

### ***Sci-fi actress finds her elf in new role***

November 20, 2012 by Jeanne Jakle

*It's not easy playing a Christmas elf. Just ask San Antonio's Summer Glau.*

*The actress is known for playing kick-butt, sci-fi figures with super abilities in TV shows such as "Firefly," "Terminator" and "Alphas." The physical stunts required for those roles, she says, was a piece of fruit cake compared to the skill she had to master for her upcoming television movie "Help for the Holidays."*

**"My character does this special magic trick,"** Glau said in a phone chat from Los Angeles. **"She pulls candy canes out from behind people's ears all the time. I had to work on it quite a bit. I don't have natural talent for magic, so it was actually harder than doing stunts. But I did eventually get it."**

Viewers can see for themselves at 7 p.m. Dec. 9, when the Hallmark Channel movie - executive produced, incidentally, by St. Mary's University graduate Larry Levinson - debuts.

It's part of a bounty of television goodies that viewers can unwrap this holiday season. New movies and specials galore join timeless classics such as "It's a Wonderful Life" and "Frosty the Snowman" to make your Thanksgiving and Christmas even warmer.

In the new "Help for the Holidays," Glau plays Christine, a hard-working elf - complete with pointy ears - who assists Santa Claus with toy-making at the North Pole. Although she loves Christmas and her job, she longs to see more of the world. Her opportunity arrives when Santa sends her on a special assignment: becoming the new nanny for a family in Los Angeles that's in desperate need of a holiday wakeup call.

Mom Sara (Eva La Rue, "CSI: Miami") and dad Scott (Dan Gauthier, "One Life to Live") spend so much time at their booming holiday store that their kids feel neglected, particularly during this special season. So Christine steps in with her magical elfin touch.

**"Her goal is to restore the family's love of Christmas,"** Glau said.

Glau said one of her own wishes was granted when she was cast.

**"I've always wanted to do a Hallmark movie,"** she said. **"My family loves these movies."**

Even in a Hallmark movie, Glau stays true to form. Asked why she's continually cast in non-human fantasy roles - whether it's a cyborg a space-faring psychic or an elf, Glau reasoned: **"I love to play pretend, and have since I was a kid."**

The winter tale was actually shot in California's Simi Valley in **"really hot weather, 110 degrees,"** she says, adding that it still **"felt so much like Christmas."**

And Christmas has always been an important time for the Glau family - from her childhood in San Antonio to now, at the age of 31.

This December, she looks forward to spending the holiday with her parents and two sisters at her second home in Boerne.

**"It's a great Christmas house,"** she says. **"We always play croquet in the courtyard."**

Her family enjoys loads of other special traditions. One is making a German pastry called stollen.

For 15 years, Glau, who describes herself as **"a terrible baker,"** was responsible for the Christmas treat. But once her baby sister, Kaitlin, was old enough, **"I passed the torch to her,"** she said. **"Now the stollen is perfect every Christmas morning!"**

That doesn't mean she's done with her holiday obligations.

**"I'm so excited,"** she said. **"My sister Christie and I are in charge of lights on the tree and we're very particular."**

While working on the tree, **"we always play a video cassette of all our favourite Christmas cartoons,"** she said.

Her favourite? **"A Charlie Brown Christmas."**

On Christmas, guests are amazed, she said, at **"how slowly we open gifts. We take hours and hours. We hug each other after each gift is opened."**

This is accompanied by Christmas songs from Bing Crosby. Her dad doesn't like them, Glau said, but **"I think Bing does the best carols."**

Making those kinds of fond family memories is the message of "Help for the Holidays."

**"Christmas is all about loved ones,"** Glau said, **"and people should take time out to really celebrate their family."**

Taken from Chron's website:

<http://www.chron.com>