

ENTERTAINMENT

State College not just for football and parties

By **MATT MCCOMAS**
Columnist
@PSU.EDU

Just because football season is over in Happy Valley, doesn't mean the good times are.

In fact, you may find State College to be more enjoyable without game days. Events are still scheduled and prices are still low, but the traffic and crowds are gone.

So why visit University Park when the Nittany Lions are not playing at Beaver Stadium? It's simple. The area is still a happening place, even when the season is changing from fall to winter.

First, let us start on campus with the Bryce Jordan Center.

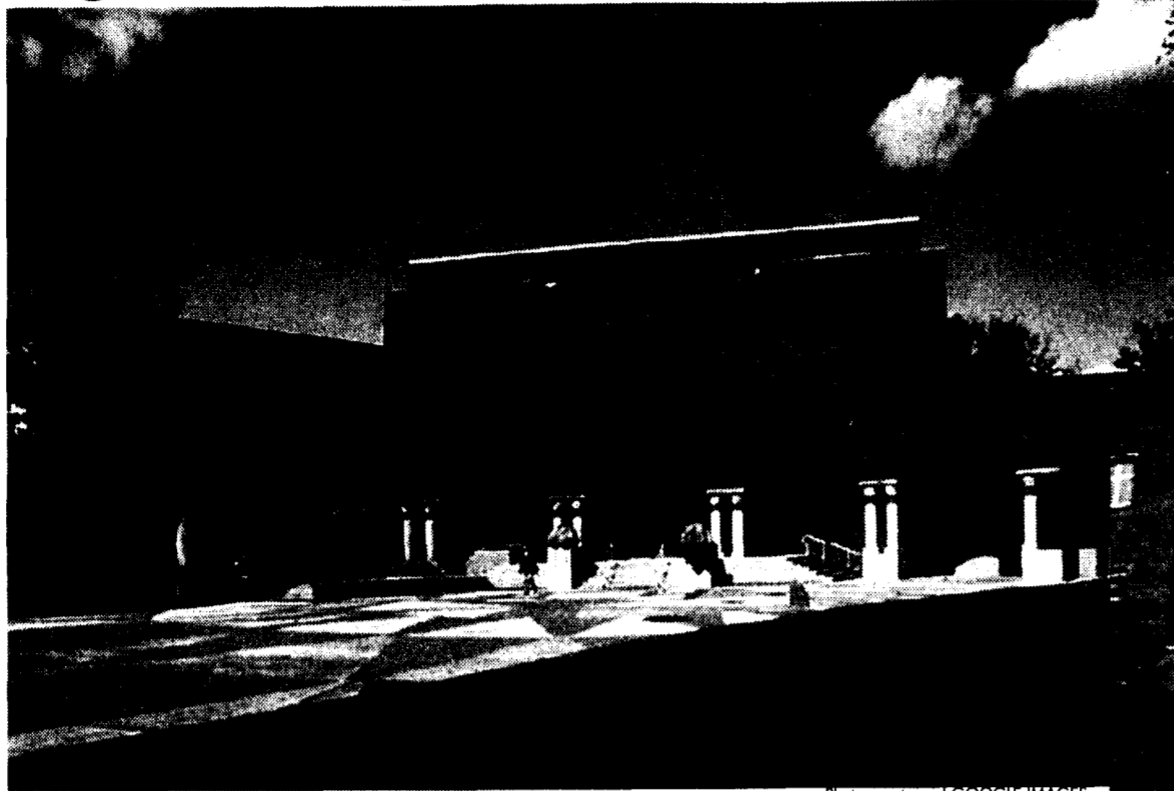
The men's basketball team provided some exciting games last year.

For example, the highly ranked Ohio State Buckeyes came to town on Valentine's Day and the game came down to one final shot at the buzzer. The women's team also plays in the BJC and competes night in and night out.

If sports are not of interest to you, have no fear. The BJC also hosts many musical talents. On Nov. 30, rock legend John Mellencamp will be performing in front of what is sure to be a packed house.

For those of you who are in to the arts and enjoy seeing events in the form of a play, a reproduction of the classic story "Annie" will be performed Dec. 4 at the Center for the Performing Arts. Another place of interest for art lovers is the Palmer Museum located on campus.

The museum features American art, European art and Non-Western art. The exhibits feature art from several time periods and also provide special sections such as ceramics and photography. Located near the



Palmer Museum at University Park allows students to expand their minds while having fun.

Palmer Museum is Penn State's famous Berkey Creamery.

Home to the best ice cream in the world, the creamery offers a variety of flavors so everyone passing through can satisfy their own personal taste buds.

Speaking of things that are cold, Tussey Mountain is just miles down the road from campus. If you are a snow bunny, this place is for you. Tussey Mountain offers skiing and tubing for you and your friends to enjoy.

There is also a lounge area for people wanting to warm up before hitting the slopes again.

If you prefer to stay inside and keep warm, you may want to consider

visiting any of the bars or restaurants on College Avenue.

Now, I know when the term "bar" is brought up, many times, people think of alcoholic beverages.

As that could be the case, if you are of age, it is not the only reason to venture downtown.

The G-Man offers intriguing trivia games, which do include prizes to the winners. Grab a group of friends and try your luck against other competing teams.

Next door to the G-Man is the Carmike Cinema 5 movie theater.

Now I know people don't travel that far to watch movies,

but if you are in town for more than a few days, you may want to take

in a show for a couple hours. Besides, maybe a film is being shown that you have missed and want to view.

As far as viewing goes, College Avenue has plenty of spots for that.

If it is televised games you wish to watch then I would recommend stopping in the Sports Café or the Lion's Den.

They have the biggest TVs downtown and have seating to accommodate people who wish to view the games.

If live music tickles your fancy, then you are in the right town. The Cell Block, Saloon and Café 210 West all

provide customers with bands.

These are not Guitar Hero wannabes and people who just like to make loud noises.

Quality bands are booked at these locations.

The instrumental playing is phenomenal and the lyrical singing is delightful. Fan interaction is constant, so brush up on your Penn State cheers.



Berkey Creamery gives PSU students a chance to 'chill' out and enjoy their favorite flavors.

In conclusion, you now see that State College, Pa. is not just a "football town." Granted on game days the city becomes the third largest in the state, but there is so much more to do that people are unaware of.

I have only written about a few things that you can do while up there.

I encourage you to research more and take a trip to UP sometime and enjoy all the town has to offer.



"What if you find out everyone that's in your life is only being paid off by a T.V. studio. And every conversation everyone's had with you was scripted by the writers living in Los Angeles. Smile for the camera." This is the opening verse of the newly released *Armor For Sleep* CD, "Smile For Them".

"Smile For Them" is a unique album filled with intriguing lyrics that beg the listener to open their minds up to many new questions. For instance what *would* you do if your entire life was scripted and the only one not aware of the reality, was you?

The album has a great kick off with their first song, "Smile for the Camera". The song plays out a tale of a twisted reality. The music and lyrics compliment each other quite well.

However if you are in search of something a bit more depressing, please continue on to listen to "Williamsburg". On this track you will hear lyrics that follow along the lines of, "Hold your own jacket please, I'm not in the mood. Millions of trains under the ground, this city was the blueprint for hell." Though the lyrics are a bit aggressive the song is still quite wonderful!

The album slows down a bit once we hit track four, "Hold the Door". The mellow music allows for the lyrics to take front stage. It is a strong song of progression and growth, slow, yet powerful.

The album picks back up on the next track, "Run Right Back In". This track delves into how humans lack the ability to run away from things that we know are bad for us. The music compliments the lyrics perfectly and makes for an enjoyable listening experience.

However, I am not quite sure what the band was trying to prove with their track, "Snow Globe". It is one minute and forty-nine seconds long. The lyrics are minimal and the drums are quite distracting.

But the album gets better when you hit the next track which many of you may be familiar with thanks to the phenomenal movie, *Transformers*. The track is called "End of the World" and is probably one of my favorites! Though the lyrics seem rather negative it makes one truly appreciate our lives as they are.

"I was chasing comets with a butterfly net, thinking I could pull one down again but I was just slipping into my little day dream." These are lyrics from "Stars in Your Eyes", a creative tale of daydreams. The instrumental on this track is rather bland but the lyrics make up for it.

Unfortunately the next two tracks are a bit on the not so wonderful side. "Lullaby" is a miserable feeling track about how anyone can survive if they simply learn to settle for what the world offers, rather than fighting for what they truly dream of. Which is followed by the track, "Chemicals", a sadly unpleasant song that talks of drug usage and death. This song is bound to leave you a little down.

Therefore we should all be thankful that the album ends with two wonderful tracks. The first one being "My Saving Grace" which tells of a tale of a man who finally lets go of something that he wants very much but knows that he is better off without it. Which is then followed by "Stand in the Spotlight".

This is a great track that begs one not to change themselves because some day everyone will finally see how wonderful they are.

The album "Smile For Them" is absolutely wonderful! The lyrics are spectacular, the variety of moods is uncommon, and the way it is all compiled makes it edgy and easy to listen to.

Ricky Gervais presents Extras: X-Mas special

By **DUSTY SIPES**
Columnist
DW55067@PSU.EDU

The funniest man in England, Ricky Gervais, announced on his Web site earlier this week that HBO has first dibs on releasing the series finale of his cult hit show "Extras". Along with Stephen Merchant, Gervais has written and directed the 12 episodes that make up the entire series, in addition to the hour-long Christmas Special. The show is set to premiere on Dec. 16 at 9 p.m.

"Extras" had been an insider's look at the grim aspects of being a Hollywood extra on major studio productions. The story focuses on the relationship between Andy Millman (Gervais), his worthless manager Darren Lamb (Merchant) and his co-extra Maggie Jacobs (Ashley Jensen). In addition, virtually every episode contains a cameo appearance from notable Hollywood celebrities and musicians such as Pirates of the Caribbean's Orlando Bloom and Coldplay's Chris Martin.

The series follows a formula that is similar to Rob Reiner's 1984 film "This is Spinal Tap".

We follow the story via a behind the scenes documentary crew that catches all the "too painful to watch moments" when Andy forgets there

is a camera crew watching. Picture NBC's "The Office" when Michael Scott is making a racist joke to warm the crowd at the company holiday party. Oh, and by the way, Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant wrote the original version of "The Office" before it was adapted into an American series. Like "Extras," the original BBC run of "The Office" only lasted 13 shows including a Christmas Special.

This is not due to terrible ratings or lack of ideas, Gervais and Merchant dedicate themselves to making a piece of lasting art instead of a throw away sitcom.

They have both cited their influence

for this reasoning on the classic BBC television series *Fawlty Towers*. The series lasted a total of 12 episodes, but has had a remaining impact on British television being hailed by critics as one of the greatest television

shows of all time. The only catch is the show is exactly what Andy feared the show would be: a throwaway sitcom with a gimmick catch phrase.

The greater half of season two shows Andy's rise to an overnight



Photos courtesy of GOOGLE IMAGES

For more info on Ricky Gervais or the TV show "Extras" check out the website www.rickygervais.com.

star. The critics hate him, but the fans love him. We are there every step of the way as Millman's hit show "When the Whistle Blows" becomes a cultural phenomenon, particularly heightened by the show's catch phrase "Are you having a laugh?"

Andy, meanwhile, continually contemplates his motives with bouts of self-loathing. He continually asks himself, is this what he wants to be famous for? The final episode of season two aired on Oct. 19, 2006 with a load of loose ends that will hopefully be fulfilled within the Christmas special. But with Gervais, it is likely to have an ending like *The Sopranos* (leaving much to interpretation). Like *Soprano's* creator David Chase, Gervais would never think of sacrificing genius for public approval.

For anyone who wants to get caught up on the series, both seasons are available on DVD, and while you're at it, make sure you pick up the complete series of the original "Office". In my personal opinion, it is truly the funniest television show of all time.

Gervais and Merchant claim this is the end of their comedy route. They plan to write a more serious series next time. It may be a long time before it sees the light of day, but I assure you, it will be worth the wait.

shows of all time. Gervais and Merchant felt the topic of sitcom drudge was suitable enough to base the later half of series one and the entire second series to in "Extras". While working as a throwaway background actor, Andy Millman has been working on a script for a television series he hopes to star in. His original intent is for the show to be a modern classic without gimmicks. With a simple twist of fate, at the hands of Millman's terribly awful manager, the script winds up in the right hands where it is sent into production.

The only catch is the show is exactly what Andy feared the show would be: a throwaway sitcom with a gimmick catch phrase.

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November 2nd to December 8th

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Olmsted: Town Square
Main lobby



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