

APPRECIATION

'Punky Brewster' patriarch George Gaynes dies

Jayne Deerwester USA TODAY

George Gaynes, best known to TV viewers as the foster father to Soleil Moon Frye's Punky Brewster and her dog Brandon, has died at 98.

Gaynes was born George Jongejans in Helsinki in 1917 to a Russian artist mother and Dutch businessman father. He was raised in France, England and Switzerland and studied opera in Italy before World War II and a brief internment in Spain derailed his schooling.

At the war's end, he headed to America, where he performed with the New York City Opera, as well as on Broadway, where he joined the cast of 1950's Out of

This World.

1953 was a momentous year for him. He was cast in Leonard Bernstein's Wonderful Town, changed his last name to Gaynes and married actress Allyn Ann McLerie, with whom he spent the rest of his life.

Matthew died in a car accident in India in 1989.

The majority of Gaynes' career was spent in on the small screen, where he eked out a living doing TV movies and guest roles on shows such as Columbo, Hawaii Five-O, Quincy, M.E. and the soap opera General Hospital.



George Gaynes didn't become a TV star until his 60s, when he starred in Punky Brewster.



Gaynes was a mainstay of the Police Academy movies.

The perpetual TV character actor's star rose with 1982's Toostie and the Police Academy series, which spanned seven movies. (He also played a supporting role in 1973's The Way We Were.)

Then finally, in 1984, at age 64,

he graduated from character actor to leading man when he was cast as Chicago building-manager-turned-foster-dad Henry Warmimont. But it came at a cost: In an interview that year, he told The New York Times: "The two things an actor dreads most are children and dogs. I have both in this series."

He played the role for four seasons, as well as in a short-lived animated spinoff. He also would find steady gigs on CBS' Hearts Afire and NBC's The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd, which allowed him to work alongside his wife.

Gaynes called it a career after the 2003 Ashton Kutcher film Just Married. He spent several years of his retirement in Santa Barbara, Calif., before moving to Washington state to live with his daughter's family.

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QUICKCROSS By John Wilmes DEADLY SIN DANCE MOVE SOUND QUALITY FOR FEAR THAT "Do \_\_\_\_ others..." "Frozen" reindeer Use a keyboard

UP & DOWN WORDS By David L. Hoyt and Russell L. Hoyt 1. MOUNTAIN 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. CREST

TXTPERT Across 1. 4626273 Down 1. 46342626 4. 36492824 5. 238 6. 5335 10. 233 11. 62825

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SUDOKU Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (no repeats).