

= Fireworks (30 Rock) =

" Fireworks " is the eighteenth episode of NBC 's first season of 30 Rock . It was written by two of the season 's co @-@ executive producers Brett Baer and Dave Finkel , and it was directed by Beth McCarthy . It first aired on April 5 , 2007 in the United States . Guest stars in this episode include Will Arnett , Kay Cannon , Matt Dickinson , Dave Finkel , Evan Harrington , Chris Parnell , Maulik Pancholy , Maury Povich , Keith Powell , Stu Richel , Al Roker , Mahadeo Shivraj , Kissy Simmons , Jason Sudeikis and Brendon Walsh .

In this episode , Jack Donaghy (played by Alec Baldwin) stages a televised firework display , in an attempt to show up his rival , Devon Banks (Will Arnett) . Devon , upon their first meeting , develops a crush on Kenneth Parcell (Jack McBrayer) . Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) follows Floyd (Jason Sudeikis) , a colleague whom she is attracted to , into Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) in an attempt to get closer to him . Tracy Jordan (Tracy Morgan) discovers that he is related to Thomas Jefferson and decides to honor his ancestor . James " Toofer " Spurlock (Keith Powell) discovers a shocking secret about one of his own ancestors .

= = Plot = =

When Devon Banks , the Vice President of West Coast News , Web Content , and Theme Park Talent Relations visits from Los Angeles , Jack fears that he is trying to take his job . After having his assistant Jonathan spy on Banks , he learns that Banks is gay and that he is interested in Kenneth . Jack sends Kenneth to try to gather information on what Banks is planning to do , but Kenneth is inept and fails at the task . Jack then enlists Liz to help him come up with some ideas so that he can impress the network and win the power coup over Banks . Jack sends Kenneth to seduce Banks again so that he will be late for the important meeting , but Banks sees through the plan and arrives at the meeting anyway .

Meanwhile , Liz sees Floyd , the corporate employee who she has a crush on , go into a church on a Tuesday afternoon . The next week , she follows him in and finds that he is attending an AA meeting . Liz pretends to be an alcoholic so that she can get closer to Floyd and hear his secrets . After finding out that members of the same AA group are not allowed to date , Liz confesses to Floyd that she was never an alcoholic and that she made it up to get close to him . He gets mad and feels betrayed , so she apologizes and tells him all of her secrets to make it up to him . Floyd forgives her and they begin dating .

When it comes time for Jack 's important meeting with the network and showdown against Devon Banks , Liz is too busy pursuing Floyd to help Jack with his idea . Jack has to attend the meeting alone , but his idea for a fireworks special impresses the network and he successfully defends his job against Devon Banks . When the fireworks special actually airs , however , the fireworks are shot off in midtown New York outside Rockefeller Center and it ends up looking like a terrorist attack . Panic results and the mayor calls , causing the event to be unceremoniously ended .

Tracy is served with paternity papers and insists that the child is not his . After the DNA test , Tracy learns that the child isn 't his but that he is a direct descendant of Thomas Jefferson . The news angers Tracy and he talks to Toofer and Frank about it . Toofer learns that he is a direct descendant of Tobias Spurlock , a black Confederate soldier . Tracy and Toofer are upset about the news until Tracy has a dream in which Thomas Jefferson (portrayed by Jack Donaghy) appears to him on The Maury Povich Show . In the dream , Jefferson takes credit for " inventing " America and tells Tracy to forget his past . Tracy decides that he wants Toofer to write a movie about their experiences and Thomas Jefferson 's life . Tracy intends to play all of the parts in the movie , except he intends for the film to be a drama .

= = Production = =

This is Jack McBrayer and Will Arnett 's third time working together . McBrayer made guest appearances as a country club waiter in " Burning Love " and " S.O.B.s " , two episodes of the

situation comedy *Arrested Development* . Arnett , a member of the main cast of *Arrested Development* , played George Oscar " G.O.B. " Bluth II in that series . The plot of the *Arrested Development* episode in which McBrayer appeared revolved around G.O.B. accidentally becoming a waiter at the Bluth family 's country club .

This episode was advertised by NBC as a " supersized " episode , with the total runtime extended from 30 minutes to 40 minutes . It aired at 8 : 40 pm , after " The Negotiation " episode of *The Office* , as opposed to 9 : 00 pm which was the series ' usual timeslot .

The husband and wife characters who appear in the 10 @-@ second internet sitcom , *Makin ' It Happen* , are played by Dave Finkel and Kay Cannon . Finkel and Cannon are both staff writers on *30 Rock* . Cannon was , at the time , also married to guest star Jason Sudeikis and Finkel co @-@ wrote this episode . A series of *Makin ' It Happen* was produced and the webisodes aired on NBC.com.

Star Wars is frequently referenced in *30 Rock* , beginning with the pilot episode where Tracy Jordan is seen shouting that he is a Jedi . Liz Lemon admits to being a huge fan of *Star Wars* , saying that she had watched it many times with Pete Hornberger (Scott Adsit) , and saying she dressed up as the *Star Wars* character Princess Leia during four Halloweens . Fey , a fan of *Star Wars* herself , said that the weekly *Star Wars* joke or reference " started happening organically " when the crew realized that they had a *Star Wars* reference " in almost every show " . Fey said that from then on " it became a thing where [they] tried to keep it going " , and that even though they could not include one in every episode , they still had a " pretty high batting average " . Fey attributed most of the references to Robert Carlock , who she described as " the resident expert " . In this episode , *Star Wars* is referenced twice : once when Liz tells Floyd that she and Pete are watching the movies on the AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies list , but they only own *Star Wars* and *Tootsie* so they keep watching those two films . It is again referenced during Tracy 's dream , when Thomas Jefferson holds his hand up to Tracy and says " May the Force be with you " .

= = Reception = =

" *Fireworks* " brought in an average of 5 @.@ 4 million American viewers upon its original broadcast in the United States , achieving a 2 @.@ 5 / 7 in the key 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ old demographic . The 2 @.@ 5 refers to 2 @.@ 5 % of all people of ages 18 ? 49 years old , and the 7 refers to 7 % of all people of ages 18 ? 49 years old watching television at the time of the broadcast . Compared to the previous episode , " *The Fighting Irish* " , which aired on March 8 , 2007 , " *Fireworks* " gained 200 @,@ 000 viewers .

Matt Webb Mitovich of *TV Guide* thought that Will Arnett , who appeared as Devon Banks , was " shrewdly cast " . Webb Mitovich added that this episode displayed some " good , good stuff " . Anna Johns of AOL 's *TV Squad* declared " *Fireworks* " as " one of the best episodes so far this season " citing that " the writers juggled a handful of storylines very , very well " . She wrote that the best part of the episodes were " the one @-@ liners . They had [her] laughing so hard that [she] frequently had to pause the TiVo to recover . " Robert Canning of *IGN* wrote that this episode " was another prime example of what this show is capable of " . He thought that " the choice of Arnett as Jack Donaghy 's nemesis was perfect , right down to their shared graveled vocal delivery " , and that recurring character Chris Parnell 's " short , quick hitting scenes are always nonsensical perfection " .