



**CHEF DAD**

Craig Gostin likes to cook for his wife, Jessica. They recently welcomed daughter Maia into their lives, which Craig says leaves him with less time for cooking. But he still tries to make five home-cooked meals per week and likes to experiment with recipes and add his own touch.

COOK OF THE WEEK: H-2

The Post-Standard

CNY

Life and leisure in Central New York

Estee Lauder is remembered for beginning 'gift with purchase'

**Post-Standard to publish same-sex announcements**

Starting today, The Post-Standard will accept same-sex union announcements. The paper joins about 245 newspapers across the country that publish or are willing to publish same-sex union announcements. The announcements will appear in Sunday's CNY section and will follow the same rules for wedding announcements. Those guidelines can be found today on Page H-5.

**100-Year-Old Club: Two celebrate birthdays**

Har Kaur Dhamoon and Ralph S. Burbank recently turned 100 years old. Find out more, Page H-4.

**'College for Kids' summer program expands at OCC**

Onondaga Community College is expanding its summer "College for Kids" program to accommodate more than 1,100 students in 65 classes each week. Registration begins Tuesday. Topics include sports, science, arts and crafts, and computers, all taught by OCC teachers at the main campus, 4941 Onondaga Road. Students may register for either half-day or full-day programs, and for one, two, or three weeks. The sessions are July 12 to 16, July 19 to 23, and July 26 to 30. The cost is \$79 per week for the half-day program, and \$149 per week for the full-day program. Call 498-6000.

**English Opera warns staff about use of terms**

Watch that word, darling. English National Opera managers said in a warning to staff. The company recently advised staff against using favored theatrical terms of address such as darling, fearing it "may constitute sexual harassment." The policy goes against the grain in a city where many people commonly address strangers as "my love" or "gorgeous."

Spokesman Anthony McNeill said, "Whilst it may be acceptable between friends, it would be thought of very differently if the term is used by a senior colleague."

**Watermelons are full of water and lycopene**

It's not hard to believe that 92 percent of a watermelon is water. But what else is in the sweet, refreshing fruit? Lycopene, a carotenoid and pigment that gives fruits and vegetables their red color, is plentiful in watermelon, according to the National Watermelon Promotion Board. A 2-cup serving has 15 to 20 milligrams, compared with 4 milligrams in one medium-sized tomato.

**Sunday Q&A: Jacob, Emily top baby-name list**

Knight Ridder News Service columnist Tina Beaumont-Clay provides today's answer: Can you find out what the top baby names are? According to the Social Security Administration, the top 10 boys names on applications received in 2002 (the latest available), in order of popularity, were: Jacob, Michael, Joshua, Matthew, Ethan, Joseph, Andrew, Christopher, Daniel and Nicholas. For girls, the most oft-chosen top 10, in order, were: Emily, Madison, Hannah, Emma, Alexis, Ashley, Abigail, Sarah, Samantha and Olivia.

— News service reports

**Index**

Dear Abby	H-2
John Gray	H-2
Thanks to	H-3
Reunions	H-3
Our Time	H-4
Engagements	H-5
Weddings	H-5
Anniversaries	H-5

Gina Ogden, features editor, 478-2272

Saying Goodbye to

FRIENDS



**The details**

What: "Friends": Retrospective special and finale.  
When: Retrospective, 8 to 9 p.m. finale, 9 to 10 p.m., Thursday  
Where: WSTM-TV, Channel 3.

**Some ties to CNY**

- Courtney Cox Arquette's last starring role on a TV series before "Friends" was the short-lived CBS comedy "The Trouble With Larry" during which she played a character running an art gallery in Syracuse.
- Brian Smith, a Syracuse native and a graduate of Corcoran High School, in a 1997 episode played a college student whom Rachel dates to spark jealousy in Ross.
- Tompkins County native Tim DeKay, a graduate of Le Moyne College, played the photo-snapping husband of Rachel's hospital roommate giving birth in a 2002 episode.
- "Princess Emma," a painting by Skaneateles artist Shelly Kennedy, was placed on the wall of Ross and Rachel's nursery in 2002.

By William LaRue  
Staff writer

Contrary to its theme song, "Friends" will no longer be there for you. The NBC situation comedy concludes its 10-year run on Thursday. The finale was filmed weeks ago, but NBC has kept mum on exactly how the series wraps up. From its first season in 1994-95, "Friends" has been a big ratings hit, a critical success and a pop-culture mover and shaker. The show centers on the Generation X friendships of three men and three women who often drop into each other's New York City apartments or hang out at a Greenwich Village coffeehouse known as Central Perk.



We all know Tom Selleck was a friend of one of the "Friends." His profession? Test your memory in our quiz on Page H-3.

But it was more than well-written scripts and good acting that made "Friends" a huge success, especially with viewers in their 20s and 30s, according to Tina Pieraccini, professor of communications at State University College at Oswego. "This group of six individuals really resonated with those baby boomers' children who were in the exact same position — starting to enter the workplace, looking for love, some going to college, some getting out of college, others looking for apartments," Pieraccini says. "It's a show that was at the right place at the right time with the right idea." "Friends" is now the No. 1 comedy on television, drawing an average of about 21 million viewers a week this season. During the February ratings period, the show ranked No. 3 in the Syracuse TV market, where an aver-

age of 75,707 households tuned in each week. The success of "Friends" has turned its main cast — Matthew Perry, Lisa Kudrow, Matt LeBlanc, Jennifer Aniston, Courtney Cox Arquette and David Schwimmer — into major stars and helped them launch movie careers with mixed success.

"Friends" also has helped to inspire numerous copycat TV comedies about young adults hanging out together. "The Single Guy," "Caroline in the City" and "Coupling" are among the shows that tried with little success to match the humor or ratings of "Friends."

But it shouldn't be forgotten that "Friends" was seen initially as a copy of the anti-authority comedy that made "Seinfeld" so popular, according to Robert Thompson, professor of communications at Syracuse University.

Its derivative beginnings might be one reason the finale of "Friends" isn't inspiring the kind of media and fan frenzy that accompanied last episodes of "Seinfeld" in 1998 and "Cheers" in 1993, he says.

"Let's face it, 'Seinfeld' was the big innovation," Thompson says. "'Friends' was initially seen as a kind of a 'Seinfeld' rip-off. They added two people. They made them all prettier. And they softened the edges."

Like "Seinfeld," he adds, "Friends" is a comedy about a group of childish adults who lack an authority figure to rein them in. "Friends" is what "The Brady Bunch" would have been if Mike and Carol had gone out for a pack of smokes and never come back again," Thompson says. "In many ways, 'Friends' took this even farther than 'Seinfeld' did."

**You still got 'Friends'**

- NBC this fall will air a spin-off situation comedy series, "Joey," featuring Matt LeBlanc's character pursuing an acting career in Hollywood.
- Past-season reruns of "Friends" air at 6:30 and 7 p.m. weekdays on WSYT-TV, Channel 68.
- Warner Home Video on May 11 releases on DVD "Friends — The Series Finale (Exclusive Limited Edition)" priced at \$14.97. The package includes the final episode, the series pilot, never-before-seen footage and other features.

If you had written the final episode of NBC's "Friends," how would the series end?

Share your thoughts with The Post-Standard. E-mail a brief summary to features@syracuse.com or deliver it to the front lobby of the newspaper, 1 Clinton Square, no later than 5 p.m. Monday.

Include your name, address and a daytime telephone. We'll publish a sample of comments Thursday.

One entrant will be chosen at random to receive a "Friends Party Pack," which includes a DVD with seven "party episodes," a CD with music from the show, a serving tray, party recipes, coasters and "Central Perk House Blend" coffee.

**The characters**



Monica Geller (Courtney Cox Arquette): She's a chef and a control freak. She's married to Chandler and hopes to start a family.



Chandler Bing (Matthew Perry): Monica's husband and Joey's former roommate recently quit his job to pursue his dreams, although he hasn't quite identified them yet.



Joey Tribbiani (Matt LeBlanc): An aspiring actor, Joey's big break came when he landed the role of Dr. Ramoray on "Days of Our Lives." He once roomed with Chandler.



Rachel Green (Jennifer Aniston): Monica's best friend from high school was married momentarily to Ross, but now they're "just friends" raising their baby, Emma.



Ross Geller (David Schwimmer): He's Monica's brother and a paleontology professor who has been divorced three times, including once from Rachel.



Phoebe Buffay (Lisa Kudrow): A vegetarian, singer-songwriter and masseuse, she just got married to Mike Hannigan, a lawyer turned pianist.