

**The adjudicating officer's story:**

Months ago a band shows up at my window. It was Lemons and Oranges, or something fruity....I asked about their music; looked at their posters, CDs, etc. At the end of the interview, they were saying, "come out and see our show tonight." I says, "I can't take any free tickets yada yada yada but maybe I'll pop in."

It was a Friday. I went with two LES. We got a table, ordered some beer, fried chicken and so on. The opening band comes on. They were called "Zoo"- this I'm sure of, since I'm from Kalamazoo, the name stuck. The Zoo starts rocking out to 70/80s tunes...But the coup de grace was indisputably when they busted out Journey. I mean, the singer was not just good-95% of all Filipinos are good singers- he was really dern good. I couldn't shut up about it. I was telling anyone who would listen, "Dude, not only does this guy have pipes, and range, he's got perfect pitch. He has only missed a few notes on some of the hardest power ballads in schlock n roll history." The LES grudgingly agreed, but they've been desensitized to the regular displays of amazing karaoke you get in Manila, so maybe they were just humoring me.

The next week I'm sitting at an NIV window next to an officer name Singer. Singer and I were doing FMJs and so we would trade off regular NIV applicants occassionally so that we got fair share of student visas. I hear Singer say, "Journey? The band Journey?" He flips through papers. He sounds unhappy.

I butt in: "What's that all about?"

He turns off his mic and looks over at me. "I don't know. This guys says he's going to try out for Journey."

I'm puzzled. "Journey? The band Journey?"

Singer goes, "That's what I just said, [EXPLETIVE]!"

"Great, another nutjob. I'll take it." Singer takes my student, I take the nutjob.

I look over his stuff and say "purpose of travel?" and all that. I start to scrutinize more carefully and realize its the guy I saw from the night before.

"Hey, does your band play at Bagaberde?... "

He confirms and he goes on to tell me the story of how he uploaded some clips of his band that he recorded to YouTube and contacted Journey's manager, having heard they were looking for a new singer. He says they called him up and invited him to the U.S. to try out. Given the malarkey you get at a Manila NIV window, this story only got points for being original. He produced some flimsy emails and letters, etc.

So I go, in my best dubious voice, "Yeah? let's hear Wheels [sic] in the Sky!"

He belts it out for the whole waiting room and for the staff to hear (I made sure to take off my headset and let the speaker play it because what I was really doing was covering my butt).

I said, "Look sir, there isn't a person in this Embassy who would believe that story- going to try out for Journey!- not a soul would believe that. Except for me. I saw you sing last Friday and I couldn't shut up about how your vocals were perfect Steve Perry.

So I tell you what. I'm giving you that visa. You're going to try out. And you're going to make it...."

And the rest is rock n roll history, my friends.

Source: [ILW.COM](http://ILW.COM) - immigration news: Consular Corner: February 2008.



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