

The next level of Karaoke: Fishball

By Deborah Phair

Everyone knows karaoke. Perhaps you've tried it (or swear you'll do it after a few drinks) or you know someone who's tried it. I fall into the I-will-never-do-it category, but the other night I did go to watch... Live karaoke, that is.

Live karaoke is original, and once people try it, they usually don't go back to the old way of singing along with a pre-recorded track. Boris and Kai, the members of Fishball, have been doing live karaoke for about six years. They have a three-page list of acoustic cover songs that they play on guitar. All you have to do is get up there and sing. Most people are a little too nervous to go up on stage the first time they attend. By the next time, though, they work up enough nerve to give it a try. Fishball isn't there to judge or intimidate anyone. They want everyone to have a good time. The play rock, soul, funk,

etc., with the words to all of the songs, in case you don't know your favorite one by heart. They're laid back and will be happy to sing along with you, in case you don't want to carry the song alone!

When I arrived, a brave soul named Steve was singing "Hole Hearted" by Extreme. He was pretty good, but he did ask the guys to help him out when he lost his place. Steve had a good time; he stuck around and even did a few more songs later on.

Live karaoke typically turns into one big jam session. It's not uncommon for more than 20 people to show up. You can bring your guitar, drums, saxophone – whatever you play. In fact, just before I left for the evening, "Derrick" came in carrying his guitar and sang a song by himself on stage. He was really good and sounded like the singer in STAINED. A few other guys came in with him, and they were getting ready to

jam. Fishball has played at the Irish Pub in Saarbrücken and the Irish Pub in Saarlouis. They also play every Thursday night at the Enlisted Club on Ramstein. Check out their website for more info at www.fishball.de. Remember to keep Fishball in mind when you want to do something a little different. They'll put you at ease.

When they're not on stage, Kai and Boris are both in college studying sound design, soundtrack, film, and just about everything else related to the music industry. In addition to Fishball, they are also in another band, Black Box (www.blackboxband.de). This group plays originals in the alternative genre, and sing in German. Black Box has played mostly in the Saarbrücken area, but has also played the Ramstein Enlisted Club. Keep an eye out for them.