

Local immigrant entrepreneur takes pride in U.S. citizenship

AnNam Tea House schedules Independence Day Music Fest

By Holly Becka

AnNam Teahouse, 103 Boyett, is celebrating the Fourth of July with a two-day Independence Day music fest.

Wednesday features the following seven local electric bands: ARB, Black Mass, Blood Oranges, Liquid Wench, Phooey, Sister Moon and X's for Eyes. The show starts at 7 p.m. and cover is \$4.

Thursday features the local acoustic bands April Fire, George Marshall, Glen Day, Implications, Renaissance Gypsy, and Ross Lambert and Lori Vaill. The show starts at 7 p.m. and cover is \$4.

Teahouse manager T.C. Nguyen says the atmosphere will be "relaxed" and both shows probably will last past 1 a.m. Music fest-goers are welcome to come in throughout the evening, so if you can't make the show by 7 p.m. it's no problem to come later.

Call 846-2898 for more information.

By Holly Becka

T.C. Nguyen is a proud American who values the meaning of Independence Day.

In fact, Nguyen spent five years in Texas dreaming of becoming a U.S. citizen before he actually could call himself an American. He was born and raised in Vietnam, and his family escaped from the worn-out country in 1980. They spent a year and six days — Nguyen remembers this vividly — in a refugee camp in West Malaysia.

"There was not enough food and water there for my family," Nguyen says. "We ate beans for breakfast, lunch and dinner. To this day when I go to a Mexican restaurant, I tell them to leave off the beans."

A Catholic church sponsored the seven-member family so they could leave the refugee camp in November 1980. Nguyen, his two brothers, two sisters and his parents, were on their way to Texas.

The family arrived at the Dallas-Fort Worth airport only to find no one was there to pick them up. Nguyen describes this as one of the most scary experiences of his life.

"We didn't know any English and everybody looked at us strange," he says.

The Nguyens eventually settled in Fort Worth, where they

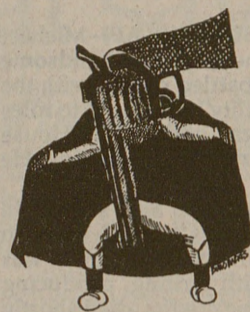
still live today. Of all his brothers and sisters, T.C. is the only member of his family who continued school and obtained a high school degree. He learned English, got a scholarship to Texas Christian University and transferred to Texas A&M in 1984.

It takes most immigrants about five years to qualify to be a U.S. citizen, but Nguyen says the wait was worth it.

"The United States is a melting pot — a lot of different kinds of people came together to make this country what it is today, and I wanted to be a part of it," he says. "It's good to be an American."

To celebrate the United States' 215th birthday, and Nguyen's second year as a bona fide, official American, he is throwing an Independence Day bash featuring local bands. Nguyen, manager of AnNam Teahouse, booked seven electric bands for Wednesday and six acoustic bands for Thursday. Shows start at 7 p.m. and cover is \$4.

"I wanted to have a big celebration, and all the musicians coming have performed here before and are supportive of the teahouse," he says. "I wanted there to be a variety of music."



'Naked Gun' sequel shoots for laughs

By Julia E.S. Spencer

The "Naked Gun 2 1/2: The Smell of Fear" begins with a CRACK!, an OOF! and a THUD! as Our Hero, Police Squad leader Frank Drebin, is honored at the

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White House for his 1000th drug dealer kill. Never mind that he backed over the last two with his car accidentally. Drebin is back with a pratfalling vengeance, making life in D.C. miserable for the First Family and the bad guys alike. By the time the familiar intrusive police car title credits roll, the laugh-o-meter has already registered a pretty healthy reading.

This environmentally-themed latest episode in "Airplane!" production team Zucker/Abraham/Zucker's Police Squad saga follows the bumbling Drebin (Leslie Nielsen) to the nation's Capital. He is trying to implicate scheming industrialist Quentin Hapsburg (Robert Goulet) in a plot to replace the energy adviser with a look-alike who will persuade the president that the country has no need for energy efficiency or renewable resources. Drebin is also trying to win back pert-and-sexy Jane Spenser (Priscilla Presley), who,

since backing out of the wedding after the first movie, has succumbed to Hapsburg's wily charms.

Cop movie veteran Nielsen manages to keep a straight face while behaving like an untutored five-year-old gone berserk, and the ever-lovely Ms. Presley is pretty darn good as the wide-eyed heroine. Las Vegas fixture Goulet is scapably oily as Quentin, and the goofy supporting cast of O.J. Simpson and George Kennedy is back again, mugging merrily away.

As usual, the plot is secondary, a mere framework for the many sight and sound gags in this very silly spoof of crime dramas and movie cliches. As with any sequel, the burning question is, "How does it compare with the first?" In one sense, it's hard to say, since I saw the first one on video, alone, and the second in a theater full of raucous college students. Naturally, this one seemed a lot funnier. Although the first had a few memorably hilarious scenes, the level of humor was extremely childish, relentlessly vulgar and body-function oriented. Calling "2 1/2" irreverent would be an understatement, since a large number of laughs come at the expense of the First Lady. However, the vulgarity has been toned down — just a tad, mind you — and the slightly more sophisticated humor is derived from a somewhat wider variety

of sources.

As a film buff, I relished the clever jabs at movie-making conventions, from the continuity jokes and '40s-era rear projection film visible through the car windows, to allusions to "E.T.," "Casablanca," and "Dirty Dancing." Zsa-Zsa Gabor appears in a cameo, and if you look fast, you'll see Mel Tormé.

Although I found this movie amusing enough to yank me out of a very bad mood, the aforementioned enthusiastic audience helped considerably in papering over the weak spots. The humor is also extremely topical — lots of political jokes about the current administration and its policies, although writers Pat Proft and David Zucker show admirable restraint in sparing Dan Quayle. "Naked Gun" takes a page out of Dana Carvey's book with its George Bush impression. (Bar is a gem, too) playing like an extended, very elaborate Saturday Night Live skit. Ultimately, the shelf life of this film can be measured in months; John Sununu may not seem so funny come December.

It's hard to say whether it's worth five bucks or not, but if you like this kind of scattershot humor, a crowded matinee with a group of friends couldn't go too far wrong. As always, listen and watch carefully, or you're liable to miss something, and don't forget to stay through the credits — all the credits.

Costello's latest 'Mighty Like a Rose' paints gloomy picture

by Timm Doolen

Elvis Costello's latest album, *Mighty Like a Rose*, is another in a long line of great albums from one of the most underrated songwriter-performers of our times.

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In this outing, we see a more polished sound than in his early albums, much more like the sound of his last album, the phenomenally successful *Spike* (phenomenal compared to the rest of his work, that is).

But unlike most of Costello's earlier work, this album has a bleak and ominous tone to it that in one respect almost hurts the generally good music but in another respect makes it all the better by adding

depth and complexity to the songs.

The best song on the album is "The Other Side of Summer," with some cryptic (and critical) lyrics. For instance, it's hard to decipher whether Costello is criticizing or praising the late John Lennon when he sings, "Was it a millionaire who said 'Imagine no possessions?'"

But other lines make it clear he is down on some areas of our society: "The pale pathetic promises that everybody swallows / A teenage girl is crying 'cos she don't look like a million dollars / So help her if you can / 'Cos she don't seem to have the attention span."

This album contains more slow songs than usual for Costello, including "Sweet Pear," "Broken" and "So Like Candy," which was cowritten by Paul McCartney.

Another collaboration with McCartney, "Playboy to a Man,"

shows that Costello-McCartney will never become a Lennon-McCartney partnership. The songs are OK, but not as good as the ones that appeared on *Spike* or McCartney's *Flowers in the Dirt*.

These are not the kind of songs you listen to when you want to cheer up in the morning.

Drummer Jim Keltner helped write "Hurry Down Doomsday (The Bugs are Taking Over)," which foretells the day civilization will crumble and a swarm of insects will take over the world.

The better songs on the album are the faster and/or jazzier ones

like "Invasion Hit Parade," another bleak picture of civilization: "A woman works the tunnel in the middle of the night / Picking up every lost object in sight / Handbags, toupees, lost legs and fingernails."

These are not the kind of songs you listen to when you want to cheer up in the morning. But they are by all means far more complex and meaningful than the average fare these days and are surprisingly well done for Costello, who has always been a superb crafter of lyrics.

Despite the dark tone of the lyrics, the music is genuinely good and even upbeat in many of the songs.

Overall I highly recommend this album, especially for anybody who even remotely appreciates the work of this highly talented songwriter and musician.



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