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## Today's Muppet Quote

**KERMIT:** Now, wait a second. See here, miss... I may not be one of your fancy Hollywood frogs, but I deserve a chance!  
-- The Muppet Movie, 1979.

Updated Sept 24.

## Lovers, Dreamers, etc.

We sing, we dance and we make people happy  
in the thrilling conclusion of  
**The Road To Hollywood Anthology!**

## Trapped in Parallel Time

Don't try to rescue me,  
I like it better here



**May the frog have mercy on my soul.  
Power to the puppets and peace to all people.**

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**Current Events -- Updated Sept 19.**

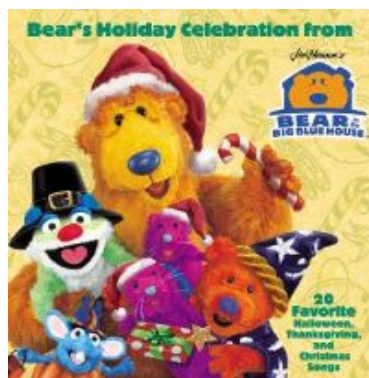
**Farscape, Un-saved** Aargh! The Save Farscape campaign took a bleak turn over the last couple days. Here's the general gist: Ben Browder appeared on CNN Headline News on Tuesday, and basically said there ain't gonna be a fifth season on Sci-Fi. (There's a transcript of [Browder's interview](#) on [Karlsweb](#).)

Then, there was an extremely negative and bleak [article about Farscape](#) on Filmforce.IGN.com... which basically says that Farscape is dead and it's everybody's fault. To top it all off, the Sci-Fi Channel posted a [Farscape Cancellation FAQ](#) that announces that it's gone, it ain't coming back, and they're "striking" (aka destroying) the sets on Friday, September 20th.



So, it was a good show, though, wasn't it? There's still a possibility that the show could come back on another network or as a miniseries or TV-movie; check out the [Save Farscape](#) site for the latest info.

**I Want My DVD** Okay, here's your schedule for this week. **September 3rd:** Go out and get [Kermit's Swamp Years](#) on DVD and video, and while you're out at the store, pick up the first two [Best of the Muppet Show](#) releases too. The rest of the week: Sit around and watch them. There. Isn't it always better when you plan ahead?



### **Big Blue Holidays**

Okay, what else is coming up? Gosh, a lot... Well, the new season of *Bear in the Big Blue House* starts on **September 9th**, with a **one-hour special** addressing kids' fears about 9-11... And then, taking this news item in a *whole* different direction: **September 10th** sees the release of [Bear's Holiday Celebration](#), a CD packed with 20 songs from the Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas *Bear*

episodes! Now, I'm gonna go out on a holiday limb here. I think "That's All I Want for Christmas" -- the salsa Christmas tune with the Bear cast begging Santa Hogg for thousands of Christmas presents -- is one of the best Muppet Christmas songs ever, even better than the John Denver "Twelve Days of Christmas." Don't believe me? Buy the CD and find out for yourself.



### **Yes, It's Got The Rainbow Connection**

And then, on **September 17th** -- can you believe this, by the way? Where did all this new stuff come from? -- there's the new Muppet compilation CD, **The Muppets' 25th Anniversary: Music, Mayhem and More!** Okay, the title's a mouthful and a half, but it's got 27 songs from *The Muppet Show* and all six Muppet movies, so you really can't beat that. The CD also comes with a special 20-page booklet on the history of *The Muppet Show*, written by long-time Henson writer and Muppet fan Craig

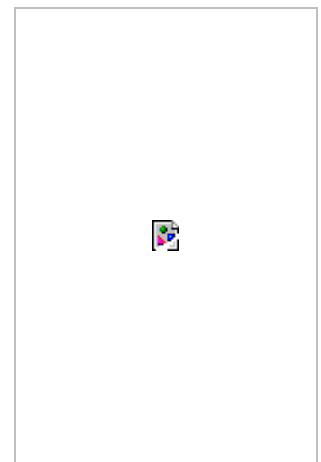
Shemin. The [Muppet CD](#) page has the complete song list, and you can [order it](#) from Amazon...

**UFM's** Keep watching the skies... and you'll probably walk into something. Then by the time you get out of the hospital, you'll be just in time to get the new Muppet Playstation game, **The Muppets Take To The Skies**, which is coming out in **December**, according to **Henson.com**. Here's the description: "Clear the runway!

This Muppet adventure soars (and hops) from County Fair Foolishness to Pirate Island Insanity in a series of thrilling air shows. Play as your favorite Muppet in aerial acrobatics, ballooning buffoonery, ridiculous races, and chicken herding! It's felt, fur, and furious flying with those daring Muppet aviators!" Well, that sounds swell, doesn't it? Who could pass up a chance for some ballooning buffoonery. Not me, that's for sure.



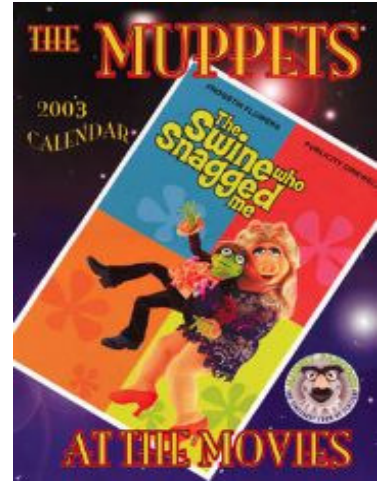
**Below the Belt** Okay, I love underwear almost as much as I love the Muppets, so why do these items make me feel so mixed up inside? I thought Muppet underwear would be funny, but it's not, it's horrible, and it makes me feel dirty and upset. Anyway, if you have any interest in putting these on your body or the body of someone you love, go ahead and click on the pictures -- **Hot Topic** is selling 'em -- **click here to buy them if you must** -- along with some **Muppet shoelaces** that are also vaguely distressing, and some **Muppet T-shirts** that are probably okay, I can't really say right now. I need to go lie down.



**Let's Pretend That Never Happened...** and I bet we'll all feel a lot better. Won't we? Sure. Hey, here's a couple of new Sesame Christmas ornaments by **Carlton Cards** that are really pretty incredibly cute. Aren't they? It'll be Christmas before ya know it, so stock up on cute ornaments, and try to forget the underwear. The underwear!



**Hey, New Calendar!** Here's another one of those news items that needs a simultaneous translation for the more hyper fankids among us. The basic version is: Hey, new Muppet calendar! The **2003 Muppets at the Movies calendar** is now listed on Amazon; funny Muppet parody calendar, hooray. Okay, now the version for hyper fankids: This looks to me like a US printing of a calendar that was printed in the UK last year. The Austin Powers parody on the front is new, all the other months are repeats from previous Muppet parody calendars from the last few years. Therefore: Really cool calendar with really funny stuff, and a great way to catch up if you didn't buy the other ones. I promise to stop posting confusing news items like this as soon as the universe stops producing confusing news.



**Bigger and Better Action Figures** Now that the Muppet Labs playset is out in stores, all of the Series 1 action figures are out... which means it's time to start thinking about the next batch! Palisades has released pictures of the **Series 3 toys**, which include **Rowlf** and his piano,  **Scooter** on a skateboard,  **Lew Zealand** with boomerang fish,  **Zoot** and his saxophone, and the amazing **Swedish Chef Kitchen** playset. Series 2 is planned for an October/November release, Series 3 for early 2003. Palisades has also announced the first toy in a new line of **Mega Muppet figures** -- a 13-inch Beaker toy, planned for Winter 2002.



**Stay Up To Date** I've got a new Tough Pigs mailing list to let folks know when there's a new bit of Muppet news, or a new update to Tough Pigs... So if you're enough of a fan to want to know the latest news right away, but you're not enough of a fan to actually check this site constantly, then this is the mailing list for you. Just send your address to **Danny@ToughPigs.com** to be added to the list!

### **Muppet Fan Calendar**

Some of these dates are tentative and subject to change.

**Sept 3:** **Kermit's Swamp Years** released on DVD and video

**Sept 3:** **The Best of the Muppet Show**, Vol 1 & 2 in stores on DVD/video

**Sept 9:** **Bear's 4th season** begins with one-hour special

**Sept 10:** **Bear's Holiday Celebration CD** released

[Sept 20: Bear's Birthday Celebration CD](#) released

**Sept 17: Muppet Show 25th Anniversary CD** released

**October:** Muppet and Bear DVD's on [General Mills cereal boxes](#)

**October:** [Muppet Show action figures](#) Series 2 released

**October 8: Muppet Christmas Carol** released on DVD

**Oct/Nov:** [Sideshow Muppet busts](#) Series 1 released

**December:** [Muppet Christmas Movie](#) airs on NBC

**December:** **The Muppets Take to the Skies** Playstation game

**Winter 2003:** [Mega Beaker figure](#) begins new line of Mega Muppet toys

**Feb/Mar 2003:** [Animal Jam](#) premieres on Discovery Channel Kids

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## Television News

**When Muppets Attack!** Here's some amazing news for Muppet fans -- Henson is partnering with Fox Broadcasting to create **a new prime-time Muppet TV series!** According to a March 7th article in the Hollywood Reporter, "the project is still in early stages of development, but the plan is to take a wholly new approach to a Muppet series -- **it will not be a remake** of the successful *Muppet Show* comedy-variety vehicle." The article also says that the series "will feature **a new crop of characters** in addition to **Kermit, Miss Piggy** and other long-standing members of Henson's fuzzy troupe." Another article from Yahoo.UK says that the show is planned for a premiere in **early 2003**. It's not clear yet exactly what the new format will be, but there were rumors a couple years ago that Henson was working on a Muppet sitcom. With this new show, the [Kermit's Swamp Years](#) video coming out in late summer, and the [Christmas Movie](#) coming in December, 2002 is shaping up to be a wild year for Muppet fans. For the complete Hollywood Reporter article, check out the [Muppet Fox Series](#) News Extra page. (**Update:** Well, despite the eager tone of the press release, as of late May, there still hasn't been any real progress on the new Muppet series. They don't really have a format, a title or a cast yet, and it looks like everything will be held up until [the sale of the Henson Company](#) either happens or doesn't happen. Stay tuned.)

**A Muppet Christmas Present** Muppet Fans are getting a Christmas present this year -- NBC Studios has announced plans for a new Muppet Christmas TV-movie that will premiere this December. The new movie, titled **A Very Merry Muppet Christmas Movie**, features parodies of classic Christmas films, with guest celebrity appearances. Muppet writer Jim Lewis will write the screenplay, which reportedly will feature a romantic kiss between Kermit and Piggy. The [Muppet Christmas Movie](#) page has all the news -- including a synopsis, celebrity casting news and a really snotty quote from NBC Entertainment President Jeff Zucker.

**Big Blue Firehouse** The new season of *Bear in the Big Blue House* starts in September, and it's kicking off with a one-hour special commemorating the events of last September with a story about the Woodland Valley community coming together to face adversity. For more



...every, about the Muppet show, continuing, coming together to raise awareness. For more info: **[Bear responds to 9-11](#)** News Extra page.

**Penelope's Pet Shop** Who? *Who?* WHO is Penelope, and what is she getting up to in her pet shop? To be quite honest with you, I don't have any idea. All I know is that *Penelope's Pet Shop* is a new Henson pre-school puppet show that's being made in Australia, as a co-production with Aussie animation studio Yoram Gross (a subsidiary of EM.TV). They start production in September, and that's everything I got.

**Play with Me TV** The new *Sesame Street* spin-off, ***Play with Me Sesame***, debuted **April 1st** on **Noggin**, Sesame Workshop's cable channel. The new show, airing daily at **7:30 and 9:00am**, is a half-hour interactive "play date" with Ernie, Bert, Grover and Prairie Dawn. By the way, there's lots of nifty content -- including cool video clips of "the new Bert" and "the new Grover" on the **[Play with Me Sesame mini-site](#)** at Noggin.com. Click on "Groove" for a *really* funky Grover dancing game. **Update:** The classic 70's *Sesame* episodes are still airing on Noggin -- **Sesame Unpaved** airs at **5:00am daily**.

**Ready, Set, Animal Jam!** Henson's new preschool TV show, **Animal Jam**, is debuting in **February or March 2003** as part of the new "READY, SET, LEARN!" preschool programming block on The Learning Channel and the Discovery Kids Channel. Here's the description of the show from the latest press release: "A jungle is the setting of the ultimate pre-school music and movement party for the 2-6 year old set. This live-action series has a very specific movement curriculum including dances, games and songs. The show is co-hosted by [new Muppet characters] Edi the Zebra, Waffle the Cow Monkey, and features the superstar dancer Bozark the Elephant. This wild, pulsing world of rhythm and song uses real kids, puppet characters and footage of live animals in motion to challenge children to master movements and use their bodies to express creative ideas and emotions. *Animal Jam* is produced by Jim Henson Television." Now, you take all that, plus the fact that producer John Derevlany described the show as "a preschool *American Bandstand* or *Soul Train*," and I think that sounds like a party. Let's meet back here in February. The show finished shooting 30 half-hour episodes at the end of June, and it's currently in post-production. The shows are due to air on The Learning Channel and Discovery Kids Channel in February or March 2003 as part of their new Ready, Set, Learn pre-school block. The two main characters, Edi the Zebra and Waffle the Cow Monkey, are performed by long-time Muppet regulars Leslie Carrera and Rickey Boyd, with John Kennedy, Andy Stone, John Tartaglia and Alison Mork rounding out the cast. (By the way, Waffle is a "Cow Monkey" because he's a monkey who pretends he's a cowboy. Got that?) The music was written by the Grammy-nominated team of Michael and Patty Silversher (*Adventures of Elmo in Grouchland*). Creator/executive producer John Derevlany had this to say about *Animal Jam*: "Obviously, I'm partial to my own work, but the shows are looking really good."



**More TV Shows in Development** I just ran across an article from Kidscreen Magazine from back in January 2002 about a couple of new preschool Muppet shows in development. One of them, **Jim Henson's Frog School**, is apparently about Kermit's school

years, so that looks kind of exciting. I don't know if these projects are still in development -- a lot's happened to the Henson Company since January, and "in development" usually means "not going to be made." Check out the details in the [News Extra Henson Preschool TV](#) page.

**Frank Makes TV** If you're a Frank Oz fan -- and which of us, deep down, is not? -- then you'll be glad to hear that Oz is making his way back to series TV. Check this out from a February 6th [Variety article](#): "Veteran feature director Frank Oz has signed to shoot his first TV pilot, the ABC comedy contender **The Funkhausers**. The plot revolves around an eccentric yet tight-knit family. Emmy-winning writer/producers Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein (*The Simpsons*) wrote the pilot." Of course, shooting a pilot doesn't necessarily mean we'll actually get to see the show, but, as always, we'll keep our eyes out for more Funkhauser-related information.

## Henson Shows on TV

*All listings here are for American TV, Eastern Time. I can't be bothered to keep track of everywhere else. I can hardly keep track of my own time zone.*

### **Bear in the Big Blue House :**

Weekdays, 6:30am, Weekends, 6:00am, [Disney Channel](#).

### **Farscape :** (4th season)

Fridays, 10:00pm, [Sci-Fi Channel](#).

### **Jim Henson's Animal Show :**

Daily 7:30am, [Animal Planet](#).

### **Play with Me Sesame :**

Weekdays, 7:30am, 9am, 12pm and 3pm, [Noggin](#).

### **Sesame Street :** (33rd season)

Daily, local PBS stations.

### **Sesame Unpaved :** (classic 70's episodes)

Weekends, 3:30am, [Noggin](#).

### **123 Sesame Street :** (reruns of last couple seasons)

Daily, 5:00am, 9:30am, and 12:30pm, [Noggin](#).

These listings are updated as of **July 2002**. If you notice that a listing is out-of-date, please let me know at [Danny@ToughPigs.com](mailto:Danny@ToughPigs.com)... Thanks!

The following shows are *not* currently airing on American TV:

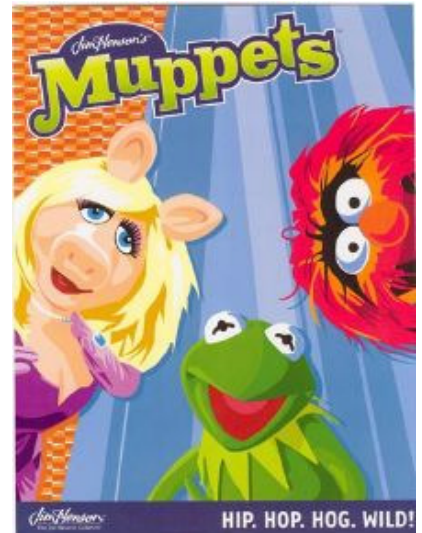
**The Muppet Show, Fraggle Rock, Muppet Babies,  
Dinosaurs, Wubbulous World of Dr. Seuss, Muppets Tonight,  
Telling Stories with Tomie dePaola.**

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**Kermit's Swamp Years: Episode IV** On September 3rd, Muppet fans will hop back into Kermit's past with the new direct-to-video Muppet movie, *Kermit's Swamp Years*. The [Kermit's Swamp Years](#) page is chock-full of swampy goodness, with a synopsis, cast list, a full list of the DVD extras, and a whole bunch of photos. Warning: This page contains some mild spoilers, and graphic cuteness.

**More Muppet Movies?** According to Henson's summer 2002 licensing sheet, two new Muppet features are in development:

- **MUPPETS' CHEAPEST MOVIE:** Mayhem ensues as the Muppets attempt to produce their own 'big budget' movie.
- **MUPPET HAUNTED HOUSE:** After being turned into spirits on Halloween, the Muppets must learn to use their new ghostly abilities to find a way back to the real world.



Now, "currently in development" usually means "won't ever get made," so take that with a grain of salt. Last year, the summer licensing sheet listed *Muppet Scary Movie* (aka *Muppet Haunted House*) and *Muppet Time Travel* as the two movies in development, and both *Scary Movie* and *Time Travel* were mentioned in September 2001 in [TV Guide Online interviews](#). Will any of these movies ever get anywhere? Stay tuned...

**Sit, Molly, Sit!** Jim Henson Pictures is currently working on -- by the way, was anyone aware of the fact that Jim Henson Pictures still existed? I wasn't. I figured it went the way of the whole Sony deal. I mean, I'm glad and all. I'm just surprised. Anyway, Henson and MGM are working on a new movie called **Good Boy**, the heartwarming story of an alien dog bent on world domination. According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, the dog comes to Earth "to investigate reports that fellow canines have abandoned their plan to take over the planet. While on Earth, he becomes the pet, and later the good friend, of a young boy." Molly Shannon is in negotiations to star as the boy's mother. Production begins August 26th in Vancouver, cause the light's better there, and the effects are a mix of live-action puppetry and CGI animation. *ETOnline* says that MGM and Henson have hopes that *Good Boy* will launch a franchise: "In researching previous pictures with dog stars, [producer Lisa] Henson said, she was struck by the number of [really bad] titles that had bred successful direct-to-video sequels, including *Air Bud*, *Balto* and *Beethoven*, [unfortunately]." Calls to *Stitch* and *ET* were not returned.

**Dog out of water** Disney and Jim Henson Pictures have another new Creature-Shop movie in development -- a live-action animal musical with the working title **Let It Rain**. Here's the story, according to a recent *Variety* report: "A canine con artist enters a barnyard of a drought-stricken farm and persuades the animals that singing the right songs will bring rain and end their misery. Between all the singing and hoofing, the animals grow to love and respect the strange interloper."



**Farscape on Film** An interview on Cinescape.com with **Brian Henson** includes some news on his plans for a *Farscape* movie. Henson says he would like to shoot a feature next year, between seasons 4 and 5, and then air the movie while season 5 is running on the Sci-Fi Channel. "I'd like to be able to air the movie before the fifth season has finished airing," Henson says. "We would be working together with Sci-Fi. They would put the show to sleep for a few months, or just play repeats, up until the movie. After the movie, they'd come right in with new episodes." However, Henson is quick to say that these plans aren't definite, so don't buy your tickets yet.

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## Merchandise News

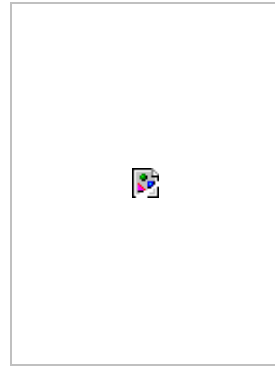
**More Muppet Show DVD's!** Okay, NOW we've got a 25th anniversary. Columbia Tristar Home Video is planning to release a line of **20 Muppet Show DVD's**, starting on **September 3rd** to coincide with the release of the direct-to-video **Kermit's Swamp Years movie**. Each DVD will have three complete and uncut *Muppet Show* episodes, including the "UK sketches." The first 15 discs in the series will actually be re-releases of the **Time-Life Muppet Show videos**, followed by 5 more discs with never-before-released episodes. The **Muppet Show DVD** page has the latest scoop on the two first two volumes -- Elton John/Julie Andrews/Gene Kelly and Mark Hamill/Paul Simon/Raquel Welch.

**Action Figures!** The new series of *Muppet Show* action figures is out in stores -- for the complete list, with links to buy the first series, check out the **News Extra Action Figures Lineup**.

**Tis the Season** Christmas is the best time of the year to be a Muppet fan, so we might as well start our Christmas shopping now. **2momluvme.com** has a whole bunch of new Sesame Christmas ornaments -- they sold out last Christmas, so forget how sunny it is right now, and stock up for those cold winter nights. That Cookie Monster angel just breaks my sugar-plum heart. Frog bless us, every one.



**Have You Seen Me?** My pal Chris Smigiano went to the San Diego Comics Convention, and he brought back some pictures -- including these shots of the new Kermit and Miss Piggy bobble-head toys made by **Rittenhouse Archives**. There's nothing about these toys on the Rittenhouse website, and I can't find any other information about them on the web. So these blurry photos are all I have to go on; they're basically like the Zapruder film of Muppet bobble-head toys.



If anyone has information about the Muppet bobble-heads -- like, for instance, when they're coming out, or where they'll be sold -- let me know, and I'll post it here. I think they're really cute, plus, any excuse to say "bobble-head," right? (Update, Aug 9): I'm told by an occasionally reliable source that the bobble-head line also includes Fozzie and Gonzo, and that they'll be out by the end of the year. Which is nice to know, but is that enough? No, it is not.

**Tiny Lunches** This just in: a former Mystery Toy -- the Muppet mini-lunchboxes -- are now available for actual purchase by real humans at the **Palisades Toys website**. One's a 25th Anniversary box, with neat photos of the Muppet cast all over it, and the other's an uber-cool Electric Mayhem box, just like you wanted to take to school back in the day. Except way smaller.



**More Love from Palisades** And also available now on the **Palisades Toys site** -- the Palisades Collectors Club, which gives fans



the opportunity to get exclusive Muppet action figures which are otherwise only sold at conventions. These toys aren't available in stores, so your options are basically to become a con-hound, track 'em down on Ebay, or join the Collectors Club. Membership is \$30.00 for a year for US residents, \$40.00 for international memberships. Join now and you'll get a **Vanishing Cream Beaker** toy, which comes complete with a tube of Vanishing Cream that fits into the Bunsen figure's hand, and how cool, may I ask you, is *that*. Next up for the Collectors Club is the *Muppets From Space* Vanishing Fozzie toy, with rubber duckie invisibility spray.



**Must Increase Our Busts** Here's a little update on the cool Muppet busts coming out this fall from Sideshow Toys: The line-up has been announced for the first four sets. **Series One** will be Kermit, Rowlf, Bunsen and Beaker. **Series Two** will be Gonzo, Sam the Eagle, Statler and Waldorf. The new announcement, according to a Sideshow flier distributed at the San Diego Comics Con, is that **Series Three** will be Scooter, Janice, the Swedish Chef and Link Hogthrob, and **Series Four** will be Fozzie Bear, Lew Zealand, Beauregard and Zoot. Check out the News Extra [Muppet Show busts](#) page for photos and more info.



**Wanted: Posters** All right, at last I've found an online source for the two new 25th Anniversary Muppet posters -- or, to be honest about it, my pal Rose found an online source, and she sent me an e-mail. So it's not like I did investigative journalism or anything. I rarely do. Mostly I just sit here and wait for people to send me stuff; it works out a lot more than you'd expect. Anyway, here's the source --

[TheBestPosters.com](#), which is selling the [Muppet Show cast poster](#) and the [Miss Piggy poster](#) for \$7.99 each.



**Muppets For Breakfast** Starting in October, the Muppets and Bear in the Big Blue House will be part of a balanced breakfast! The [Muppets for Breakfast](#) page has the scoop.

**Christmas Carol Extras** [The Muppet Christmas Carol](#) is coming to DVD in October - and like the recent [Muppet Treasure Island DVD](#), it'll be packed with neat extras, including an audio commentary by Brian Henson, a gag reel and a making-of featurette called "Frogs, Pigs and Humbug: Unwrapping a New Holiday Classic." As far as I know, it'll be just pan & scan, like *MTI*.

**Digital Treasure** Aahhhrrrr! Avast ye, me hearties! **Muppet Treasure Island** came out on DVD on June 4th, and shiver me timbers, it's got some extras on it to give ye a little somethin' for yer pieces of eight, ahhhhrrrr. Click here for my DVD review, **Muppet Treasure Island: Above and Beyond...**

**How Sweet It Is** At some point over the last month or so, I just started saying, hey, y'know what? They *are* making a lot of new Muppet stuff. And I think the precise moment when I realized that was when I found out about these -- new **Muppet Pez keychains** by Basic Fun. They're really cute little guys, with brand-new sculpts -- these aren't just the same Muppet heads from the actual Pez dispensers. There's just three of 'em -- Kermit, Miss Piggy and Gonzo. No Fozzie, sorry! Oh, and they actually dispense Pez candy, which is helpful if you get hungry while you're locking up. I don't know an online retail source for these, but I found 'em at Tower Records.



**Time for a new watch** So, the 25th anniversary is the Watch Anniversary, right? Well, it is if you buy the new **Fossil Muppet Show watch**, which features Kermit, Piggy, Fozzie, Gonzo and Animal on the dial. It's pretty sexy. It's also \$105.00 plus shipping. So. You know.

**I See London, I See France** Meanwhile, does Henson.com tell us about the Weezer video? No no. They have bigger fish to fry -- like the announcement that intimate-apparel company Sugar D has got the license to make Muppet underwear. That's right! Soon, you'll be able to show the world your Muppet-fan pride by stripping down to your skivvies and parading around in your Fozzie Bear string bikini. At least, I know I will. I don't usually post press releases about new licensees that haven't made any products yet, but underwear is funny, so for more information, see the **News Extra Muppet Underwear** page.

**Corgi Cars** Boy, you wait 25 years for little toy cars with Muppets in 'em, and then four of them come along at once. The UK miniature car company Corgi -- makers of fine miniature cars for, ooh, ages now -- is celebrating the Muppets' 25th anniversary with new reproductions of their classic Muppet toy cars from 1979. The set includes **Kermit, Miss Piggy, Fozzie** and **Animal** -- and you can order them now at **2momluvme.com's Muppet store**.

**Shirt Happens** The 25th Anniversary of *The Muppet Show* has not gone unnoticed over at **eMerchandise.com** -- an online store that's all stocked up with fab new Muppet stuff. To start with, there's the new **Muppet Show 25 Years T-shirt**. And when that's in the wash, you can wear one of the other **groovy new Muppet shirts**, including a Gonzo shirt, a couple Animals, a Statler and Waldorf, a Swedish Chef, and an **Electric Mayhem concert shirt** that has to be worn to be believed. And while you're there, eMerchandise also has the

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new **Muppet embroidered patches**, and the Kermit, Piggy and Animal **keychains**. So go ahead and go shopping, and we'll meet back here when we're done.

**Best of Farscape DVD's** And is that not enough DVD action for ya? Then dig this: Blockbuster is selling a special 3-disc **Best of Farscape Season One collection**. The set features six Season One episodes, two with commentary tracks -- "Premiere" has a commentary track with Rockne O'Bannon, Brian Henson and Ben Browder, and "Family Ties" has a commentary by Ben Browder and Claudia Black. An added extra in the set is a behind the scenes documentary, *Making of a Space Opera*. What does Ben Browder have to say for himself, you ask? Click the link and find out.

**Check Yourself** One of the nice things about being a capital-F Fan is that you get to show off your particular obsession in so many different ways. Like paying off your gambling debts, for example. Now, thanks to the new **Muppet Checks** from Image Checks, you can pay off your more persistent creditors with the assistance of Kermit, Miss Piggy, Fozzie Bear and Animal. And with the new Muppet Address Labels, you can even put those characters on the outside of the envelope, too. That is, if you love the Muppets more than you love your own social life.

**We Are The World?** Lots of Muppets -- including Kermit, Miss Piggy, Dr. Teeth, Oscar and Bear -- have joined forces with characters from other kids' shows, including Barney and the *Zoom* kids, for a special video and CD benefit version of "We Are Family." The video aired on PBS, Nickelodeon and Disney on Monday, March 11 -- and proceeds from the CD and DVD will benefit the I Am Your Child Foundation. For more information, check out the **We Are Family News Extra** page. According to the information just posted on the **We Are Family Foundation** website, they're planning to release both a CD single and a DVD, with a behind the scenes "mockumentary" on the making of the video. With longtime *Sesame* producer/songwriter Christopher Cerf involved, that DVD is probably going to have some great Muppet content. Right now, the site says that release dates for the CD and DVD are still to be announced.

**The Tough Pigs Theme Song!** Attention, Tough Pigs readers: We now have a theme song. I don't have the technology or the copyright to actually play it when you come to the site, and I hate websites that play music anyway. So here's what we're gonna do. Buy a copy of **Are a Drag**, the 1999 CD by punk cover band **Me First and the Gimme Gimmes**. Then put it into your CD player and play track 6, Me First's cover of "**Rainbow Connection**" every single time you come to Tough Pigs. It's amazing. The whole album is wonderful -- party versions of twelve showtunes, including "Over the Rainbow" and "What I Did For Love." The "Rainbow Connection" cover is the absolute best possible version of this song. This is what Tough Pigs sounds like. Make sure you are listening to this song when you come to Tough Pigs from now on. That's a rule. No exceptions.

**Calling All Monsters** On September 3rd, the Furry Feeling of the Day will be Happy -- a **Monster Clubhouse CD-Rom game** is coming out for PC, from Encore Software.

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## Muppet Character News

**The Muppets meet Weezer** The Muppets are the guest stars in a new music video for Weezer's latest single, **Keep Fishin'**. The video premiered on MTV2 during a half-hour behind the scenes special on July 14th. There's more details and lots of cool photos on the [News Extra: The Muppets](#) page. You can also [click here](#) to see a streaming version of the full **Keep Fishin'** video.



**Kermit on the Walk** Miss Piggy must be so annoyed -- I mean proud -- because her main frog Kermit will be honored next year on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. No, wait, I mean annoyed.



**Muppets on the Air** On June 23rd, the Muppets appeared on London radio station [Capital Radio](#) for their *Capital Radio Takeover* program. The hour-long show featured the entire main Muppet cast -- Kermit, Miss Piggy, Fozzie, Gonzo, Rizzo, Pepe, Animal, the Swedish Chef, Bunsen and Beaker -- playing records and sparring with each other. You can hear an [archive of the show](#) on the Capital website.

**More Muppet Commercials** The Muppets are back on TV again, but unfortunately, they're just selling other people's stuff. Kermit, Piggy, Statler and Waldorf are currently appearing in [Denny's commercials](#) celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Grand Slam Breakfast, believe it or not, and Kermit and Piggy also appear in commercials for **UPS and Nascar**, which you can see online at the [UPS site](#). Did you know there was a UPS site? Go figure.

**Kermit Across the Pond** In the past, Kermit the Frog has hobnobbed with presidents and pop stars -- and this week, he got to hang with the Queen. Our humble frog appeared onstage on Monday, June 3rd, during a concert at Buckingham Palace to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. Kermit joined other superstars, including Paul McCartney, Tony Bennett and Ozzy Osbourne -- and he sat on Tom Jones' shoulder during the final number, "All You Need is Love." Michael at [Kermitage.com](#) -- also known as Our Man in England -- has posted some great photos on a special [Kermit at the Queen's Jubilee](#) page, including shots of Kermit with Jones, Osbourne and HRH Herself.

**Un-believable!** Talk about a steamed shrimp. Word's out on the street that Pepe the King Prawn is being *dropped* as the spokes-shrimp for the Long John Silvers fast food chain. E-mails from LJS customer service say that Pepe's reign of terror is over, the commercials are off the air, and signs with Pepe's image are being taken down from LJS restaurants. Maybe they got tired of everybody asking them when the Pepe dolls were coming out. Frog knows I am. Anyway, for all the eager Pepe fans: *There is no doll*. And it doesn't look like there's going to be a doll, at least not made by Long John Silver's. Oh well. Better luck next time.

Meanwhile, you can still see Pepe's commercials -- plus bloopers and Pepe's Screen Test -- at the [Pepe's Lounge](#) section of the [Long John Silver's website](#)! (If it asks you a password, it's "howcanyouresist".)

**Riding in Cars with Muppets** Okay, I have something to confess. I've known about this link to [the Muppets doing something with NASCAR](#) for like four days now. I keep meaning to post it, but that means I have to care about NASCAR long enough to a) read the information on the site and b) figure out something intelligent to say about it, neither of which seem likely. I've tried reading what's on the site. There's nice pictures. And apparently the Muppets are doing something with NASCAR. But I can't figure out if there's actually going to be live Muppet appearances at some NASCAR race, or if they're making little toy cars or what, and I can't quite bring myself to care. Apparently NASCAR is a sport, I've figured that part out. But if sitting in a stadium and watching people drive is a sport, then sitting at my computer and writing this website is a sport, and I don't expect Pepsi endorsements, do I? Sorry, I guess I'm not entering into the spirit of this. Let me know when the Muppets start appearing at competitive backgammon games.

**Sesame Radio is on the air!** Looking for incessant, relentless 24-hour Sesame music? Perhaps you have a small child, or a roommate that you're trying to drive insane. Whatever your 24/7 Sesame music needs, you can fill them with the new [Sesame Radio](#) on the official Sesame Workshop website. Enjoy!

**Me Want Justice!** Our long national nightmare is over -- the man who assaulted Cookie Monster has been apprehended, booked, and brought to trial. In a moment: [the results of that trial](#).

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## Henson Company News

**Nick Buys Out Noggin** Sesame Workshop has sold its half of cable channel Noggin to co-partner Nickelodeon... There's details on the [Nick Buys Noggin](#) News Extra page.

**Brian Henson Resigns** After 12 years as the head of the Jim Henson Company, Brian Henson has stepped down as chairman. Two articles from *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter* are posted on the [Brian Henson Resigns News Extra](#) page...

**Muppet Sale Looms** Or does it? According to last week's *Variety*, there might be an announcement of a sale of the Henson Company sometime after Memorial Day. For more info, check out the [Muppet Sale News Extra](#) page...

**EM-Ex** The ownership of the Henson Company is still up in the air. EM-TV, the German media company that purchased Henson a year ago, is going through huge financial and legal

media company that purchased Henson a year ago, is going through huge financial and legal troubles; it now seems possible that the Walt Disney Company will end up owning the Muppets. However, a group of Henson employees -- headed by Henson CEO Charles Rivkin -- is looking for investors to fund a staff buyout and keep the company independent. EM was originally planning to sell JHC by the end of 2001, but a **Financial Times article** from October delays that until maybe October 2002. Meanwhile, a **Reuters article** from December suggests that Michael Eisner may still be negotiating for Disney to buy the Muppets. Eisner says he's not interested in buying Henson right now because the price is too high -- but if he really wasn't interested, he wouldn't be talking to German magazines about it, now would he? Speaking of not interested, here's what I think about the **Merger-Go-Round**.

**Muppets on Parade** Starting October 1st, 2001, **Disney World** is celebrating Walt Disney's 100th birthday by finally thawing him out of the freezer. Well, maybe. But they're also hosting a year-long "100 Years of Magic" celebration, with new attractions, parades, and, of course, collectible pins. The Orlando Disney-MGM Studios park will feature the "Disney Stars and Motor Cars" parade, a procession of Disney-park characters in limousines, including Muppet and Big Blue House characters. Henson built new Kermit and Piggy costumes for the parade, both in formalwear, and Sweetums will be walking alongside their limo. (There are some nice new photos of the **Muppets car** and the **Bear car** at **TheLaughingPlace.com**.)

**The New Face of Henson.com** There's been a bit of a redesign over at **the official Henson site**... There's a lot of the same content from the old Henson site, but now it has big green candy-like buttons. Look, I didn't say all of this news was *exciting*. I can't be responsible if some of it is kind of dull. Wait, how about this -- Every time you visit the redesigned Henson site, another angel gets his wings. Is that better?

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## **Muppet Fan News**

**More Muppetfest Rumors...** Fans are still talkin' about the East Coast Muppetfest, which is more than anybody at Henson is doing. Here's the deal: When Kermit and Piggy were guests on *Hollywood Squares* the week of May 13th, they announced that details on "the huge East Coast Muppetfest" would be up at **muppetfest.com**. Now, you and I both know that there aren't any such thing up at muppetfest.com. But that doesn't stop us. The latest rumor, picked up at the San Diego Comics Con, is that Muppetfest 2 is currently planned for the first weekend in March, in New York City. This is still a tentative date -- if the Henson Company gets sold sometime soon, it could throw everything up in the air again -- but it's a definite that the folks at Henson and Creation are working on putting a second convention together. Stay tuned for more vague unsubstantiated rumors.

There's coverage of the December 2001 Muppetfest on the **Muppetfest** page.

**Encyclopedia Muppetanica** The fine folks at [Kermitage.com](http://Kermitage.com) have put together an amazing new resource -- the [Muppet Show Character Index](#), an illustrated alphabetical listing of every *Muppet Show* character -- even the really, really, *really* obscure ones. Listing performers and every appearance, studded with hot photos and cool facts... Kermitage, you take my breath away.

**More Love for the Fans** Muppetfest was a big success, so it looks like our pals at Henson want to keep the Fan Spirit alive. They've established a new official Muppet Fans mailing list; to join the list, send an e-mail to [muppet-fans@henson.com](mailto:muppet-fans@henson.com). Henson.com is also celebrating the Muppet Show's 25th Anniversary online with a new [Muppet Moments](#) page, which is collecting the recent "Muppetisms" sketches. Gosh, and I didn't get them anything.

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**Thank you for your kind attention.**

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