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SECTION **C**

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Dishing the 'Dirt' with actress Cox

TV star plays woman on other side of celeb tabloids

By PATRICIA SHERIDAN
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Former "Friends" star Courteney Cox is getting down and dirty as a soulless tabloid editor in "Dirt." Cox, 42, lives with husband David Arquette and their daughter Coco in Los Angeles. She shares her thoughts on the new show, being a celebrity and working out.

Q: Will "Dirt" do ripped-from-the-headlines stories?

A: Not necessarily. We have this one guy who works for the show who has worked on a lot of magazines like People and Entertainment Weekly. So he's always giving us what's the latest out there. If anything, it just cues us for other ideas. We're not taking anything directly from the headlines.

Q: Did you feel like you were going into the belly of the beast with this character?

A: You know what I feel like? I was doing a scene yesterday and I was just having such a good time. I'm in the belly of the beast, but I just feel like I'm having fun at it.

Q: Of all the cast of "Friends," it seems Jennifer Aniston has been plagued the most by the tabloids.

A: No doubt.

Q: What was your worst experience with them?

A: My life has not been that dramatic. Having Coco was probably the worst experience, because they are so obsessed with celebrity babies. The paparazzi were insane during that time.

That's kind of how the show originated. When I was pregnant with Coco, I was hounded so bad that the head of development in our office was a witness to a bunch of different events. They would surround me in cars or just really get in your face, to the point where you go into fight-or-flight mode.

So, she saw this and thought this would be a great idea for a show. Then we developed it.

Q: How has motherhood changed you, if it has?

A: I'm doing exactly the same thing except Coco just comes. I've spent one night away from her since she was born. That was pretty brutal, and I was only in Las Vegas.

So I would just say it enriches my life. I wouldn't say it changed it. It doesn't inhibit me. It's just made me love deeper and more appreciative of things.

Q: You are on the treadmill right now. How long will you be on it?

A: I'm on the elliptical, and I'll be on it an hour. And I'll probably do it four times a week. When I started, I thought, "Oh, my God, it's the worst thing in the world," but now there's so much you can get done when you are working out. Especially producing a show.

This is when I watch the cuts. This is when I make notes. This is when I learn my lines.

Courteney Cox stars as a tabloid editor in "Dirt."

AP PHOTO



Muncie excited, nervous about TV's 'Armed'

By KEN KUSMER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

Reality television? Or just surreal?

Erik Estrada, La Toya Jackson and three other celebrities get shocked with stun guns, tackled by police dogs and party with the denizens of college town Muncie in "Armed & Famous," a new CBS television show that premiered Wednesday night.

The show features Jackson, Estrada and other celebrities as gun-toting, badge-wearing reserve officers of the Muncie Police Department.

And while CBS hopes it's a hit, some in this city 50 miles north-east of Indianapolis are wary of how Muncie will come across during the duration of the show.

"They're going to try to show the worst side of Muncie because that makes the best television," said attorney Michael Quirk, who represents a man who was filmed being arrested. "I don't think anybody but the city wants these people in town."

Mayor Dan Canan said he initially shared Quirk's reservations, fearing the show's producers — who include Muncie native Michael Braverman — would portray the city in a bad light.

"They assured me that was not their intent at all," Canan said.

Since the cast and crew arrived, Canan said, they have embraced the city. Estrada participated in a "shop with a cop" program for underprivileged children at Christmas, and another celebrity cop, retired professional wrestler Trish Stratus, read to children at a library.

Hoosier city getting famous



La Toya Jackson pumps gas while being filmed for the CBS television show "Armed and Famous" after responding to a stabbing in Muncie. The show follows five celebrities as they accompany officers on ride-alongs.

AP PHOTO

"People who have met them, the response has been good," Canan said.

Not so for Philip Vore.

Quirk, the Muncie man's attorney, said his client was arrested on a charge of violating terms of his home detention by Jack Osbourne (of MTV's "The Osbournes") and his partner.

They ostensibly arrested Vore for having traces of marijuana in his system, but the traces were lower than when Vore had begun his home detention about four weeks earlier, Quirk said. Vore is awaiting trial on a forgery charge.

"In my opinion, they went out and arrested him because they were having a slow news night," Quirk said.

The attorney also said officers held Vore in an empty room at the Delaware County jail, refusing to book him for 45 minutes until he signed a waiver allowing the television program to show his face. Quirk said Vore signed in return for \$400, money he has not received.

Muncie Police Chief Joe Winkle has denied Vore's booking was delayed until he signed the waiver.

CBS spokeswoman Kelli Raftery provided a police report stating Vore agreed to sign the waiver in return for a T-shirt saying he had been arrested by a celebrity.

In another incident, Estrada engaged in

(SEE ARMED, PAGE C7)

'Alpha Dog' has shrill bark but surprisingly strong bite

By CHRISTY LEMIRE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

They aren't exactly likable characters, the drug dealers and stoners and wannabe gangsters of "Alpha Dog."

They're bored, white kids with too much money and time on their hands and, in their shallow estimation, nothing better to do than sit around getting high, playing video games and emulating the speech and bravado of their favorite rap videos. (Every other word is "chill," "dog" or an F-bomb. Word.)

But they feel real and alive in the hands of writer-director Nick Cassavetes — who couldn't have gone in a more opposite direction from his 2004 weepy romance "The Notebook" — and whose story of drugs, kidnapping and murder is inspired by a 1999 Southern California case.



Elvis Schmidt (Shawn Hatosy), left, and Frankie Ballenbacher (Justin Timberlake) discuss what to do with their hostage in "Alpha Dog." The film opens Friday.

AP PHOTO

The situations become shrill, overlong and a bit repetitive (how many parties can these people attend over a three-day period?), but they also

grow increasingly volatile, which allows for vibrant performances from a hot, young cast that includes Emile Hirsch, Ben Foster, Shawn Hatosy,

MOVIE REVIEW

'Alpha Dog'
Rating: R for pervasive drug use and language, violence, sexuality and nudity
Stars: 2½ out of four

Amanda Seyfried and Olivia Wilde. Justin Timberlake is surprisingly good as one of the kidnapers.

You already knew he was charismatic, and if you've seen him on "Saturday Night Live," you knew he was exceedingly capable of comedy. But here, all buffed and tatted, he succeeds at digging deep dramatically, as well.

His character, Frankie, shares a tangle, unexpected bond with the doomed 15-year-old victim, Zack

(SEE DOG, PAGE C10)



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