

A NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY ARTS, **GO!** ENTERTAINMENT AND DINING GUIDE
Guide

King High School graduate Andy Nguyen wins film contest

By Elizabeth Leib
 Editor, Go! Guide

Andy Nguyen, 17, filmmaker and graduate of King High School, has a family history of high achievement. At age 10, he visited Vietnam to help his uncle, Vietnamese filmmaker Vinh Son, produce a film. His father, Anphong, a painter, left Vietnam by boat traveling to Thailand settling briefly in France before immigrating to the United States. He received his bachelor's degree in computer engineering within two years at the University of Central Florida and settled in Tampa to raise his family.

"A Silent Night," Andy's 12 minute film, was awarded the 2005 Moon Dance International Film Festival Columbine award for short film. Andy taught himself to write the film script form and began writing the film in his freshman year at King High. He says making movies is all about the script - more so, in his opinion, than the technological aspects of movie making. He drew inspiration for the film by listening to the stories his family and friends in the Tampa Vietnamese community tell about their experiences during the Vietnam War.

The story takes place on Dec. 24, 1968, during a particularly brutal attack referred to in the Vietnamese community as the "Christmas bombing." The 12 minute film portrays a 10-year-old Buddhist monk leaving his home and passing by a bunker. A brief scene shows the GI alone in his bunker, looking at pictures of his children. The young boy catches in mid-air a beer can discarded by the GI. Buddhist monks in the community have been accepting beer cans, returning them to people transformed into small tin sculptures. The young boy returns to the GI and silently hands him the now



transformed beer can.

Andy traveled to Ho Chi Minh City with his brother, Aidan, 12, cast as the main character, to shoot the film with the blessing and support of his parents, if not the Vietnamese government. Four times he applied for a formal government film permit, but each time he was refused on the grounds that he would not agree to allow the script to be censored. His uncle provided him with the equipment he needed to shoot and edit the film, all completed within a seven day period.

Locally, the film was accepted into the Junior Independent Film Festival,

organized and hosted by the Education Channel in Tampa. The Festival accepts submissions from kids K through 12 years with the purpose of providing encouragement and acknowledgement young people interested in the media arts. Although the Festival accepts submissions to meet TV acceptable standards, it is not set up as a competition. All Festival participants receive a showing of their film and a certificate from the Education Channel acknowledging their achievement. The films of all 2005 Junior Independent Film Festival participants will be shown to the public on Sept. 17, starting at 9 a.m. at the Sunrise Cinema in Olde Hyde Park in Tampa. For more information call the Education Channel at 813-254-2253 x206 or visit www.educationchannel.org.

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*Fun Things
To Do!*

Cost to attend is free for members and included in Museum admission for non-member parent(s); children are free. The Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art is located just west of Highway 19 at 600 Klosterman Road on the Tarpon Springs Campus of St. Petersburg College.

ences. This week, Sylvia Earle, Marine biologist, explorer-in-residence at the National Geographic Society talks about her research on marine ecosystems. The Education Channel can be found on Channel 18, Bright House Networks and Adelphia Cable in Hillsborough County. For more information

Japanese Family Festival

Aug. 6, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Japanese Family day at the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Pete includes performances, demonstrations, and hands-on activities. This free event includes admission to the new exhibition, Splendors of Meiji Japan (Meiji