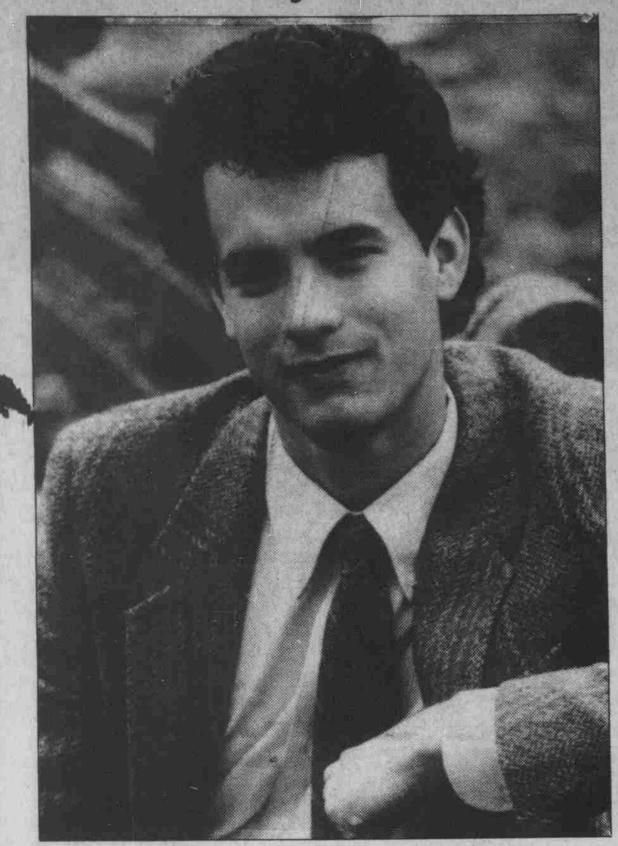
Chemistry between Hanks and Candy wasted in 'Volunteers'



Hanks in 'Volunteers': A forte of snappy patter and clever comebacks

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By MARK DAVIS

It's hard to analyze chemistry between actors. No one can really explain how or why it works, but when you come right down to it, the hows and whys don't really matter. What does matter is whether or not the chemistry exists. In the case of John Candy and Tom Hanks, it does.

The two first worked together in the highly successful Splash and have become, on the basis of that film and the newly released Volunteers, one of the best comic duos of the '80s. Unfortunately, Volunteers doesn't utilize the chemistry between these stars in the right way and, because of that, never realizes its potential.

Hanks is Lawrence Boon III, a rich Ivy League snob who falls into heavy gambling debts and is forced to flee for his life by joining the Peace Corps. He travels to Thailand, where he meets up with Tom Tuttle (Candy), a gung-ho volunteer who spends most of his time teaching everyone he meets the Washington State fight song. While his colleagues try to help the locals by building a bridge to connect the two main villages, Hanks instructs the locals in matters closer to his own heart, such as card tricks, poker and blackjack. After the bridge is completed, Hanks and Candy meet up with a gang of Communist sympathizers and a bigwig in the black market, all of whom wish to use the bridge for their own illegal purposes. To add to their troubles, Candy is kidnapped by the Communists, and Hanks falls in love with a girl who is being avidly pursued by the black marketeer.

Although the film contains more than its share of hearty laughs, it suffers from a variety of problems that considerably dim its value. Its main flaw is a lack of focus. Volunteers begins by emphasizing the contrast between Hanks' selfish nature and his newly-found obligation to help the Thai people.

cinema

However, after 30 minutes or so, the numerous sub-plots accumulate, and it becomes hard to tell whether the main issue at hand is Hanks' metamorphosis into a caring individual or Candy's kidnapping or the fight against the black market or Hanks' love problems.

The other main flaw of Volunteers is that it simply does not contain enough of John Candy. It's no coincidence that the funniest scenes are the ones featuring the interplay between Candy and Hanks. Unfortunately, these scenes don't occur often enough, and Candy frequently is relegated to the background. When the two of them do get together, though, the film really comes

Although the story drags noticeably at times, Levine and David Issacs have created a screenplay that is chock full of one-liners and that, fortunately, doesn't take itself too seriously. Nowhere is this better illustrated than when a girl says something in Thai to Hanks and he leans over to read the English subtitle that flashes onto the screen in order to get the translation.

Tom Hanks is perfect at playing a hip, irreverent character whose forte in life is making snappy patter and clever comebacks. He's gone from portraying naive innocence in Splash to smart-ass

See VOLUNTEERS page 6B

Pee Wee's adventure is a big success

By ALAN MASON

He eats "Mr. T" cereal over eggs and bacon in the morning and wears nothing but light gray suits with red bow ties. His bright red house is full of clowns and firetrucks and crazy contraptions that whir and whiz to his delight. His morning activities consist of riding his prized possession, a red-and-white streamlined bicycle, through town to the

cinema

local magic shop, where he marvels at the proprietor's newest shipment: boomerang bow ties and flashlight eyeglasses.

He's Pee Wee Herman, and as he tells Dottie, the girl who only has eyes for him, "You don't wanna get mixed up with me." Then he cocks his head and intones, "I'm a rebel."

Pee Wee's Big Adventure is a film as anomalous as its protagonist - an adventure without blood (except for the fake stuff from the magic shop), fist fights, million-dollar car crashes or rampant sex (Pee Wee wouldn't think of kissing a girl). What it does have is plenty of laughs and good clean fun.

In a summer full of stars, Pee Wee Herman will be the man (or kid?) everyone will remember.

Director Tim Burton and screenwriters Phil Hartman, Michael Varhol and Paul Reubens (a.k.a. Pee Wee

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Herman) did the right thing. They created settings and situations that would showcase Pee Wee and then let Pee Wee take it from there. His back-

See PEE WEE page 6

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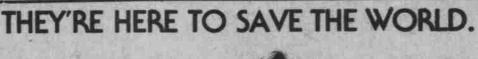
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