

## Winter fun hits Peek season at NY resort

by Katie Przepyszny  
staff writer

Well, it happened once and it won't be long until the snow flies again. And when it does, Peek 'N Peak will be the perfect place to cure your winter blues.

Peek 'N Peak is a 1,000-plus acre year-round resort area not far from Erie in the southwest corner of New York State. As always, this winter's features include downhill skiing, snowboarding (including the popular half pipe), snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and snow tubing. Behrend student Brian Jaworski, 01 DUS, recommends the Peek for everyone. He says, "The slopes at the Peek are the perfect place to meet your friends."

The Peek has a total of nine chair lifts, a vertical drop of 400 feet, several snow making machines, and 27 trails that range from easy to difficult. For those of you who are beginners,

the Bunny Hill is the perfect starting point. But once you're ready, go ahead and move on up. Some hills to check out are Alan-A-Dale, Arden Wood, Robin's Byway, Willy Nilly, Ox Bow, and Will-O-The Wisp.

To make sure you get your fair share of ski time in, the Peek is open daily offering four-hour, eight-hour, all day, and night passes ranging in price from \$20 to \$36 (plus extra cost if you need to rent their equipment), and once a week, weekend, and season passes ranging in price from \$70 to \$450. And if you feel the need for improvement, there is no need to worry. There are special passes, lessons, and schools for beginning skiers and snowboarders, and those who want to learn to ski and ride better.

Also available from the Peek for mini vacationers are special Stay 'N Play Midweek packages and Weekend Lodger lift tickets. In addition, new this year is The Peak Five, a special

through which you can buy four tickets and get one free for a total of \$136. If that isn't enough for your large group of friends, the Peek also offers group rates for 20 people or more. And if you want the ski season to last forever, keep in mind that the special spring rates are in effect from March 1 until the end of the season.

The Race Arena is also a main attraction at the Peek. This timed race course offers the opportunity to race a friend or your own best time. If you like the winter weather but skiing is not your thing, go catch some thrills tubing. The Peek's tubing area features two lifts that assist you for some old fashioned sledding fun. While you spend your time out on the slopes, don't worry about your things. You can always leave your belongings at the ski check, in the coin lockers, or in your own season locker.

When a day on the slopes leaves

you cold and hungry, you can warm up and relax at one of the three lodges. The Main Ski Lodge, also the focal point of skier services, houses a cafeteria and a circular fireplace to sit around. The Sugar 'N Ouse (a.k.a. The Sugar Shack) is home to Pizzaiolo's Italian Eatery and the Winter League Sports Bar. And when you find yourself near the tubing area on the North end of the complex, check out the cafeteria-style Mexican-American flavored food of the lower level, or the sub/sandwich feature on the upper full lounge level of The Retreat.

Before you leave, don't forget about the Peek's indoor pool, sauna, indoor/outdoor hot tub, game room, fitness room, and ski shop, all perfect to finish off a winter evening. For more information on specific Peek rates call 716-355-4141 or go to the Peek 'N Peak homepage at [www.pknk.com/](http://www.pknk.com/) <<http://www.pknk.com/>>.



A cottage (below) and clubhouse (above) FILE PHOTO nestled in the hills of the Peek



FILE PHOTO

## Anywhere is fine with Portman

by Kristin Grudowski  
staff writer

So you say you're feeling guilty because of the arguments, bickering and just general disagreements between you and your mom over the short Thanksgiving break. Well, first of all, take it easy--you're not alone. Second, try to reach a whole new appreciation for the woman by seeing *Anywhere But Here*.

*Anywhere But Here* is the story of an off-the-wall mother, played by Susan Sarandon and her emotional daughter, played by Natalie Portman. The two move from their small town to Beverly Hills in hopes of obtaining a better lifestyle.

What happens while searching for this improved lifestyle is what makes the movie what it is. Furni-

ture shopping means driving through the streets on garbage day. Pretending to be people they are not gets them a tour of a house they cannot afford. Both examples are meant to illustrate the bizarre relationship between the mother and daughter.

While there is a story line, a more important aspect of the film is the development of the of the mother/daughter relationship. Their relationship is strictly one-on-one, as Portman's father has been out of the picture for a long time, and she has no siblings. Sarandon acts as a mother who can't live up to her daughter's expectations, or her own. She makes choices for her daughter so as to live vicariously through her. Portman's character is more parental than her mother. She is more responsible and thinks more realistic

thoughts than her mother. All Portman wants is a normal life while Sarandon longs for everything she cannot have. Through their own differences, the difficulties of daily disappointments and the joy of their triumphs show that Sarandon and Portman are not only mother and daughter, but also best friend.

By the end of the movie, I began to have a better understanding of what protective, unconventional mothers (or any mother really) sacrifice for their daughters, even when it seems they don't have anything to give of themselves.

So repent for your shameful ways and treat your mom to a movie, and of course, accompany her. This movie is enjoyable, and mom will enjoy the time with you.



Natalie Portman and Susan Sarandon in *Anywhere But Here*, a new release from Twentieth Century Fox

## Websites offer Christmas Bests

by Douglas Smith  
staff writer

It's that time of year again to hear the sounds of Christmas. From silver bells to "Ho, Ho, Ho," many sounds classify December. Of course there are the traditional Christmas caroling songs also. If you are one that really gets into the spirit, [polyholiday.com](http://polyholiday.com) has selected the top 30 holiday albums ever made. It is an interesting list that covers many decades with artists from Nat King Cole to the Squirrel Nut Zippers.

This list is good for those of us who may become a little annoyed by the traditional songs like "Deck the Halls" or "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus." Many albums on the list have tracks that were newly written for their respective album with that holiday feel. Also, the list helps us keep in touch with those Christmas specials we loved as kids and probably still watch today. It has the soundtracks from many such shows.

In fact, the number-one Christmas album according to [polyholiday.com](http://polyholiday.com) is *A Charlie Brown Christmas* by Vince Guaraldi. John Denver and the Muppets' joint effort is also on the list. It is called *Christmas Together*.

The list contains a variety of music styles from jazz or piano based to new-age to ska. Many well-known artists appear on the list. These include Vanessa Williams, Mariah Carey, and Harry Connick, Jr. The list also pays respect to some artists that were prominent earlier in the century such as Ella Fitzgerald and Al Green. Of course Elvis Presley is also on the list, as well.

There are a few albums that may come as a surprise to those that view the list. Two such albums are the Squirrel Nut Zippers with *Christmas Caravan* and the Beach Boys with *Ultimate Christmas*. The Squirrel Nut Zippers released their Christmas album in 1998 and it contains eight original tracks. They also offer their rendition of "Sleigh Ride" and "I'm Coming Home For Christmas."

The Beach Boys' *Ultimate Christmas* also came out in 1998. It contains 26 tracks that are mostly old time favorites with a few new songs and public service announcements thrown in. One such new song is "The Man with All the Toys." However if you are looking for some classics, the Beach Boys cover "We Three Kings of Orient Are," "Frosty the Snowman," "Auld Lang Syne," and many more.

98 Degrees brings one of the newer Christmas albums out this year to listeners. It was released after the survey was done. For the complete list log on to [www.polyholiday.com/lists/30x](http://www.polyholiday.com/lists/30x)

## Usher lights it up in new film

by Jermaine Hardy  
staff writer

Usher Raymond sparks the big screen in his new film, *Light It Up*. Holding a policeman hostage in school, Usher proves that he really does like it his way.

Usher's character, Lester, is forced into a tough predicament once he sees his friend get gunned down by a policeman. In this tense situation the cop ends up getting shot. Lester decides to take matters into his own hands in order to clear his friend's name. Along with the help of Rosario Dawson and Fredro Starr, the team holds the school police officer hostage.

Produced by Kenneth "Baby Face" Edmonds and directed by Craig Boloton, the movie tells the story of six students who find this particular day appropriate to take their school captive because they simply want to be heard. Now, I wish I could tell you that this was a good movie, but the great theme didn't make for good en-

tertainment at all. It's cool that these kids want to stand up for what they believe in, but couldn't Usher and gang have come up with any better reason than a leaking ceiling or a textbook shortage to take their school hostage?

It becomes evident that the film is pleading for reason, as the character's personal tribulations become the drive for this life-risking venture. It turns out that Lester never got over the loss of his father who was killed by a cop, and that his friend is a victim of child abuse. Here the movie makes it seem as though it is saying, we (Generation X) are willing to go to insanely drastic measures to get empathy from the world, but that's not us. How many times must I tell you, Hollywood, if you're going to portray us, do it right? We are complex. We'd rather you make a parody of our generation than to take our serious issues and address them all wrong. Good effort though. *Light It Up* may not make for a great film, but it could pass for a pretty good after school special.



Usher Raymond, Robert Richardson and Rosario Dawson play three students in *Light It Up* FILE PHOTO

## Holiday feasting with the X-Files

by Katie Galley  
editorial page editor

Thanksgiving weekend is typically a time of excess. Too much turkey, too much football, too many parades, too much pie, too much TV...too much X-Files? Okay, there can never be such a thing as too much X-Files and for the people who love the show, known as Philers, it was a Christmas present in November.

Starting at noon on Thanksgiving Day, Philers were treated to the Secret Ballot Marathon, on the FX station. It was a virtual cornucopia of everyone's favorite X-File episodes. Fans voted on line throughout the month of November in different categories, and the results were shown all day on Thanksgiving. The episodes ranged from the extremely hysterical *Bad Blood* to the deeply moving *Christmas Carol*/Emily episodes. The Marathon was hosted by the always eccentric Lone Gunman, who are a trio of computer geeks that are friends with Agent Mulder. However, the stars of the Marathon were the determined Agents

the enigmatic Agent Scully. So while people all over the country were feasting on turkey and gelatinous cranberries, thousands were gorging themselves on the Files.

Mulder and Scully teamed up with former FBI Agent Frank Black to try and solve a mystery involving an end-times Millennium cult. This episode was the whipped cream on my pumpkin pie! It had everything from the dead to "traditional New Year's Eve activities," wink, wink!

The living dead were all former FBI Agents who were part of this Millennium group. They were all brought back to life by a necromancer, who is someone that has the spiritual power to raise the dead. They all believed that the world we live in now is evil, and that Armageddon would be triggered by the turning of the century so they had to come together to stop the evil.

Of course, our heroes stopped the cult, detained the necromancer and saved the day, all in time for some of those "traditional New Year's Eve activities." Yes folks, that's right, after seven 1-0-n-g years, Mulder and Scully finally came to their senses and indulged in a kiss.

Maybe it was a kiss of friendship, maybe one of romance, however, only time and Chris Carter's warped sense of humor will tell. One thing for sure is that this series is just getting better and better and will surely survive Y2K and make its way into the new year.



Agents Mulder and Scully ward off the living dead and help in the new year FILE PHOTO

Then Sunday night came and it was once again time for a second helping of the X-Files, with an all new episode on Fox. It was the fittingly named episode, Millennium. This episode was doubly exciting because it was the first with Chris Carter's

return. Carter's return to the series was a surprise, but it was a welcome one. Carter's return to the series was a surprise, but it was a welcome one. Carter's return to the series was a surprise, but it was a welcome one.