

The Beacon Concert Page

by Ben Herwatic, Sean Hackett, and Andy McNeil

Upcoming concerts, events, other cool stuff

staff writers

PUNKsutawney



PHOTO BY GRANT THAYER

Fans enjoy a Dropkick Murphys concert, which was part of the Vans Warped Tour in Pittsburgh.

by Andy McNeil staff writer

What is the definition of being a punk? In essence, it's anyone who simply enjoys and supports punk rock. Dress, race, and beliefs have nothing to do with it. If you go to a lot of shows you see many different (really, really different, in fact) people. Even with all these differences, we punks have one thing in common though, a sense of brotherhood. Punk rock is all about looking out for each other and having a good time. This is why I really like to see people start listening to punk because it's never too late to start.

In my punk career I've seen quite a bit in person even though I'm from the small town of Punxsutawney, PA ("Groundhog's Day"). Anything from classics like the Misfits, NOFX, and Rancid to Snapcase, boysetsfire, AFI, and H2O, just to name a few. My favorite example of punk brotherhood came this summer at the Vans Warped Tour in Pittsburgh. The night before the show a friend and I had found out about a flag contest the Dropkick Murphys (an Irish punk band from Boston) were holding and decided that we would enter. We endured the smell of marker until the break of dawn to finish the colossal flag. When we got to the show that day amidst the excitement came sadness. We

had found out that Warped had sold out. A sold-out Warped show is highly irregular. Undaunted, we set to get some autographs and chill with the bands at their tour buses. Needless to say, security threw us out on our ear. Walking around in a panic with this giant flag we ran smack into Ken Casey, bassist for Dropkick. He was promoting a benefit acoustic set to be played after the show for the stage workers union, who were on strike at the I.C. Light Amphitheatre.

We told Ken our story and showed him the flag. Ken said us that he'd get us in. He came back with his manager who told us that they were out of room on their guest list, but he'd get us in. The Dropkick Murphys then spent about two hours sneaking each and every one of us in one by one. Marc Orrell, one of the guitarists, walked me in personally.

As I enjoyed Rancid, H2O, Pennywise, Less Than Jake, and of course Dropkick that day, I thought about what had happened and smiled. My favorite band had just snuck me into the biggest show of the year! This really showed me the true meaning of being a punk.

Recently, Dropkick donated a portion of the proceeds of recent concerts to the New York Firefighters 9-11 Relief Fund. So, when you think punk, think brotherhood, or even sisterhood, depending on the case. The band H2O said it best in "Thicker Than Water": "My family looks out for me like friends."

Now is the time for a concert. Good music, good people, and VERY good times. Ever feel like dancing with the love of your life to Harry Connick Jr. or chillin with your friends while Phil Lesh is playing in the background or letting go and rocking out to the Misfits? The three closest cities to give them are Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Buffalo, all within the next three weeks too. Don't believe me? It's true.

All you have to do is go to Pollstar, the Concert Hotwire, which is on the web. Just give your choice of city and dates and it will give you every concert that is happening.

Some concerts we have posted for you, but you should check online for later dates. In Pittsburgh, the coolest places to find some kicking concerts would be Mellon Arena, Rosebud, Club Laga, and M, which is formerly known as Metropol. In Buffalo, look up the HSBC Arena, Shea's Performing Arts Center, and the Showplace. If you ever reach Cleveland, try out the Agora Theatre, Gund Arena, and the Odeon Concert Club.

Addresses are posted below. Try out each and every concert you can and you might find out something you don't know about yourself. Have fun and enjoy.

-Ben

Pittsburgh - Mellon Arena, 66 Mario Lemieux Place, Pittsburgh PA 15219 Rosebud, 1650 Smallman St., Pittsburgh PA 15222 Club Laga, 3609 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15213 M, 1600 Smallman St., Pittsburgh PA 15222

Cleveland - Agora Theatre, 5000 Euclid Ave., Cleveland OH 44103 Gund Arena, Huron and Ontario St., Cleveland OH 44115 Odeon Concert Club, 1295 Old River Rd., Cleveland OH 44113

Buffalo - HSBC Arena, Michigan and Perry St., Buffalo NY 14203 Shea's Perf. Arts Ctr., 646 Main St., Buffalo NY 14202 The Showplace, 1063 Grant St., Buffalo NY 14207

Backstage with Britney

by Sean Hackett staff writer

On Sunday night, HBO will give millions of viewers a chance to experience a VIP view of Britney Spears' latest concert, to be held in Las Vegas. While many will be satisfied with just watching Britney on television, it is totally different being able to be there in person.

I have been one of the privileged to see the Princess of Pop from a backstage view. I didn't jump on stage and get carried off of the stage by security, if that is what many of you are thinking. One of Britney's dancers is from my hometown and her boyfriend asked me if I would want to accompany him to see her concert. My answer was "hgsjl," which is the word for yes while one is in shock.

We got to the concert a few hours before anyone else did. The security was heavy, and every time I walked more than three yards there would be a new guard checking my press pass. While we were introduced to the dancers and stage crew the visitors from the Make A Wish foundation would constantly ask "Where is Britney?" According to the tour guide, she naps before concert time.

After the stadium filled with thousands of children, teenagers, parents, and middle-aged men who have websites dedicated to Ms. Spears, I finally met face to face with Britney and her entire crew gathered in one gigantic circle for prayer. Then the concert started.

The opening started with an alien-like theme. There were tons of pyrotechnics and Britney came down in a UFO. The crowd went wild and thousands of cameras flashed.

Each song that she performed was like a totally new music video and to much delight of the majority of the audience. Britney changed costumes for every scene.

The dancing in the show was really amazing to watch and really went well with the "story" that was told while they sang their songs. Britney would sometimes take small breaks in between songs and explain how she got involved with dancing and singing, as well as her influences both from Hollywood and her hometown.

Although the show did feature the seven or eight hit songs Britney has produced in these few years, the audience and I lost interest when she would perform some of her less popular songs (such as her adaptation of the Rolling Stones' "Satisfaction" and "Dear Diary"). Luckily, those songs were played in the middle and the show started and ended strongly.

Who would have figured that pig-tails, knee highs, dark eyes, and bubble gum lyrics would have so much of an effect on so many people, yet tickets are going fast. So if you like the music, or just the music videos, check out Britney in Albany on Dec. 3, in Philadelphia on Dec. 10, or on HBO.



PUBLICITY PHOTO

Britney's Las Vegas special will show Sunday night on HBO.

Upcoming concerts

Table with 4 columns: Cleveland, Buffalo, State College, PA, Pittsburgh. Lists concert names, dates, and venues for each location.