

Live band karaoke brings out people's inner rock star (4 photos)

February 29, 2016 by: Troy Bridgeman



Eric Braun sings Turn the Page. Troy Bridgeman for GuelphToday

It's only rock and roll but they like it, love it yes they do during Live Band Karaoke night at Q-Ball Billiards and Bar on Woodlawn Road.

"This is not your typical karaoke," said bass player and host Barry Bevan. "There is no ghost vocal or recorded soundtrack. We have a four-piece band playing live and loud rock and roll."

Singers select from a list of more than 150 songs ranging from pop standards such as I Feel Good by James Brown to hard rock anthems such as Rock and Roll by Led Zeppelin.

Bevan and the band have even ventured outside their typical comfort zone with country chart toppers such as I Feel Like a Woman by Shania Twain and Motown mega hit Billy Jean by Michael Jackson.

"I was reluctant at first to learn all those songs but when I saw the look of elation on people's faces it made it all worth it," Bevan said. "They have been belting these tunes out in their car and singing in the shower for years and now they get to perform with a live band in a 70's-style rock concert complete with a fog machine

and lightshow.”

There was a long lineup of new and returning singers at Q-Ball last Friday night. Regulars Alex Windos and Christine Buck teamed up for a duet of Meat Loaf's, Paradise By the Dashboard Light and Buck's daughter Shelby Richardson sang I Love Rock and Roll by Joan Jett.

Karaoke veterans Robin Pringle and husband Jamie “Chip” Pringle were there as well.

“We come out regularly,” said Robin. “I'm a big Zeppelin fan and singing these songs with a live band is such a rush.”

Robin got the Led out with Rock and Roll by Led Zeppelin and Jamie summoned his inner Riff Raff for a rousing rendition of Time Warp from Rocky Horror Picture Show.

“It's like crack,” said Bevan. “Do it once and you're hooked.”

Each act showed up with their own fan club made up of family and friends but by the end of the night everyone was cheering, dancing and singing along.

“It has been amazing,” said Q-Ball owner and manager Sam Fazari. “We have people driving here from Kingston, Toronto and Hamilton for the opportunity to sing with a live band.”

The singers might be amateurs but the band members are seasoned professionals that play with a number of established groups and artists.

On rhythm and lead guitar are Howard Brown from Grooveyard and Steve DiVenanzo from Mississippi Thud, Three Quarter Stone and Loose Cannon.

Drummer Tony DiVito plays with the Ground Floor Band and singer-songwriter Kris MacQueen.

Bevan has played with several local bands including The Toys, The Watch, Cold War, Sapphire City and the Paul Sharpe Band. He has also backed The Killer Dwarfs, Kim Mitchell, Jeff Martin of Tea Party, April Wine and Helix.

He said he was hesitant at first when booking manager Susan Breckon Deem pitched the concept to him but he is glad she did.

“I still love playing in a band and this is a great way to share that experience with others,” said Bevan. “It helps me pay the bills and it is a lot of fun.”

For more information about Live Band Karaoke and a list of future shows go to <http://qballbilliardsguelph.com/yrk/yrkabout.html> .

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Troy Bridgeman is a multi-media journalist that has lived and worked in the Guelph community his whole life. He has covered news and events in the city for more than two decades.

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