### P.I. BLUES

is "a really fun film" that's remi-

niscent of studio movies from the 1940s, and "a joy to watch." Fritz is a "wannabe" private Frize is a 'Nannabe' private detective who works in a pet store. One day, his friend, a private detective who works in a pet store. One day, his friend, a private detective, asks him to watch his reptile while he leaves town on a case. Fritz agrees, but begins to pretend he's a private investigator. The lovable, fumbling Fritz manages to get involved with a down-on-her-luck v oman who needs a P.I. to fi s., her brother. Murder, intrigue, comedy, silly friends, and the Russian Mafia soon take over.

Jim Dudek wrote, produced and directed the movie that took more than two years to complete.

"It's a story driven by likable characters," Dudek said, "I characters, Dudek said. "I enjoy movies from the 1940s, movies without graphic vio-lence ... that left something to the imagination. In P.I. Blues even the bad guys are likable: "The production of P.I. Blues has been a blast," Dudek said. "I hope audiences have as much

Observer & Eccentric | Thursday, February 13, 2003

has been a blast, Dudek said. Thope audiences have as much fun watching this film as we've had making it.

We really liked shooting in Michigan, there was great energy. Shooting in LA is old hat there and people are inconvenienced by it, but here people are excited about it. Everybody on the set took my ideas and made them better.

Also exercise in the film is

made them better."
Also starring in the film is
Dolores C. Reyes, Alex Safi, Peter
M. Brown, and Alan Madlane.
Much of the movie's crew,
including Dudek and DeMerell
are hardly newcomers to the
business.

DeMerell, raised in White Lake, earned a bachelor of arts in theater from Western Michigan University. He's toured with a national company of 1 Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change, and the Little Shop of Horors. Entertainment is his lifelong passion.

"When I was a child I walked on a stage at Frankenmuth and started entertaining, they couldn't get me off the stage. DeMerell' skid.

He also worked at Jeff Daniels' Pupple Rose Theatre in Chelsea. This of his favorite roles were Valmont in Les Listions Eungercuses and the Cowardly Lion in The Wizard of Oz.

"It's impair that I got my fray."

of Oz
"It's ironic that I got my (paying) jobs here at home rather than when I lived in New York," DeMerell said.

Immi@oe.homecomm.net | (248) 901-2572



A "musher" drives his dogs through the home stretch during a race at the Double JJ Resort in Rothbury.

## **OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC**

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اللاللا  $\hat{\omega}$ ATTOKAL SECURITY (PG 13)

# Ready, dogs? Let's mush!

Ten barking, straining-at-he-leash husky dogs. One wooden sled with nar-

One wooden sled with narrow runners.
Ready to 'mush'?
Hold on tight, lean into the curves and watch that first hill.
Isn't as easy as it looks, is'? said Dave Alvarez, stopping his snowmobile after I tumbled, flying off a hill and ripping my snowsuit, on the sled dog trail at Double JJ Resort near Muskegon.
Alvarez, head musher, was teaching me to drive a dog sled, pulling me around the resort's lake with a snowmobile in preparation for the real thing a pack of 10 dogs.

preparation for the real thing - a pack of 10 dogs.

The dogs won't run as fast as the snowmobile, Abarez said.

If you can do it with the snowmobile, you'll be OK with the

He was right. After falling off the snowmobile-towed sled four times, the dog sled drive was a cinch. I didn't even have to use my new musher's vocabulary ("Gi" for right, "Ha" for left) to guide my pack. The dogs knew the trail so well, they practically ran on automatic. "We have about 30 dogs. Ours give rides," said Bob Lipsitz, resort owner. Adults pay \$30 (\$20 for children) to sit on the sled while a skilled musher, like alvarez, takes the team on a 20-minute ride. For another \$15, resort guests can learn to handle the reins themselves, as I did on a recent visit. Get good enough and you might consider joining a dog sled organization, like the statewide MUSH club, which led its annual ruces at the Double JJ last month. "Our dogs aren't racing. These guys would be going right past our dogs," Lipsitz

said, watching MUSH teams race against the clock as they crossed the finish line. Several competitors traded sleds for skis and raced in a dog

Several competitors traded sleds for skis and raced in a dog and ski sport called jurying. The skier wears a leash with one or more dogs attached. "I trained her on my Roller Blades first," said Holland resident Austin Stauffer, who hooked his dad, Brian, to a leash pulled by their Springer Spaniel, Maddie. Lipsitz said dog and skier must "work together" to stay in control and on the move. "You'll see skiers with two and three dogs and then for sure you have no control," he said, laughing. Where can a cross-country skier 'earn to ski jury? "Right here at the Double JJ, Lipsitz said. Thanks, but after those tumbles off the dog sled, I'd better save that class for the next trip.

#### **DOUBLE JJ**

FROM PAGE BY

was the original Club Med. You had to be single and the age was between 19 and 29. It's amazing how many old-timers from the area stayed in the area because they came here and met their spouse. Lipsit to perated the resort as a summer-only facility, adding a golf course in 1993. He built a winterized conference center and restaurant.

He built a winterized conference center and restaurant, hotel, condominiums and tubing hill in 1997. The Back Forty, which includes water slides, a Western town, cabins, horse barn, snownobile track and RV park, opened in 1999. The original summer-only ranch operates from May ranch operates from May through October. The rest is open year-round.

WINTER FUN

Lipsitz said he draws the majority of his customers from the Detroit and Chicago area for tubing, sled dog rides. snowmobiling, horseback rid-ing and cross country skiing during the winter.



Snow tubing is easy when the trip up the hill includes a tow rope.

"Most places don't allow peo-ple to run horses, but we do,"

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he hill includes a tow rope.

Lipsitz said. Guided advanced rides take horse and equestrian over truits at fast clip.

Beginning and intermediate riders with or canter.

He said the resorts quarter mile snowmobile track is its newest attraction.

"It's got jumps and curves. It's not a straight oval track. The average anowmobiler can't go fast, but you can go around 12 miles per hour."

The resort can make snow for its tubing hill and snowinobile track, but Gall Zemmol, public relations director, says there plenty of natural white stuff to keep sleds and sking diffuse.

We have a ton of snow, said. Zemmol, a former Farmington Hills resident. There's about a foot and a balf out there.

A Plymouth Canton Girl Scout trop spent a recent. It's a favorite destination for Scouts and other groups.

The kids love it. But the people who really love it are the trop leaders because house.

ple who really love it are the troop leaders because house-keeping will come in and make the beds. You don't have to bleach down the mettresses when you leave, she said. And it's not camp food. It's resort

"We get a lot of letters from kids. They count down the days until they come back. They asy it's better than Disney."

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