

# through channels

by Joey Sasso

**BEHIND THE TUBE:** Top ABC executives waged a desperate behind-the-scenes battle to keep **Genie Francis** from quitting the top-rated soap opera, "General Hospital." The 19-year-old actress, who plays sexy Laura Webber, announced a few months ago that she had decided to quit "General Hospital" because she wanted more money and more freedom. Network officials refused at first to give in to her demands, but they changed their tune after the on-screen marriage of Laura and Luke, played by **Tony Geary**, drew the largest viewing audience in the history of daytime television. Millions of fans waited anxiously for the outcome of secret talks. They took out ads in trade papers and bombarded the network with letters demanding that Genie stay. Geary has readily admitted that Genie had "a tremendous amount" to do with the stunning success of "General Hospital," which was in danger of being cancelled when she joined the cast five years ago. "She was top of the heap for years," Geary told me. "The adulation for her more or less spilled over on me." Despite her overnight success on the soap, Genie was anxious to escape the limelight. "I'm sorry that I've missed out on a regular childhood," she said. "It is time for me to pay attention to Genie Francis the person instead of Genie Francis the actress."

**TV BACKSTAGE:** **Pamela Sue Martin**, who plays Fallon on ABC-TV's soaper "Dynasty," says in an interview published in *Oui* magazine (January) that she loves California Governor **Jerry Brown** and hates watching TV.

"I cannot watch TV because of commercials. I can't. I hate it. I'm just not caught up in those kinds of things. I don't have time to watch TV. I'm so driven, I don't have time to be entertained. Anything but TV." However, Martin says, she likes West Coast men and thinks Governor Brown is brilliant. She says, "He's very innovative. I think he's an exciting personality. I guess it wouldn't be entirely honest to say that I don't, once in awhile, look at somebody purely as a sexual object because I do. I mean those are moments, those are fantasy moments that everybody has in their life. They see somebody and they have a flash. Every once in a while I'll see somebody and go 'Oooo.' **Bruce Springsteen**. The energy that that man puts out is like nothing I've ever seen before. I guess I have a real soft spot for musicians."

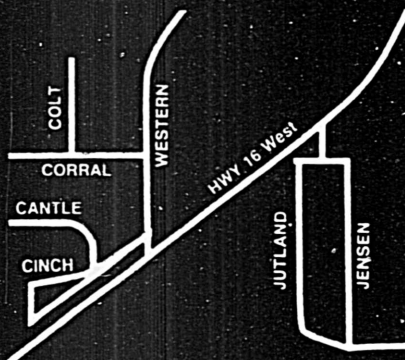
**TV CLOSEUP:** TV's top emcee **Bob Barker** knows all about the quiz show business. The super-host of "Truth or Consequences" and "The Price is Right" has been in TV for 25 years and has given away \$45 million to contestants. But he's also had his share of embarrassing moments. Audiences always thought the best stunts were the ones that backfired on Barker. He once interviewed three little boys and sent them backstage. Then he told their mothers he would pay them whatever their sons said their shoes, tie, or coat cost. The first little boy came back and . . . "How much did your mother pay for your jacket?" "\$500," the little boy replied. "The place exploded and that was a consequence we never repeated," said Barker.

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