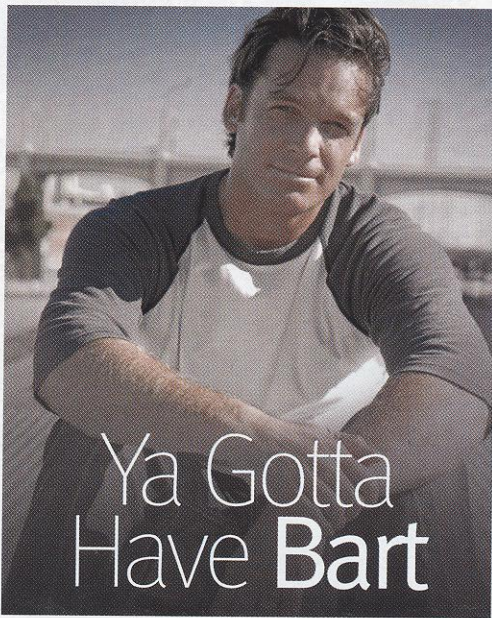


# MY BOYFRIEND'S BACK

The entertainment industry has gone guy-crazy and given us an incredible roster of men to idolize.

BY JILL SIERACKI AND ANDREW STONE



Ya Gotta  
Have Bart

It takes a charming guy to hold his own against the squeaky-clean teen of the *High School Musical* franchise. Thankfully, **Bart Johnson**, aka coach Jack Bolton, is up to the challenge.

**LOS ANGELES CONFIDENTIAL:** Is the enormous success of *High School Musical* surprising to you?

**BART JOHNSON:** Shocking. This was supposed to be a little movie for Disney television. No sequel. Halfway through production the Disney executives really began responding to the dailies they were seeing and we got the note back to change the dialogue in the script to make the “seniors” into “juniors” so there would be room for a sequel. No one saw this becoming such a phenomenon.

**LAC:** You must be getting recognized all over the place.

**BJ:** Every day now. If I'm in a crowded place with kids, I get a lot of really strange looks that turn into stare-downs. Then one kid comes and asks me for my autograph, the floodgates open, and they all come runnin'. I love it.

**LAC:** You own Johnson Mill Bed & Breakfast in Midway, Utah. Do you get out there much?

**BJ:** The last couple of years I've spent about half

the year at the Mill. I asked my agents to get me in every film that was shooting in Utah. In the last two years I think I shot seven films there! The Mill is the only inn that sits on the Provo River, and I spend a lot of time fly-fishing, kayaking, skiing, mountain biking.... You name it.

**LAC:** You wrote and directed the comedy short *The Run*. That must have been a cool experience.

**BJ:** When I wrote my first screenplay, I had an idea for this story that I really loved. I remember giving it to one of the producers of *HSM* and he read it and gave it back to me and said, “I don't get it.” No surprise, I couldn't get it financed. So I extracted a short film out of the feature and got that financed, went to Mexico, and for the first time as a writer-director I made *The Run*. I brought that film back to the producer and he said, “I love it. Do you want me to produce it?” That's when I realized that if I can make the film that I see in my head, it will work and it will be funny. I guess that's what I really hope for, to be able to make the films and tell the stories that work in my head.



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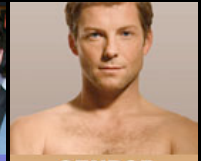
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Bart Johnson Went To Great Lengths To Land "Teen Witch"



Did you know that Zac Efron's father is also Blake Lively's brother-in-law? Well, kinda. See Bart Johnson, who plays Zac's dad, Jack Bolton, in the "High School Musical" franchise is married in real life to Robin Lively, Blake's sister and the star of "Teen Witch!"

So while I was scheduled to talk with him about "HSM" -- and we did, don't fret -- I found out that a 7-year-old Princess gown-clad Blake actually acted as a pre-teen Cyrano for Bart.

**Pop Wrap: Looking back, did you have any idea that the original would become so successful?**

Bart Johnson: It was a shocker to everybody, including Disney! They didn't have anyone signed to three-picture deals so they had to pay up for the next two.

**PW: When did you realize this was going to be bigger than originally planned?**

Bart: It started halfway through filming on the first movie. The executives who had been watching dailies started giving us notes to reshoot all the scenes where we say the kids are seniors. "We want to make them juniors." They weren't ready for them to graduate yet.

**PW: But they definitely are now -- what's it been like watching these kids go from nobodies to megastars?**

Bart: Most of my scenes are with Zac and to see him and the rest of the kids get older is crazy -- I mean, they all had their mom's driving them around on the first one and now they're navigating some really serious careers with a lot of money and a lot of fame, buying big homes in the Hollywood Hills. These kids grew up fast.

**PW: And they're all officially done - right?**

Bart: They've made it very clear that all the seniors in this movie will not be coming back - their time as Wildcats is over. Even though they've written a "HSM 4" nobody knows if they're going to do it.

**PW: I know they bring in some younger kids this time around to possibly carry on the franchise, right?**

Bart: Yeah -- there are three new characters - a new drama girl and two basketball players. I talked to our writer and he said, "it's good to be the Coach at East High -- see you next year!" [laughs]

**PW: Your character is initially against his son being in the musical -- what's your take on all those big production numbers?**

Bart: It's funny, you rehearse these routines and it's really fun to watch them come together. Then you shoot them and think this is the last time we're ever going to come together on this song. Well, at the wrap party someone put the soundtrack on - which is such a lame thing to do -- but everybody busted out the choreography and did the dances to the entire movie. It was pretty great.

*Keep reading to read how Blake played matchmaker for her sister and find out what Bart thinks of that proposed "Teen Witch" remake!*



**PW: The big question is, how much money will this movie make? If every one of the 17 million people who watched the sequel's premiere bought a ticket, the box office would be astronomical.**

Bart: It would be crazy -- also, it was really popular to have parties for "HSM2" so it was like ten to twenty girls watching on one TV -- so it could definitely be interesting.



**PW: You're married to Robin Lively -- star of my favorite childhood movie "Teen Witch" -- and brother-in-law to Blake Lively. Between "HSM" and "Gossip Girl," you must be like the most popular dad on the block.**

Bart: Yeah, I seem to be pretty cool with the young folks right now. If I don't impress them with "HSM," they flip out when I tell them Blake's my sister-in-law. She's a real sweetheart and not really a party chick -- she's another one, like Zac, who has stayed super grounded. I love her, she's like one of my best friends.

**PW: That's good because so often in-law relationships can be monstrous!**

Bart: It's so not like that. She was very instrumental in me meeting my wife.

**PW: Really, how so?**

Bart: I ended up teaching a kids acting class for their father, Ernie Lively, and I met Blake when she was 7-years-old. She was dressed as a Fairy Princess when I met her

when she was 7-years-old. She was dressed as a Fairy Princess when I met her

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with the crown and the wand. A few years later I met Robin and was totally smitten. I told everybody, that's the girl I'm going to marry and Blake helped me -- she was like my inside man.

**PW: So she'd give you the scoop on who Robin was dating?**

Bart: Exactly. I'd take Blake to 31 Flavors, buy her ice cream and get the latest on Robin's boyfriends. We were plotting and scheming for years until I convinced Robin to date me. You gotta go to great lengths if you want to land "Teen Witch."

**PW: So true, I mean, she is the most popular girl!**

Bart: [laughs] Oh wow, she's going love that you just said that.

**PW: You do know that your "HSM" co-star Ashley Tisdale is planning a remake of "Teen Witch," right?**

Bart: Yeah. We've been friends with Ashley forever and she's a big fan -- I think that movie might have been one of the reasons she got into the business to begin with.

**PW: Personally, I don't like that they're remaking "Teen Witch," it feels sacrilegious.**

Bart: I'm really nervous about it. It's one thing to remake a movie but to remake a cult classic that is loved because it's so offbeat - how do you recreate that? I think she's going to have a tough sell.

*"High School Musical 3: Senior Year" is in theaters right now*



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### ABOUT THIS ENTRY

This page contains a single entry by published on *October 24, 2008 1:39 PM*.

[3oh3: 2 Cool 4 School - Or Spelling](#) was the previous entry in this blog.

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Buzz up!

By Jarett Wieselmann on October 24, 2008 1:39 PM | [3 Comments](#)

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cindy | [October 24, 2008 3:20 PM](#) | [Reply](#)  
oh my goodness I LOVED Teen Witch. Every time I get hot my husband and I start rapping "I'm hot you're not, but if you wanna hang with me I'll give it one shot, top that!"

What happened to Robin - is she still acting?

gary | [October 24, 2008 10:59 PM](#) | [Reply](#)  
i was looking through an issue of in touch, and saw an article about him being married to teen witch...and thought wait till jarett find out about this...looks like you did. lol ...love ya

Debbie | [October 25, 2008 11:47 AM](#) | [Reply](#)  
I loved that woman, she needs a hit show like "Doug Savant" did with Desperate Housewives and re-make herself. Its a shame she hasn't done anything big yet

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## BART JOHNSON

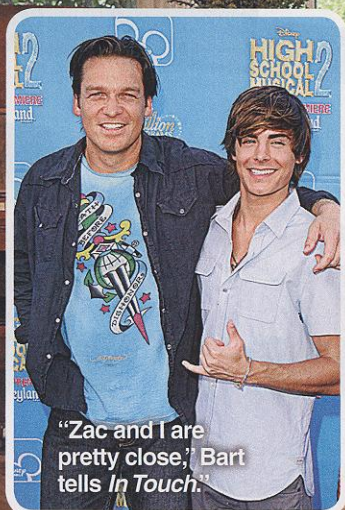
■ Any "High School Musical" fan worth his or her salt knows the popular Disney movies were made in Utah. But not all may know that **Bart Johnson**, who plays Coach Jack Bolton in all three "High School Musical" flicks, is also a homegrown talent.

Bart attended Wasatch High School in Midway. His family founded the historic Johnson Mill, and Bart recently took over operations of the inn, which was named one of the four most romantic bed-and-breakfasts in the country by Redbook magazine.

In addition to his popular role as Coach Bolton, Bart has acted in five independent films and recently produced his first directorial project, "The Run."



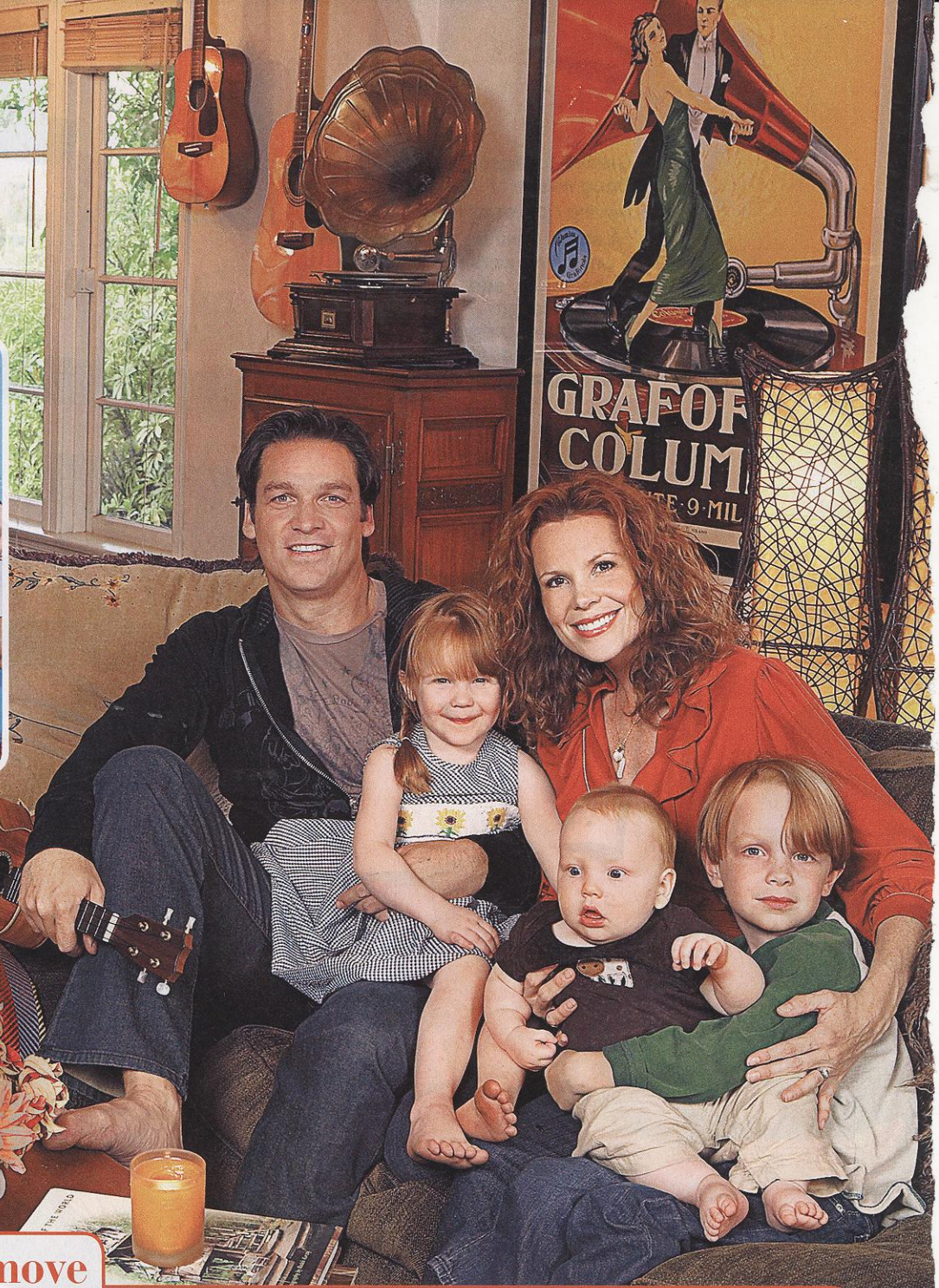
Bart Johnson



"Zac and I are pretty close," Bart tells *In Touch*.

### Bart's family room

As coach Jack Bolton in *HSM3*, Bart Johnson has his hands full playing dad to Troy Bolton (Zac Efron) and training the school's basketball team. But in real life, Bart is busy with his family, wife Robyn Lively (sister of *Gossip Girl*'s Blake) and their three kids, son Baylen, 5, daughter Kate, 3, and 7-month-old Wyatt. "Robyn and I love to chill in our family room with a good DVD," he says.



### Stars on the move



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*Life in the Fab Lane* star Kimora Lee Simmons has reportedly found an even more fabulous home in LA than the one she bought last year.



**DANIEL CRAIG'S NEW APARTMENT IN LONDON**  
 The James Bond star is keeping U.K. fans happy by purchasing a \$7 million apartment in the exclusive Regent's Park section of the city.



**CAMERON SPOTTED HOUSE SHOPPING**  
 Actress Cameron Diaz, who lives in Hollywood, was seen shopping for a new home in Beverly Hills in early October — she looked at four houses off Sunset Plaza.

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### Bart Johnson, A Legend In The Making

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Posted by Tommy Garrett on Oct 5, 2008 - 7:06:46 PM

The extraordinary Hollywood Hills actor Bart Johnson stars as Coach Jack Bolton in Disney's "High School Musical 3," reprising his role from the first two films. The film opens wide theatrically on October 24. Johnson admits to enjoying his role. Though many around him had suggested he not do the first film, Johnson's own innate intelligence and business savvy told him that it was a great film to be a part of and those who have seen his work with Zac Efron admit that they have excellent father/son chemistry on the screen. Johnson is one of the most handsome and talented stars in Hollywood today. The prolific actor has over nine films in the can and ready for release. There's no sign of this star's offers slowing down. Johnson is not only known as one of Hollywood's best actors but is a very nice man as well. A real gentleman, the actor is sought after by producers and casting directors constantly. "I enjoy what I do, and I loved returning to this Disney film. My wife had previously starred in a number of Disney classics and I knew this was going to become one of Disney's finest." Johnson was right and so far his instincts have kept his career soaring to great heights.

From 2008-2009, Johnson additionally has seven other films being released, including "The Cell 2," from the producers of "24," and a thriller from the "High School Musical" producers, called "Animal." He recently wrapped production on "Locker 13," an anthology feature film comprised of seven vignettes along the lines of "Four Rooms," "Short Cuts," "The Red Violin," and "Night on Earth." Seven award-winning directors shot 15-minute segments and they will be combined to make one feature length film. All segments are linked by a mysterious locker number 13. "I feel very blessed to be a working actor. It's great to be doing what I love." That being said, Johnson was departing for parts unknown at the time of this interview. He and friends are working on the funding for his next production. Johnson will be directing, writing and producing "The Run," a short film that will be made into a full-length feature film. I have seen the trailer for the film and it is absolutely incredible. This man is capable of anything.

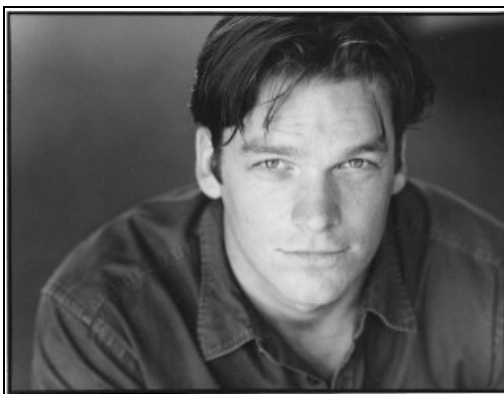


Photo courtesy of Bart Johnson and Good Brothers Productions

In his television work, Johnson starred on the WB's drama "Hyperion Bay" with Mark Paul Gosselaar, from creator Joseph Dougherty of "Thirty Something." Bart has also guest starred and recurred in dozens of TV shows including: "Las Vegas," "Eve," "JAG," "CSI Miami," "Tremors," "Babylon 5," "Strong Medicine," "Clueless" and "Diagnosis Murder."

In 2008 Johnson debuted as a writer/director with an 18-minute 35mm short film entitled "the Run." Johnson took a cast and crew of 43 people, five ton trucks and a camera package from Panavision deep into the desert of Baja Mexico for 10 days. The film, shot entirely in Mexico, is a prelude to a feature length film. The film has just been funded and Johnson is scheduling the production to begin after the completion

of "High School Musical 3." Johnson has also penned two additional screenplays for his company, Good Brothers Entertainment, scheduled to begin production later this year.

In 2006, Johnson bought a Bed and Breakfast, which he will discuss in a future interview with Canyon News. The B&B in Midway, Utah, was featured in Redbook magazine, which recently named it "one of the four most romantic Inns in the Country." He spends half of the year there on the 30 acres of land, which boasts a 5-acre pond, 40-foot waterfall, and is the only Inn that sits on the Provo River, offering blue ribbon fly fishing to his guests. His property is surrounded by 300 acres of wildlife reserve, and is only seven minutes from the Deer Valley Gondola and another seven minutes to Park City, the Canyons and Sundance ski resorts. "I love that place. It's a getaway for my family and me and that region of the country is beautiful."

Not only is it important for Bart Johnson to work with solid professionals, but it's also important for him to be friends with solid stand up people as well. His racing partner Ricky Schroder has become one of his

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best friends and Johnson is also married to the beautiful and talented actress Robyn Lively. They have been married for almost a decade. The couple has three children: Baylen, Kate and Wyatt. "I truly enjoy my role in the Disney movie and my kids are still too young to watch, but I love making movies that they can grow up watching." Johnson and his family reside in the Hollywood Hills.



Photo courtesy of Bart Johnson and Good Brothers Productions

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## celebrity interview

# Breaking Free

**For longtime actor Bart Johnson, a little movie called *High School Musical* became the start of something new**

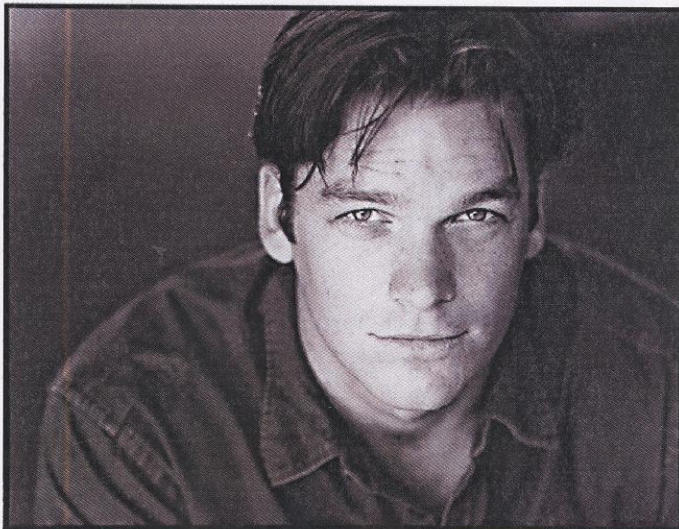
By Dina Santorelli

Virtually anyone with tween daughters should have October 24 highlighted on their calendar: the day that *High School Musical 3: Senior Year* is to be released in theaters.

Yes, the crazy popular musical is leaping from the Disney Channel onto the big screen, where millions of screaming pre-pubescent will watch Troy and Gabriella face the prospect of being separated from one another as they head off in different directions to college.

Bart Johnson will reprise his role from the first two films as Coach Jack Bolton, the father and coach of Troy Bolton, played by Zac Efron. Johnson, 37, lives in Los Angeles with his wife, actress Robyn Lively (the sister of *Gossip Girl*'s Blake Lively) and his 3 children, Baylen, Kate and Wyatt. In addition to acting, Johnson owns the Johnson Mill Bed & Breakfast in Midway, Utah, which *Redbook* magazine recently named "one of the 4 most romantic inns in the country."

Johnson was about to embark on his directorial debut of a full-length feature film, *The Run* – a project based on his short film (which he wrote, directed and starred in) of the same name – when WHY caught up with him to chat about the release of *HSM3*.



**Did you have any idea, any sense, that *High School Musical* would become such a global phenomenon?**

Well, I like to tell people that I'm the only one that knew, because nobody knew, so someone's got to take credit for it (laughs).

No, it was a huge surprise for everybody. There were a couple of times during the first one where we thought, this is kind of unusual, this is not normal for a little movie. Everybody had done little movies, like this one was supposed to be, but there were a few kind of telling moments that were magical and big and had an epic feeling and that got you thinking that this is not normal, this could be big.

**My daughter loves it.**

That's my people. I want to say a special thanks to your daughter. I got a really nice residual check today. I'm really grateful for my people (laughs).

**How did you get involved with *HSM*?**

I've known [director, producer, choreographer] Kenny Ortega for years. My mom, who is a hair stylist, actually did hair for him on *Newsies*, so it kind of goes back a long way. [As a kid,] I hung out on the set of *Newsies*, and that was the first time I'd met Kenny. He's been a friend of the family for years, and this movie came up that was going to shoot in Utah, and he called me one day and said, 'Hey, listen, I'm doing this little movie – it's just a tiny, little movie, there's no money and no one will probably see it – but come on up.' I had a place in Utah, and he said, 'I know you've got a place up here, and, if nothing else, we'll have a really fun summer.' I said, Absolutely. If Kenny tells me he's interested in me for a part that he thinks I'm really great for, I'm going to do it anyway. Having it in Utah is kind of a nice bonus.

So I went on the audition at Universal Studios, and they put me on tape and the executives said no. They turned me down. They said I was too young for the part. I hadn't received a script, I didn't know anything about the project. I just went in and read for it, and Kenny Ortega fought for me... I had gone in with spiky hair, I was dressed wrong, but he fought for me and got me a screen test at Disney, and my mom had all these friends who were make-up artists, so they put gray in my hair and made me look older, and I wore more mature clothes, like a sports coat, to get rid of my youthful feel. And they bought it. So it was kind of a battle for a little while, and if it wasn't for Kenny Ortega fighting for me, I'd definitely not be a part of it.

**I have to ask you this, or else my daughter will kill me. What was it like acting with Zac Efron?**

Hey, again, she's my people. We gotta answer her question!

Zac's great. I love the guy. In the movies I'm not really dancing and singing – actually, I'm in one song this time, which was pretty awesome – but all my stuff is with Zac and usually alone, just the two of us, and it's usually really heavy stuff, the things that matter in life – lifelong decisions and relationships with your family, so I kind of feel like the luckiest guy in the show. Most of the actors, most of the lead kids, might have a word or two with Zac and that's it. I get to have important work with an up-and-coming star, and I think he's super talented. And he's a really great guy, and we've become really good friends. We work out at the gym together in LA. We live right across from each other. I don't really feel like the dad role, but I definitely feel like I have an older brother relationship with him a little bit, although he knows more about working out than I do. It's really weird – I have been working out for, like, 20 years, and he's been working out for, like, 3. It's really funny.