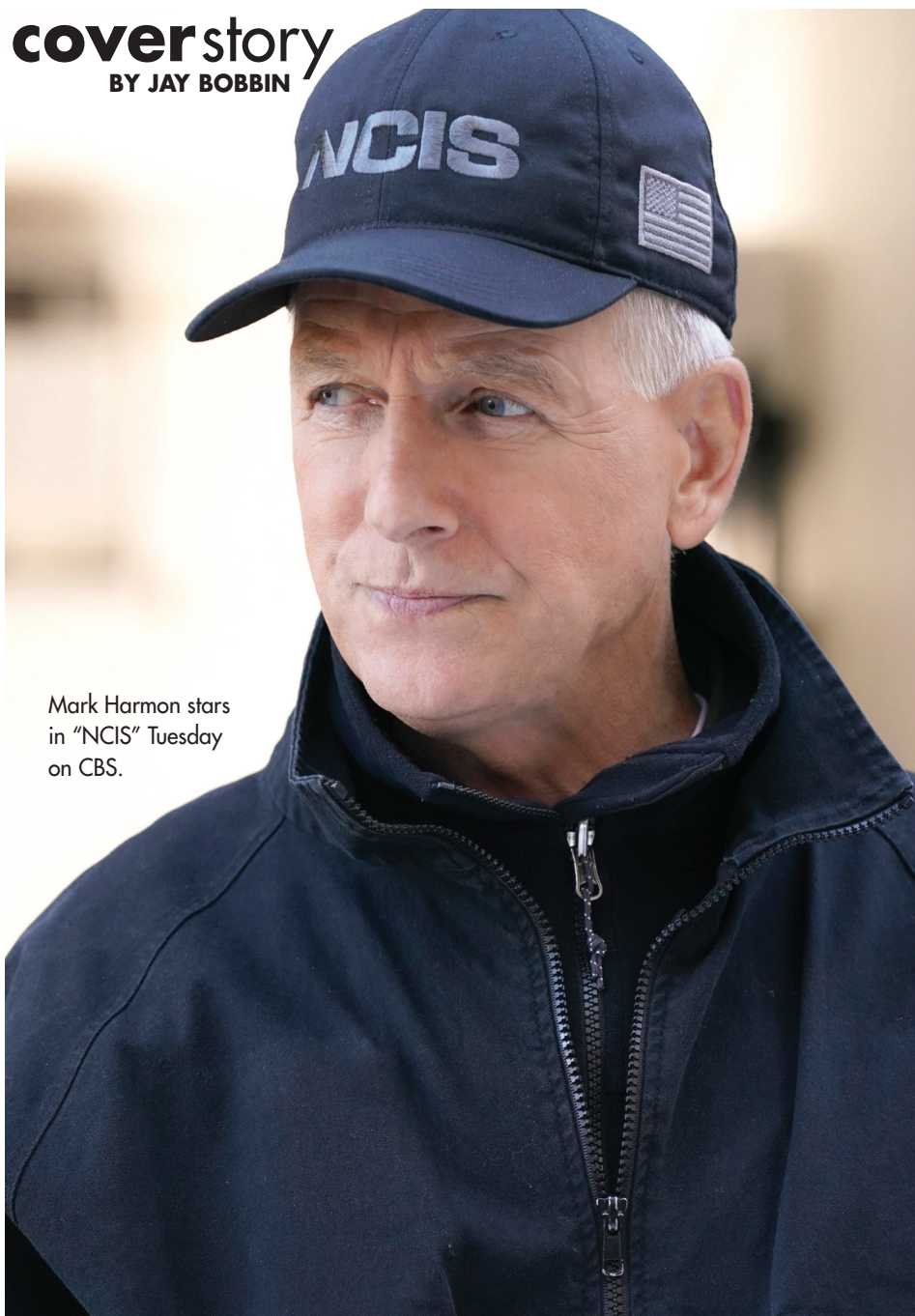


coverstory

BY JAY BOBBIN



Mark Harmon stars in "NCIS" Tuesday on CBS.

Pam Dawber is now Mark Harmon's leading lady on and off 'NCIS'

It's taken a very long time, but Pam Dawber finally is working with her husband.

He happens to be the star and an executive producer of one of the world's most popular television series: Mark Harmon, who welcomes his "Mork & Mindy"-alum spouse to her third of four scheduled guest appearances on CBS' "NCIS" Tuesday, May 18. She continues to play Marcie Warren, an investigative reporter whose professional determination both intrigues and frustrates current Naval Criminal Investigative Service exile Leroy Jethro Gibbs (Harmon). In the newest episode, they're led by Marcie's friend's murder to a serial killer.

"I blew my own mind," the ever-friendly Dawber laughs about deciding to take the "NCIS" part. "I certainly was not shopping to go back on television, and Mark didn't even tell me this was going to come my way until I suddenly got a call from my agent. I'm usually like, 'Harry, leave me alone! I don't want to do this anymore!' Then, Mark told me they'd created this character, and they were naming all these actresses they could go to. And he said, 'What you're looking for is my wife.'"

Dawber notes that she had turned down previous "NCIS" offers "for just various reasons," but this one was clinched by a call from "NCIS" co-star Rocky Carroll,

who would direct the first of her episodes. "He said, 'You know everybody here. We love you. It'll be safe. It'll be fun.' I ended up going upstairs and putting on my meditation tape, and I breathed and I cried. And I decided to do it."

Even then, Dawber admits, she had her doubts about proceeding. "I thought, 'What if I can't remember my lines? What if I look like everybody's grandma?' And then, this was my twisted internal dialogue: 'What will make you feel worse, chickening out, or going forward and being scared but agreeing to do it?' Chickening out really would have made me unhappy with myself, so I did it, and we just had a blast."

Though they've been married for 34 years and have two sons, Dawber allows that she was "a little nervous" about working with Harmon. "I love to hear about his day, not be in his day, and he likes to come home and separate himself from the studio. He's so supportive of me, and he was just wonderful. We had a really good time doing this."

Dawber also appears in the May 25 "NCIS" season finale, and while the show has been renewed for its 19th year, there's no guarantee she'll return for that — and she maintains she's perfectly fine either way that goes. "You know," she concludes, "I'm just not going down that road at all."

Guide to the TV grids

PA: Parental advisory
 DVS: Descriptive video service
 EI: Educational/instructional
 D: Dialogue
 L: Language
 S: Sexual situations
 V: Violence

HD scheduling, please note:

Schedules are based on standard-definition (SD) channels. High-definition (HD) channels may vary by three hours when a West Coast

programming feed is not available to your TV provider. Please refer to your provider's interactive TV guide for detailed HD channel schedules.

For a list of cable and over-the-air channels by zip code, as well up-to-the-minute TV programming, please visit www.bendbulletin.com/tv. For questions or feedback please call The Bulletin Circulation Department at **541-385-5800**.

TV Ratings:

'G': General audience
 'Y': Young children
 '7': Children over 7
 '14': Children over 14
 'PG': Parental guidance
 'M': Mature audience only

Common symbols:

🔊: In stereo
 📺: Closed captioning
 iTV: Interactive TV program
 N: Program is new

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