

Transcription of Podcast Episode 306: Oke Dokey Karaoke Club

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SPEAKERS

Bob Firing, Alan Voss

Note: This transcription was computer-generated and may contain typographical errors.

Bob Firing 00:09

Good afternoon Shadow Hills. Well, if you are walking in the Montecito Clubhouse one time and here's somebody belting out "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain" you're not . . . the chances are Willie Nelson is not here. Chances are, the sound is coming from our Oke Dokey karaoke club. And Alan Voss is here to tell us about it. Alan, welcome to the podcast.

Alan Voss 00:34

Thanks. I'm happy to be here. And I love to talk. So there's no problem.

Bob Firing 00:38

Great. Great. We're gonna get along fine. So let's start with you. How long have you lived here?

Alan Voss 00:44

We've been here six years. We are from the real part of California, northern California. And we moved from a place called Greenhorn Creek, which is a Golf Resort in Angels Camp, California, which was made famous by Mark Twain in 19...1865, sorry, when he wrote to celebrate jumping frog of Calaveras County, and from that time, we have been a real unique center on the Highway 49, the Gold Rush Highway. And it's been it was a wonderful thing. My wife and I were the social chairman of there, we put all kinds of...and then we made the mistake of following our kids who lived here. And we... live yes, my oncologist, they she moved from Chicago here. And so we had other kids up in Oregon, so we didn't want to live there. So my wife says, well, we can live there, and I want to see the grandkids. So here we are, of course, five years later, they moved to Portland. So here we are here, you don't trust your kid

Bob Firing 01:49

For the time being. So how long have you been involved with a karaoke club?

Alan Voss 01:55

I've been in it since I got here. I've been singing most of my life. It's a fun thing. It also makes me feel better. So right away, I got involved in a I guess it was good timing, because the person who was running it then and wanted to retire. And so they offered me the opportunity to become the KJ we call it the Karaoke Jockey, which I took on and have done so since then.

Bob Firing 02:21

Okay, and when do they meet? And how long does the meeting last?

Alan Voss 02:26

We meet from October through May, the first Thursday of every month, from 6:00 to 9:00 in you the front or the back half of the Montecito ballroom.

Bob Firing 02:38

And before we shut down, how many people would you get on a given night?

Alan Voss 02:44

It's very, very flexible. It goes anywhere from a low of 15 to a high of 35.

Bob Firing 02:50

Wow! I mean, what I'm the reason I asked that question is one of the complaints I've heard about karaoke in the past, is people sit and sit and sit and they get to sing one song and the whole evening. So how do you deal with that?

Alan Voss 03:04

Well, you know, that's a good question, because I see a lot of places all over town. And that is a problem, where you have three hours, you have 25 singers, we usually have somewhere in the realm of 10 to 12 singers. So for that three hours, you get minimum three songs, if not four songs. And the nice thing about karaoke is that you can go out any place to listen to music, pay for it or not. But wherever you go, it's usually going to be one kind of music, either it's going to be country or it's going to be jazz, there's going to be show tunes. You come to karaoke, in that three hour segment here, you'll hear everything known to man from country to show tunes to whatever you want the Great American Songbook is a classic.

Bob Firing 03:52

And so you're here to recruit new members and make the club known. What's the profile of a person who would join your club?

Alan Voss 04:01

Well, I'm here for a couple reasons. I want to I don't want to digress. But let me say that, first of all, to answer your question. Most of the people who come are all our age group, you know, their backgrounds are varied, and their interests for singing are different. But the reason why I'm really anxious to get people to come and enjoy, is because I've been in medicine most of my life, and what we've learned with studies is that you can live longer and have less stress, because you put music and laughter in your life. You come here to Shadow Hills. We're blessed because we not only have the place to sing, whether it be we have comedy night we have community singers, we have karaoke. And we have the ones that musicians they bring in, so you have a lot of chance to get out of your box. I call it the house. They get out to listen to this music and feel better. So everybody comes for different reasons you can come and, what we like to see, you don't have to sing. But I tell you what makes singers better is a great audience. And so if you want to come and have an audience and bring a

libation, and just enjoy the evening, for, you know, a modicum of, you know, we cost at 10 bucks a year. So

Bob Firing 05:17

That's affordable for the people, I'm sure.

Alan Voss 05:20

So it's a real interesting you meet a lot of different people. And the thing that I like a lot, because I'm into music and nostalgia, if you will, I'm a big band guy, is that a lot of people come and they hear music. They can remember from the past that was very special to them. And so it's really a sometimes a really nice kind of feeling people get because most of the songs they don't hear very often. And we make sure, because there's a very group of singers that like everything I say, we have a lot of people like thing country, I like to sing the Great American Songbook, which is almost all of. If you realize that most of the songs that were popular in the 50s and 60s were written in the 30s and 40s. And made it downhill. And we're really great music. So it's a wonderful opportunity to listen to a bunch of stuff.

Bob Firing 06:15

Yeah, well, not to make this about me. But I have learned that listening to the 50s on five, or the 60s on six, on Sirius XM, bring back all my memories from that point of my life. And it is very effective

Alan Voss 06:35

And the interesting thing is, you can come and you don't even have to think about the songs you might want to hear. But in our software program, we have 72,000 songs to pick from. And most of them are the songs you know about and many of them are from that era. And so, and I will say this, again, is that many of the songs which are very popular, even today, were written in the 30s and 40s.

Bob Firing 07:01

Yeah, and I've done a little of this, and it's hard getting up there and following...do people practice before they come in and perform in front of the audience.

Alan Voss 07:13

Some do some have this fear, they're going to look less than they want to be. So they will practice home. And that's easy to do. Because almost, if you've got a computer at home, you can pick it up, pick up any song you want. It's there. You can sing...

Bob Firing 07:29

Karaoke machines are cheap.

Alan Voss 07:30

You can sing to it. But again, there are people who just get there, you can sing by yourself, you can sing with somebody else, again, or you can hum along and listen. But the issue is it just a fun time with music, that people can get their mind someplace else except where the house that they live in.

Bob Firing 07:51

Well, did I miss anything? Is there anything else you want to cover?

Alan Voss 07:54

I would say that we look forward to people, for great audiences, because I will say one thing, great audiences make singers better.

Bob Firing 08:04

And one more time, say when you meet.

Alan Voss 08:06

We meet on Thursdays the first Thursday of every month, starting in...October through May. And you can stop by and just listen. Stick your nose in. And if you don't like it, you can go someplace else. But I think you'll really enjoy it. And please join with us.

Bob Firing 08:26

And for the new residents. That's a great way to meet some new people and have a lot of fun.

Alan Voss 08:32

Just recently, there was in fact, the last meeting, they had a new homeowners meeting across the hall, we open the doors, we had about 15 people just wander in. So it's really a very nice thing for everybody, I think.

Bob Firing 08:45

Well, thank you for coming in and telling us about it. And I hope that this boosts your attendance significantly.

Alan Voss 08:51

I hope so too. And I hope everybody really has a chance to enjoy both the music and the laughter that Shadow Hills provides.

Bob Firing 08:58

Okay, and thank you for your attention audience. Until next time, bye bye.