

Singer Spotlight Beyond Open Mike Night

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By DAN PEARSON Contributor

Gotta sing? Then you simply gotta contact Chicago Singer Spotlight.

On the second Wednesday of every month since 2001, Becca Kaufman has welcomed aspiring and established vocalists to take center stage at FitzGerald's Night Club in Berwyn.



Becca Kaufman (far right) with backing vocals from Jen Chada, Lara Jenkins and Carole Baskin during the Singer Spotlight at FitzGerald's in Berwyn. - Photo by Dan Locke

"We were looking for an opportunity for vocalists to mingle and network and learn the business," said Kaufman, a professional vocalist from River Forest and mother of three.

"If you are an unknown vocalist, trying to establish yourself can be very daunting. Finding a band to play your material can be not only very challenging, but also quite costly. And after all of that, you still need a club to perform in. That's where Singer Spotlight can help. We have an amazing band, and our show is at one of the finest clubs around, FitzGerald's."

A New York native who moved to Chicago to attend Northwestern University as a theater major, Kaufman has established herself as a veteran studio singer and voice-over artist. **She can also be found leading her talented group of musicians in the Becca Kaufman Orchestra at weddings and corporate parties and other celebrations.**

"I sing professionally and I make a very good living. Voice-overs and jingles keep me quite busy and the **Becca Kaufman Orchestra allows me to perform all styles of music for all kinds of people. I am really lucky.** I get to keep my hands involved in many aspects of the music business and still be an active and involved parent," she said.

Each month Kaufman and her co-producer Amy Mowery provide a stage, a house band and sound system for four vocalists of different experience levels. Each performer sings four numbers in front of a live audience. The waiting list is now between eight and 12 months.

"We want to provide an incredible space where you can share your music," said Kaufman, the perky hostess who usually kicks off and closes the show and also pops up in between a few times with her own musical renditions.

"Each vocalist can sing any kind of music they want. R&B, jazz, country, rock, pop, original music-the audience never knows what they will hear from show to show. Some of our performers are professional vocalists who want to try out some new material, some have never sung in public but have always wanted to. I will pick a style of music that is not being represented that night so I that I contrast who is coming next. No show is the same and no vocalist that evening will be the same."

CHICAGO SINGER SPOTLIGHT

7:30 p.m. the second Wednesday of every month at FitzGerald's 6615 W. Roosevelt Road, Berwyn. Next date Sept. 12. \$8. www.fitzgeraldsnightclub.com or www.singerspotlight.com.