

OPDC OAKLAND

A Newsletter for Older
Oakland Residents

Making space for live music in Oakland



An all-ages show at the Electric Banana in North Oakland, courtesy of Oyo Ellis.

Oakland was once home to a bunch of live music venues, many of which hosted all-ages shows.

Those venues have long since closed—a loss not just for local musicians, but for the community as a whole.

Ahead of this month's Let's Talk community conversation on live music in Oakland, we're looking back at three notable Oakland venues with Oyo Ellis, OPDC Facilities Manager and long-time member of Pittsburgh's music scene, to inspire a conversation about how we might support all-ages entertainment here in the future.



August 2023

TOGETHER

The Electric Banana (3887 Bigelow Blvd.)

Active: 1977-1999

The Electric Banana began as a disco club in 1977, but “caught the first wave of punk going into the ‘80s,” says Ellis. The club had all-ages shows on Wednesdays and Sundays, with some bands even playing twice on the same day to accommodate younger audiences.

Graffiti (4615 Baum Blvd.)

Active: 1982-2000

“Graffiti was specifically a performance venue that was notable for hosting bands that would eventually break out,” says Ellis. When Green Day came through following the release of their Grammy-winning album *Dookie*, “there were little kids with their parents there!”

Club Laga (3609 Forbes Ave.)

Active: 1996-2004

3609 Forbes was home to a number of clubs including the Attic and the Upstage Lounge. “Laga was the last of an era,” says Ellis, who worked the door for six years. It could hold several hundred people and played host to all-ages shows with music ranging from underground rap to rock, punk, and metal.

Join Let's Talk: Live Music in Oakland on Aug 16 (see reverse side for details).

Keeping clutter off Oakland's streets



It's move-out season, a time when Oakland's streets are littered with still-useful household items that often wind up in the dump. Clutter for a Cause is a collaboration between OPDC and Pitt to collect these items to reduce litter and waste and promote sustainable re-use.

Last month volunteers collected 37 large items, 24 electronics, 49 dorm essentials, 84 kitchen items, and LOTS of clothing. Thanks to our volunteers and donors for taking part!



Oakland Planning
and Development
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information on OPDC's community
activities and projects:
www.opdc.org

Events

Let's Talk: Live Music in Oakland

Wed, Aug 16, 6—7 p.m. 294 Semple and Zoom.

Join a community conversation with OPDC and the City's Office of Nighttime Economy to discuss ways to support live music in Oakland that benefit all of its residents.

Phone: 646 558 8656
Meeting ID: 829 4683 8403
Passcode: 483514

Be a Good Neighbor Block Party: Oakland Square

Tues, Aug 29, 5—7 p.m. Oakland Square

Come to Oakland Square for the first of this summer's rain-or-shine block parties for food, games, music, and prizes, hosted by the University of Pittsburgh. Get to know neighbors both old and new at events on Tuesdays through September 26 in West Oakland, North Oakland, Oakcliffe, and Dan Marino Field.