that you have probably done at least 6000 episodes. Oh, easily. I think it is close to about two thirds.

Wow – pretty cool! Yes, pretty cool! It makes

me laugh when I hear people carrying on about doing their 100th episode.

And the 40th Anniversary of the show is next year? Yes, it is next year – next July 15.

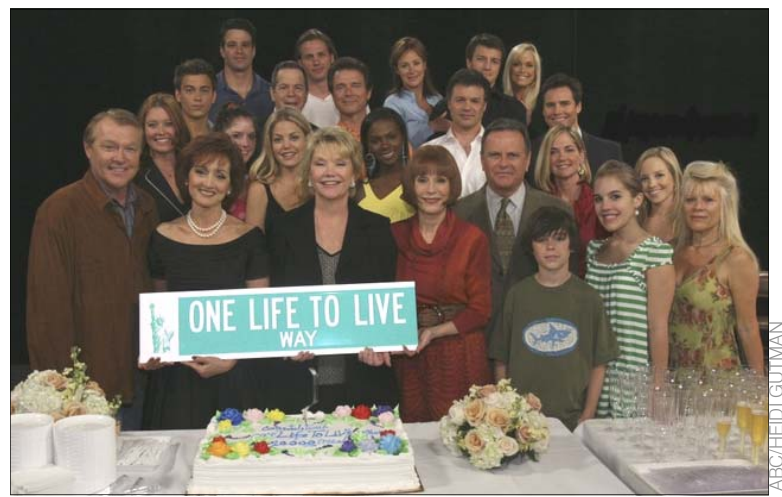
It’s totally amazing!!!! It is – and it is a testament to the characters on the show that it has survived this long, which is wonderful.

Cast and crew celebrate the taping of the 10,000th show on July 3, 2007

www.abcmmedianet.com



Executive Producer, Frank Valentini, and Erika cut the cake.



Actors of One Life to Live