

BUSINESS PROFILE

Clarizio Music Center builds community through music

BY KAYLA MARSH
THE OCEAN STAR

For more than 20 years, Clarizio Music Center has served the Jersey Shore community as the premier instruction studio.

Walking into the center, located on Bridge Avenue in Point Pleasant Borough, patrons young and old can find a variety of instruments to try their hand at, as well as any accessories to meet their musical needs.

Under new leadership, owners aim to continue the tradition of excellence established by late owner John Clarizio, while introducing new programs that further support students' talents and expand the business within the community.

"It is very important to us to continue to grow our store in our local community, it was very important to John Clarizio and it is something that we feel very strongly about, and are working hard to continue that legacy," owner Matt Kindler said.

NEW OWNERS

According to Mr. Kindler, his family had been coming to the center for some time before taking over ownership.

"We purchased it back in October 2016. We were a longtime customer of the store. We started here with my daughter taking guitar lessons and then that turned into drum lessons," he said.

"We were coming once a week for her lessons and during that time, John Clarizio ... got sick and passed away in January 2015. John was here for 20-plus years in town ... just a real fixture of the community."

"His wife Andrea tried to keep it going after he passed



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Matt Kindler has been the owner of the business since 2016 and has helped grow it to offer a wide range of brands for instruments, supplies and sheet music.

and I remember overhearing her talking about ... wanting to sell or close. It was too much of a reminder every day walking in here.

"I went home and said to my wife, 'What do you think?' We talked and I later texted [Andrea] and within days we basically had an agreement to take over."

MUSIC LESSONS

At Clarizio Music Center, lessons by experts and professionals help make learning to read and play music an enjoyable experience.

"We have 10 instructors here, they all stayed on board with us. The lessons were what was really driving business and still to this day it does," Mr. Kindler said.

"We probably have

upwards of close 150 students and that number has definitely grown since we've been here."

Whether playing as a hobby or dreaming of performing on the world stage, lessons foster confidence and creativity in students of all ages.

"There's basically not an instrument we don't teach," Mr. Kindler said.

"Everything from woodwinds to brass to piano to guitar to ukulele to drums you name it, pretty much one of my instructors here is going to be able to teach it."

"That's one of the things we really pride ourselves on here is the amount of instructors and the quality of the instructors that are here."

"We do have string — vio-

lins, viola and cello — we have two string instructors here, we probably have about 12 string students here, which is very impressive."

Seven lesson studios allow students to further practice and hone their skills.

"Monday nights, Wednesdays, Thursdays, all of them are pretty much completely filled," Mr. Kindler said. "It is a great thing to see."

OTHER SERVICES

At Clarizio Music Center, patrons will find a wide range of brands for instruments, supplies and sheet music in stock.

"Ukuleles is probably one of our best sellers," Mr. Kindler said.

"It is a good, cheap way for

parents to jump into the music world. For \$45 you can get your kid a ukulele and see if they want to work their way up to a guitar where they are going to spend at least a minimum of \$150. It is kind of testing the waters."

From guitar strings to cleaners, there are supplies available to meet all needs.

"I think we've fine-tuned it enough to know what people are coming in here looking for," Mr. Kindler said.

"They want that local music shop where they can stop and buy their guitar string or their guitar picks. They don't have to drive somewhere, they don't have to order online."

"It was a big focus for us to get that back on track. In year one retail sales have really increased for us."

Clarizio Music Center also services what they sell and rent, offering in-house adjustments, repairs, restrings and more.

"Repairs is not something offered throughout the area," Mr. Kindler said.

"It was something that really wasn't offered at the store. We do have a certified licensed technician and luthier here on site who is very important."

"Simple repairs, restorations, I can't stress enough how much of a big draw it has been for us here."

PART OF THE COMMUNITY

For the students and owners of Clarizio Music Center, every day is a new adventure.

"Being in the music business like I was it was a bit of a natural fit for us," Mr. Kindler said, who formerly worked with a concert promoter.

"This place is such a family community environment

and it was important for us to make sure that didn't go away.

"We're a big supporter of all the local schools ... and it has been an important part for us to build those relationships ... having us be that go-to place for them to come to."

Students have performed at functions throughout the shore community.

"It is good for the kids to get out and perform. It makes them realize this is something they want to continue to do and they get the bug for it," Mr. Kindler said.

"We do a rock band program that brings these kids together and they start playing. It started last July and it's really picking up steam. They've done several charity events like the Ocean of Love benefit for children with cancer in October, the Halloween event in Brick, Eakfest, then their big one in December, Sinderella's Ball for ALS."

"We have a couple of things coming up like we're going to play SummerFest ... it is a lot of fun for those kids to play and get more exposure."

As business grows, Mr. Kindler hopes to provide more to patrons of all ages.

"Every day is thinking of something new to do to try to bring into the store and to offer kids more," he said.

"We are giving them this opportunity now ... and they're learning. They really look forward to coming here and I hear from the parents all the time [the children] have found what they are looking for."

For more information on Clarizio Music Center, visit <http://clariziomusic.com/> or call 732-295-6644.

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