

# John Hughes' film mildly amusing effort

Mark Hain and  
Becky Tideman  
Staff Reviewers

Mark Hain: Remember way back those days of prepubescence, when John Hughes' latest flick was a monumental and possibly life-altering event? "This man has glimpsed



into my very soul," murmured the weestruck teenage masses, their voices cracking. "The screen has become a mirror; that is me." We all slunkered down in our seats as the lights went up, hiding from the ushers if we could in a desperate attempt to sit through another showing of "The Breakfast Club" in rapt silence. But now Anthony Michael has grown out of his gangliness, and along with it his charm; Molly Ringwald is quickly joining the ranks of the "Where are they now?" club, and as the world-

weariness and cynicism of "adult life" turns those theater lights to full beam, John Hughes is no longer the cure for feelings of alienation and loneliness, only a purveyor of mildly amusing films about the interaction of teenagers and adults.

Becky Tideman: I also was hoping this movie would be of the same caliber as past Hughes films, but "Uncle Buck" displayed none of the humor or effort of Hughes' previous films. I feel Mr. Hughes should take the advice so eloquently dispensed by Steve Martin in "Planes, Trains and Automobiles" (another Hughes film starring John Candy).

Martin explained, "Here's an idea, next time you tell a story, have a point. It makes it so much more enjoyable for the listener."

I think "Uncle Buck" had potential. Unfortunately it turned out to be a 90-minute exercise in mediocrity; good TV, but not good film-making.

MH: I was expecting to be miserable at this movie. I knew the only way I could get to the theater to see this film was on my bike, and just as I hopped on my rickety love machine, the rain began. I felt like I had been

thrown in a pool. Miraculously making it to the theater without getting struck by lightning, I sat down in the air-conditioned dimness. Three teeny-bopper girls giggled maliciously behind me as I tried to dry my spattered glasses. Once again I was a shy, insecure teenager who had been mesmerized by "Sixteen Candles." (I suppose you're wondering why I'm blathering on and on, but there's really not much to say about "Uncle Buck" without giving away the plot.) I shivered in my clinging clothes as the lights went down, my bangs trickling cold, stinging water into my eyes. Despite it all, I had a good time. Not a great laugh riot, and no insight into life, but I laughed.

BT: I think I was less satisfied with this movie than you. True, I did laugh occasionally, but the film left no lasting impression; it bounced right off me. I was much more interested in making squishy noises by wiggling my toes about in my drenched Keds.

The premise of the film is that the drinking, smoking, gambling, prodigal uncle, Buck Russell, is recruited by his yuppie brother to care for his three children while he and his wife

are called out of town on a family emergency. Candy and his nieces and nephew have a series of battle-of-the-wills confrontations, none of which are overly entertaining or interesting. Basically pretty Mr. Belvedere/Punky Brewster type stuff.

MH: I wouldn't say it was quite all that bad. I mean, I didn't cringe in embarrassment or anything. I think some of the faults of the film were overshadowed by appealing performances by Candy and a surprising cameo role by Amy Madigan. She managed to be her earthy, personable self and still not seem out of place in this film. Also surprising were the two child actors, who were both cute and precocious without being saccharine and annoying. Most child actors make me want to have a vasectomy, but for the most part I could tolerate these two wee ones. The same, however, cannot be said for Jean Louisa Kelly, queen of the withering stare and icy putdown. I have a feeling that she's really rather a good actress, but she manages to be so callous, that she reminded me of every hateful teenage shrew I've ever known.

BT: It was the small things that made me laugh in this movie; Uncle Buck's pride in his personalized bowling ball, the school principal's face-encompassing wart, and microwaved laundry in lieu of a functioning clothes dryer (it never dawned on Uncle Buck to hang the clothes on a clothesline).

MH: It's interesting that it seems like as we've grown up so has John Hughes. But now that we're young adults he seems to be a cynical old man. While Hughes' humor has in the past been broad, bawdy and slap-sticky, it's now rather sedate and somewhat disconcerting. (Uncle Buck's delightful giant pancake does not make up for his creepy, unsettling serial-killer imitations.) Hughes seemed tired and bored. About the only interesting technique he used was a fish-eye lens in shooting Marcy, the neighbor woman in torador pants who comes over to rumba with Buck. There is a sense that this film is a half-hearted effort for almost everyone involved. Since all of them didn't seem to care much, I guess we can't either.

# Nationally known comedians help comedy club celebrate

By Gretchen Boehr  
Senior Reporter

Noodles Comedy Club celebrates its one-year anniversary Sunday night with nationally known comedians.

The three-hour show is called "The Best of Noodles" and features Scott Nivotny of Minneapolis, Willie Farrell of Des Moines, Iowa, Craig Peters of Los Angeles and Thor Ramsey of Colorado.

Bobby "Red" Tolnai of Lincoln will serve as the master of ceremonies for Sunday night's show.

Tony Coe, manager of the comedy club, said Sunday night's show will bring together comedians with various styles of humor.

Farrell and Nivotny, who are considered headliners for the show, have made appearances at Noodles before, Coe said.

Nivotny has appeared on "Showtime's Funniest Person in America" and Farrell's television credit includes the Playboy Channel, Johnson said.

Ramsey has been on HBO, Showtime and "The Arsenio Hall Show." Peters also has appeared on Showtime.

Coe said the show already is booked.

"This is going to be a great show," Johnson said. "We just wanted to celebrate our anniversary and thank everyone who's supported Noodles this year."

Mark Johnson, general manager, said Noodles will serve free champagne and cake.

Noodles opened Sept. 8, 1988, Coe said.

"When we first opened we were

unsure if Lincoln would be receptive to comedy," Coe said, "but we've been overwhelmed by customers."

Friday through Sunday, Noodles will feature Farrell, Jeff Sutherland of Minneapolis and Tolnai.

The show that runs Sept. 7 through 9 features Jent Monk of Sioux City, Iowa, and Ted Lyde of Chicago.

Reservations are highly recommended.

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