

## Dean Jones goes Hawaiian with 'Saved by the Bell'

**Saturday morning hit gets prime-time shot**

The cast of NBC's *Saved by the Bell*, the top-rated Saturday-morning series for teens, has been rewarded by the network with a working vacation in the tropics. The prime-time movie *Saved by the Bell Hawaiian Style*, airing Friday, Nov. 27, also treated the young cast to the influential presence of former Disney leading man Dean Jones.

Jones plays the grandfather of high school student Kelly (Tiffani-Amber Thiessen) and invites her and her friends to his quaint Hawaiian Hideaway resort. There the gang helps Jones save his business from a ruthless real estate developer.

Without mention of how public school students can afford the exorbitant airfare, the movie jets the teens into a story that, while reminiscent of madcap Disney movies of the '60s, still maintains the successful format of the *Saved by the Bell* series. That translates to well-meaning, vivacious teens stumbling on their own ineptitude while pursuing higher goals, yet ultimately proving that good will out.

For some characters, island romances provide valuable life lessons. Zack (Mark-Paul Gosselaar) learns sacrifice and commitment from an unwed mother (Rena Sofer). Kelly falls for a young lawyer with ulterior motives. Slater (Mario Lopez) and Jesse (Elizabeth Berkley) discover even a lovers' paradise can be ruined by petty bickering. Meanwhile, Lisa (Lark Voorhies) finds some new malls to shop at and Screech (Dustin Diamond)...well, Screech has his video camera.

The first prime-time outing for *Saved by the Bell* is not going to win any new viewers outside its original demographic group—adults, for example—but it won't disappoint any fans in its stretch from a half-hour to two hours. Never mind that a subplot in which Screech's resemblance to a carved statue causing natives to believe he is the descendant of their tribal god is all too similar to an episode of *Gilligan's Island*.

Jones, known for his roles in *Beethoven* and Disney films including *That Darn Cat*, *The Shaggy D.A.*

and *The Love Bug*, took the part as a favor to his friend, executive producer Peter Engel, who, Jones says, backs up the positive teenage image on *Saved by the Bell* with the claim that "not every teenage girl is pregnant, and not every teenage boy is a drug addict."

Extensively involved with child-care organizations, Jones enjoyed the time spent on the *Saved by the Bell* project.

"When I can go to work as an actor, it's a vacation for me. I concentrate on one thing, which is my job, and in between shots I relax and enjoy my fellow actors and craftsmen. It truly is a vacation for me. I have a perfect excuse to cancel all appointments and show up on the set." Jones' lively co-stars made the experience all the more memorable for him.

"It's challenging when you've got all of that teenage exuberance around you to maintain your concentration on what you're supposed to be doing. If you do with it, it takes on a life of its own and becomes a lot of fun."



On Tuesday, A&E's *Biography* series examines the life and career of Oscar-winning actor James Cagney.

