

The New Old Neighborhood Pub

ACROSS FROM THE WASHINGTON-JEFFERSON
SKATE PARK, OLD NICK'S ROCK PUB OPENS
DOORS IN APRIL

by William Kennedy

The building has stood empty for about a decade. Over the years, the spot has housed a variety of well-known drinking holes, notably Harvey's and most recently Rascal's — in fact, the signage still faintly reads "Rascal's."

However, the interior has been transformed into the Whit's newest nightlife destination — Old Nick's Rock Pub, located at the corner of 2nd and Washington across from the WJ Skatepark + Urban Plaza.

Business partners Emily Nyman, Tim Kinney and Jevon Peck say Old Nick's fills a niche in Eugene's music scene — a niche left behind by the closing of The Samurai Duck, John Henry's and the Oak Street Speakeasy.

"We've had a lot of live music venues shut down recently for whatever reason," Nyman says, adding, "There's a real need for this kind of music venue."

Old Nick's will focus on booking metal and punk, Nyman says, but not be limited to any one genre. Nyman says she feels the pub offers bands a crucial middle ground between Eugene's small bar and house-show scene and larger venues like WOW Hall and McDonald Theatre. The venue will guarantee artists payment, she says, which is crucial for touring bands, and it will be equipped with professional sound equipment.

The partners picked the spot due to its central location between downtown and the Whiteaker district, as well as the relative isolation from residential areas.

"We saw this building and thought: 'Oh my gosh, this is exactly what we want,'" Nyman says. "We don't have neighbors around."

Nyman explains Old Nick's will mainly be a music venue with a full bar, but Peck, a longtime fixture of Eugene bar food culture, is also preparing a menu. Peck is known for formerly managing fellow Whit venue Tiny Tavern, as well as revamping its kitchen.

"It's going to be very simple," Nyman says. "It's going to be basically just pub food," in keeping with the venue's comfortable and welcoming English-Irish pub décor. "[Jevon] can do amazing things with a relatively simple kitchen," Nyman notes.

Kinney will be handling most of the venue's booking and he aims to host live music up to seven nights a week, while remaining open to other kinds of live events — from DJ nights and drag shows to burlesque.

The venue's already full docket includes some noteworthy names: French black metal band Antaeus April 3, punk-thrash legends D.R.I. April 9, local Irish-punk band Toad in the Hole April 10, Darius Koski of Swingin' Utters April 15 and hardcore greats D.O.A. on April 17.

All shows will be 21-plus and have a cover. Kinney hopes to encourage bands whenever possible to play an all-ages matinee show at the nearby all-ages venue The Boreal. ■

Old Nick's hosts a soft opening 9 pm Wednesday, April 1; free. For more information and a full line-up of events, go to oldnickspub.com.



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