

# 'Free Ride' exercise in illogical behavior

An aimless youth invades an empty nest on the new sitcom "Free Ride" (9:30 p.m., Fox, TV-14).

In a programming move that is sure to confuse all, "Free Ride" previews after tonight's 90-minute "Idol" only to premiere in its regular time slot March 12.

Josh Dean stars as Nate, a recent college grad who returns to his small Missouri town armed with a diploma and bereft of a clue as to what to do with his life. Before he even arrives in his parent's driveway, he spies one reason to stick around.

Erin Cahill stars as the fetching, flirty bank clerk, Amber Danwood.

Nate's parents, Margo (Loretta Fox) and Bob (Allan Havery), appear surprised by his return and his plans to stick around. And this show's few touches of credibility begin to dissolve whenever they are on screen.

Bob and Margo are supposed to be in marriage counseling. But, in the logic of sitcoms, this simply allows them to talk about sex without regard to boundaries or to the fact that their son is in the room.

Speaking of rooms, they surprise Nate with the fact that they've turned his room into a shrine to exercise equipment. We're told that this means he must sleep in the garage, a fact that makes no sense, unless they've turned their huge McMansion into a two-bedroom home.

Nate's folks aren't the only eccentrics in his path. While shopping for an air mattress for his garage exile, he runs into Mark Dove (Dave Sheridan), a wild and crazy high school acquaintance who promises to act as Nate's guide to the town's party scene.

Nate soon learns that "The Dove Man" is more talk than action and that many of his old friends are either home changing diapers or playing videogames alone. Even Amber turns out to have a fiancée, and a violently jealous one at that.

Unlike the soon-to-depart "That '70s Show," a comedy that offered an affectionate look at small-town Wisconsin life and whose producers took the time to create a believably lived-in middle-class home and teenage basement, "Free Ride" treats its Midwestern setting with a glib contempt that expresses itself in indifferent set decoration and expensive props.

From his parents' showroom home to unemployed Nate's new car, nothing in "Ride" seems to follow any logic or consistency. Even the downwardly mobile Dove drives a tricked-out truck that would set him back 10 years



Kevin McDonough

of his minimum-wage salary. Contrast this with the Earl's rusty heap on "My Name is Earl" or the comedic penny pinching on "Everybody Hates Chris" or Homer's sad, oil-stained driveway on "The Simpsons."

These details speak volumes about the characters' lives, livelihoods and attitudes. No such thought went into "Free Ride."

## Tonight's other highlights

- Howie Mandel hosts "Deal or No Deal" (8 p.m., NBC).
- A fight for survival on "American Idol" (8 p.m., Fox).
- Nicole Linkletter's Paris photo-shoot on "America's Next Top Model" (8 p.m., UPN, TV-PG).
- A killer returns after a two-decade hiatus on "Criminal Minds" (9 p.m., CBS, TV-14).
- On two episodes of "Law & Order" (NBC, TV-14), Van Buren breaks the rules (9 p.m.), no good choices (10 p.m.).

## Cult choice

A 30-something woman, Catherine Keener ("Capote"), freaks out when her best friend (Anne Heche) gets engaged in the 1996 comedy "Walking and Talking" (7:30 p.m., IFC).

## Series notes

On two episodes of "Still Standing" (CBS, TV-PG), coaching (8 p.m.), my bad (8:30 p.m.) ... The prodigal brother on "George Lopez" (8 p.m., ABC, TV-14) ... Danger in the corridors on "One Tree Hill" (10 p.m., WB, TV-PG) ... A new eatery on "Freddie" (8:30 p.m., ABC, TV-PG) ... Preying on victims on "Veronica Mars" (9 p.m., UPN, TV-PG) ... A new facet to the men on "Beauty and the Geek" (11 p.m., WB, TV-PG).

## Late night

Sarah Jessica Parker appears on "Late Show with David Letterman" (11:35 p.m., CBS) ... Jay Leno hosts Jason Lee, Jamie Oliver and Dwight Yoakam on "The Tonight Show" (11:35 p.m., NBC) ... Howie Mandel appears on "Jimmy Kimmel Live" (12:05 a.m., ABC).

Kevin McDonough is a TV columnist for United Features Syndicate.

## WEDNESDAY EVENING MARCH 1, 2006

	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
WTTV	Friends (CC)	Every-Raymond	College Basketball Indiana at Purdue.				One Tree Hill (N) (CC)		Beauty and the Geek (CC)	
WRTV	The Insider (N)	Be a Millionaire	George Lopez	Freddie (N)	Lost "Maternity Leave" (N) (CC)		Barbara Walters Special (10:03)		News (CC)	Nightline (11:35)
WISH	Inside Edition	Ent. Tonight	Still Standing (N)	Still Standing (N)	Criminal Minds (N) (CC)		CSI: NY "Fare Game" (N) (CC)		News (CC)	Late Show
WTHR	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Deal or No Deal (N) (CC)		Law & Order "Acid" (CC)		Law & Order "Choice of Evils" (N)		News (CC)	Tonight Show
WFYI	Business Rpt.	Discover Purdue	Windsor Castle: A Royal Year (N)		Monty Python's Personal Best (N)		Monty Python's Personal Best (N)		Tavis Smiley	Fools-Horses
WNDY	That '70s Show	That '70s Show	America's Next Top Model (N)		Veronica Mars "Ahoj Mateys"		News		College Basketball Northern Illinois at Ball State.	
WTIU	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer		Windsor Castle: A Royal Year (N)		Monty Python's Personal Best (N)		Monty Python's Personal Best (N)		Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N)
WHMB	Harvest						Life Today (CC)		Mount Zion	Paid Program
WCLJ	Billy Graham Classic Crusades		Behind Scenes	Against All		Taking Authority	Van Impe Pres		Praise the Lord (CC)	
WXIN	The Simpsons	Seinfeld (CC)	American Idol Male semifinalists perform. (N) (CC)		Free Ride (N)		News (CC)	Geraldo Large	Seinfeld (11:05)	Drew Carey
WIPX	Balderdash	Family Feud	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye (CC)		Early Edition (CC)		Doc "Eminent Domain" (CC)		It's a Miracle	Paid Program
WTBU	David Reagan	John Hagee	Rod Parsley	Joni Lamb	Celebration		Jimmy, Karen	Wisdom Keys	This Is Your Day	Believer's Voice
A&E	Cold Case Files (CC)		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Spying on Self	Spying on Self	Crossing Jordan	"Family Affair"
AMC	In the Heat of the Night (5:45) (67)		For Your Eyes Only (PG) (81) ***	Roger Moore, Carole Bouquet,			Topol. Action. (CC)		The Spy Who Loved Me (10:45) (PG) (77) ***	(CC)
AP	The Most Extreme (CC)		Horse Power: Road to the Maclay		Little Zoo That Could (N)		Animal Precinct (CC)		Horse Power: Road to the Maclay	
BET	106 & Park	Access Granted	The Parkers	The Parkers	The Corner (CC)		In Living Color		In Living Color	In Living Color
BRAVO	Project Runway	"Makeover" (CC)	Project Runway (CC)		Project Runway "Reunion" (CC)		Project Runway (N) (CC)		Project Runway (CC)	
CNBC	On the Money		The Apprentice (CC)		Mad Money		The Big Idea With Donny Deutsch		The Apprentice (CC)	
CMT	Dukes of Hazzard		Revolutions: Highwaymen		Johnny Cash in San Quentin		Trick My Truck	Trick My Truck	20 Greatest Myths	
CNN	The Situation Room		Paula Zahn Now (CC)		Larry King Live (CC)		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)			
COM	Com.-Presents	Reno 911! (CC)	Daily Show	Colbert Report	Chappelle's	South Park	South Park	Drawn Together	Daily Show	Colbert Report
DISC	Extreme Engineering (CC)		Supershops Powerful ships. (N)		MythBusters "Cooling a Six-Pack"		MythBusters "Penny Drop" (CC)		Dirty Jobs "Chimney Sweeper"	
EI	EI News (N)	EI News	Dr. 90210 "Action!"				Girl Next Door	Number 1 Single	Saturday Night Live (CC)	
ESPN	College Basketball Duke at Florida State. (CC)				NBA Basketball Philadelphia 76ers at Houston Rockets. From Toyota Center in Houston.				SportsCenter	
ESPN2	Interruption	Season Weekly	College Basketball Texas at Texas A&M. (CC)				College Basketball Utah at Texas Christian. (CC)			
FAM	Smallville "Transference" (CC)		Karate Kid II (PG) (86) **	Ralph Macchio, Martin Kove. Action. (CC)			Whose Line?		The 700 Club (CC)	
FNC	Fox Report With Shepard Smith		The O'Reilly Factor (CC)		Hannity & Colmes (CC)		On the Record-Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor	
FOOD	Good Eats	Unwrapped	Emeril Live Tomato recipes.		Behind the Bash	Sugar Rush	Good Eats	Ham on Street	Iron Chef Dr. Hattori.	
FOXMV	The Games (6) (G) (70) **	Drama	Millennium (PG-13) (89) **	Kris Kristofferson. Science Fiction.			The Fury (R) (78) **	Kirk Douglas, Amy Irving. Horror.		
FOXSM	NBA Basketball Indiana Pacers at Washington Wizards.				Women's College Basketball		Best Damn Sports Show Period		Best-Sports	
FX	That '70s Show	That '70s Show	Above the Law (R) (88) **	Steven Seagal, Pam Grier. Drama.			Phone Booth (R) (02) **	Colin Farrell. Suspense.		Above the Law
HALL	Walker, Texas Ranger (CC)		Walker, Texas Ranger (CC)		Mighty Joe Young (PG) (98) **	Charlize Theron, Bill Paxton. Adventure.	M*A*S*H (CC)		M*A*S*H (CC)	
HGTV	Curb Appeal	House Hunters	Kitchen Trends	I Want That!	Buy Me (N)	Cash in Attic	House Hunters	What You Get	Dream House	FreeStyle
HIST	Modern Marvels (CC)		Modern Marvels "Glue" (CC)		Modern Marvels "Sewers" (CC)		Modern Marvels "Bathroom Tech"		Six Degrees of Francis Bacon	
LIFE	The Soul Collector (99) **	Melissa Gilbert, Ossie Davis. Drama. (CC)			Touched (NR) (05) Jenna Elfman, Samantha Mathis. Romance. (CC)		Will & Grace		Will & Grace	
MSNBC	Hardball (CC)		Countdown With Keith Olbermann		Rita Cosby Live & Direct		Scarborough Country		The Situation With Tucker Carlson	
MTV	Direct Effect		MTV's The Shop	MTV's The Shop	True Life		True Life "I'm on Trial by Fire" (N)		The Real World "Key West" (CC)	
NICK	Oddparents	Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob	All Grown Up	Full House (CC)	Fresh Prince	Roseanne (CC)	Roseanne (CC)	Roseanne (CC)	Cosby Show
OXY	The Deep End (6:30) (R) (01) ***	Tilda Swinton.	Indecent Proposal (R) (93) **	Robert Redford, Demi Moore, Woody Harrelson. Drama.			The Ellen DeGeneres Show (CC)			
SCIFI	Ghost Hunters (CC)		Ghost Hunters (CC)		Ghost Hunters (CC)		Ghost Hunters (CC)		The Uninvited (96) **	(CC)
SPIKE	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		The Principal (R) (87) **	James Belushi, Louis Gossett Jr., Rae Dawn Chong. Drama. UFC 58				
TBS	Every-Raymond	Every-Raymond	Every-Raymond	Every-Raymond	Every-Raymond	Every-Raymond	Sex and the City	Sex and the City	Getting Played (11:10) (PG-13) (05)	
TCM	Strike Up the Band (5:30) (40) ***		The Bridges at Toko-Ri (NR) (54) ***	William Holden. Drama.			From Here to Eternity (NR) (53) ***	Burt Lancaster. Drama.		
TLC	Mysteries of Noah's Flood (CC)		Noah's Ark: The True Story (CC)		Psychic Witness "Betrayal" (N)		Psychic Witness "Overkill" (N)		Noah's Ark: The True Story (CC)	
TNT	Law & Order "Hubris"		Armageddon (PG-13) (98) * Bruce Willis. Science Fiction. A hero tries to save Earth from an asteroid. (CC)				Armageddon (PG-13) (98) * (CC)			
TOON	Foster's Home	Ben 10	Grim Advent.	Codename: Kid	Ed, Edd n Eddy	Grim Advent.	One Piece (CC)	Dragon Ball Z	Futurama (CC)	Family Guy
TVL	Good Times	Good Times	Little House on the Prairie		Andy Griffith	Sanford & Son	Sit Down Comedy-David Steinberg		Happening!	Cheers (CC)
USA	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Law & Order: Criminal Intent (CC)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent (CC)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent (CC)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent (CC)	
VH1	Celebrity Fit Club		Celebrity Fit Club		Celebrity Fit Club		Celebrity Fit Club		Web Junk 20	
WE	Dharma & Greg	Dharma & Greg	Bridezillas (CC)		This House-Sell	This House-Sell	Daddy's Girl	Daddy's Girl	Style-Hunter	Style-Hunter
WGN	America's Funniest Home Videos		Becker (CC)	Becker (CC)	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	WGN News at Nine (CC)		Sex and the City	Becker (CC)
DISN	Phil of the Future (CC)	That's So Raven "Mr. Perfect"	Now You See It... (05) Alyson Michalka, Frank Langella. Adventure. A teenager meets a magician whose powers are real. (CC)		Life With Derek	Sister, Sister (CC)	The Suite Life of Zack & Cody		That's So Raven (CC)	
ENC	Ella Enchanted (6:15) (PG) (04) **	Anne Hathaway, Cary Elwes. (CC)	Patton (PG) (70) ****	George C. Scott, Karl Malden, Michael Bates. Biography. Gen. George S. Patton fights World War II. (CC)			Bad Santa (R) (03) ***	Billy Bob Thornton, Tony Cox. Comedy. (CC)		
HBO	50 First Dates (PG-13) (04) **	Adam Sandler. A man falls for a woman who has short-term memory loss.	Making the Sopranos (8:45)		Assault on Precinct 13 (R) (05) ***	Ethan Hawke. Action. Gunmen attack a crumbling police station to kill a gangster. (CC)			The Sopranos "All Due Respect" Johnny Sack turns up the heat.	
SHOW	No Looking Back (5:45) **	As Good as It Gets (PG-13) (97) ***	Jack Nicholson, Helen Hunt, Greg Kinnear. Comedy-Drama. A mean-spirited New York author finds love with a waitress. (CC)		The L Word "Latecomer" Moira wants to be called Max. (CC)		Johnny Mnemonic (R) (95) * Keanu Reeves. Science Fiction. (CC)			
MAX	On Set: Hills Have Eyes	GoodFellas (R) (90) ****	Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta, Joe Pesci. Crime Drama. An Irish-Italian hood joins the 1950s New York Mafia. (CC)		The Phantom of the Opera (PG-13) (04) ***	Gerard Butler. Musical. A masked figure becomes jealous of a singer's romance. (CC)				
TMC	The Big Empty (6:25) (R) (03) **	Jon Favreau. Comedy. (CC)	Teaching Mrs. Tingle (PG-13) (99) * Helen Mirren. Three teens hold a mean-spirited teacher captive.		Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers (9:45) (R) (95) * Donald Pleasence, Marianne Hagan. Horror.		Monster (11:15) (R) (03) ***	Charlize Theron. Biography. (CC)		
STARZ	National Treasure (6:45) (PG) (04) **	Nicolas Cage, Diane Kruger. Adventure. A man tries to steal the Declaration of Independence. (CC)	Van Helsing (PG-13) (04) **	Hugh Jackman, Kate Beckinsale, Richard Roxburgh. Fantasy. A monster hunter battles creatures in Transylvania. (CC)			Havoc (11:20) (R) (05) **			

## ACCENT ON PEOPLE

The Associated Press

### Paris Hilton's teenage boyfriend didn't need ID

Two Las Vegas clubs have been put on notice for allowing Paris Hilton's underage boyfriend into their establishments on New Year's Eve.



HILTON

Tao Asian Bistro in The Venetian and Body English at the Hard Rock Hotel received warning letters last month from the Clark County Business License Department after investigators determined that Stavros Niarchos, 19, was allowed into the clubs.

Hilton, co-star of "The Simple Life" reality series, recently celebrated her 25th birthday. Both clubs were told they had violated county code but were not issued citations because operators had cooperated with county agents, the letters said.

A security guard caught on a surveillance tape escorting the couple into the club was fired and the doorman who did not ask Niarchos for identification was suspended, said Jim Bowen, vice president and chief financial officer of the Hard Rock Hotel.

Several years ago, the resort made news when it ejected an underage Britney Spears.

Dollar Baby" and "Boys Don't Cry," as a "radiant and natural beauty" who does not conform to stereotypes.

"Her background of always opting for the more challenging and 'risky' roles coupled with her warm and genuine personality, a far cry from the usual Hollywood mold, were all factors that made her an obvious choice for Guerlain," the luxury French fragrance and beauty company said in a statement.



NEW YORK

### '80s actress to star in stage's 'Sweet Charity'

Molly Ringwald will portray Charity Hope Valentine, the dance-hall hostess with the heart of gold, when "Sweet Charity" goes out on the road this fall.

It will be a touring production of the recent Broadway revival of the Cy Coleman-Dorothy Fields musical that starred Christina Applegate. It ended an eight-month New York engagement on New Year's Eve.

Ringwald, who has appeared in films such as "Pretty in Pink," "The Breakfast Club" and "Sixteen Candles," has starred on Broadway in "Enchanted April."

BY BRIDGET BYRNE

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### LOS ANGELES

Dee Wallace was puzzled when she heard that Fred Goss, creator and star of "Sons & Daughters," was interested in her playing the role of his mother.

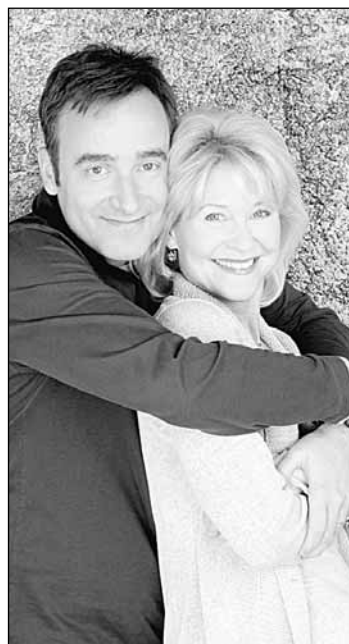
Why? Because despite all her years of experience — including playing one of the screen's most famous moms — the actress wasn't versed in improvisation, and that's what sets ABC's new show apart from prime-time's pack of other sitcoms about dysfunctional families.

But once she began improvising with Goss, it all came, well ... rather naturally.

"I had the parameters of what I needed to do. I had who she was and who he was and how I felt about both of us ... and I realized it's all about being in the moment. It brings together all the best ways that I work anyway. It's freedom," says Wallace, who famously played the mother in "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial," one of the most popular movies of all time.

Nick Holly, co-creator with Goss, says the actors are present-ed not with a traditional script, but with "a short story" that "occasionally includes a line or two of dialogue, but is normally just this novelization."

Adds Goss: "We was poetical in the descriptions because the dia-



AP PHOTO  
Fred Goss and Dee Wallace star in the new sitcom "Sons & Daughters." The half-hour series debuts at 9 p.m. Tuesday with back-to-back episodes.

logue is not there, so it's important for everybody to get a real strong feel for what it is we are going for, scene by scene, so when they hit the set they understand the bullet points that they need to hit to propel the story forward."

But the cast works with a net. The writers are always there behind the camera to contribute ideas and shape key moments,

especially when they need a specific line to cut into or out of an ad break, or to set up a vital plot point.

Typical of traditional sitcoms, multiple cameras are used on the series; the start-stop-reset routine of single-camera production would derail the show's improvisational flow.

But unlike a typical sitcom, the series is filmed without a live audience on various sets and locations.

And because of the meandering nature of improvisation, editing on the series is an especially extensive process, designed, Goss says, to remove the "ums and ahs" of actors just "riffing." The creators cite filmmakers John Cassavetes and Robert Altman as inspiration for a concept that, while not pure improvisation, frees up the actors to draw instantly on their own interpretations.

"I think if people never knew it was an improvised show it wouldn't matter," says Goss, who also directed the pilot episode.

The half-hour series, from "Saturday Night Live" creator-producer Lorne Michaels, debuts at 9 p.m. Tuesday with back-to-back half-hour episodes.

## CALENDAR

### Today Meetings

**White River Rotary Club**, 6:30 a.m., Pipers Cafe, 172 Melody Ave. in Greenwood, off State Road 135

**Christian Businessmen Committee of Greater Greenwood**, 7 a.m., Denny's restaurant, Main Street and Interstate 65, Greenwood

**Business and Professional Exchange**, 8 to 10 a.m. Greenwood City Building lower level, 2 N. Madison Ave., Greenwood. Information: Ron Mote, 735-2010

**Discover Downtown Franklin**, 8 a.m., Don and Dona's Restaurant, Franklin

**Columbus Star Quilters**, 9:30 a.m., Masonic Temple at Rocky Ford and Taylor roads, Columbus

**TOPS** (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), 9:30 a.m., Abundant Grace Lutheran Church, 2425 S. Emerson Ave., Greenwood. Information: 780-1324

**Bargersville Area Senior Citizens**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 14 W. Old South St. Potluck lunch, cards; 6 to 9 p.m. music

**National Association of Retired and Active Federal Employees**, 11:30 a.m., Hillview Country Club, Franklin. Information: 422-9651

**Johnson County Republicans**, 11:30 a.m., Don and Dona's Restaurant, Franklin

**Parkinson's Disease Support Group**, 1:15 to 2:15 p.m., Franklin Senior Citizen Center, 160 E. Adams St., Franklin. Information: 736-7523 or 736-0193

**Overeaters Anonymous**, 5:30 p.m., Greenwood United Methodist Church, 525 N. Madison Ave., Greenwood

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SHOWTIMES FOR MARCH 01 - 02

DOOGAL (G) 1:20 3:30 6:20 8:50  
MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION (PG) 12:00  
2:10 2:40 4:40 5:10 7:20 7:50 9:50 10:20