

## **Owner brings passion for music to teaching**

The Desert Sun - Palm Springs, Calif.—May 6, 2010  
Special to Palm Desert Sun, By Kathy Strong

### **Occasional writer says he learned to play piano in dark**

London-born John Hardie began his love affair with music at age 4 and can honestly say that his passion for vocals and guitar has taken him "around the world several times over."

His last touring performance before starting Willow Creek Productions four years ago placed him in front of audiences in 18 countries.

Although Hardie still performs all over the Coachella Valley during his evenings, his passion these days lies in teaching others how to produce the music he loves in the Palm Desert music studio he co-owns with wife of five years, Linda.

Not your old music-teacher-school format, Willow Creek puts together team teaching, ensemble playing, online resources and even recording studio capabilities to attract a diverse list of clients from children to seniors.

But everyone works with Hardie, whose passion and joy for music passes on to his students.

As Linda puts it, "Nothing about music is harmful to your physical, mental or emotional health unless, of course, you drop an electric guitar on your foot."

### **Question: How did you choose this occupation?**

Answer: The studio idea started when Linda and I first met and wanted to find a business we were both involved in.

Linda would not let me give up music; the studio gave us something we could both be part of. Linda is much more than a studio manager -- she has input on lesson plans and often teaches piano and reading music.

### **What makes your business unique in the valley?**

It's not specific to one instrument. We teach guitar and related instruments, as well as piano and vocals. Also, we teach guitar players to actually read regular music. Most guitar players can only read guitar music.

I take credit for the socials we put on for our students with wacky quizzes. The number of students has increased so much that we can only hold them outside, when the weather cooperates.

### **What would you be doing if you had another career?**

The only other thing I could do is write fiction. I am a big sci-fi fan, and I wrote many short stories in college. I have a novel I am writing that I pick up and mess with every once in a while.

### **How do you enjoy your time away from work?**

I have always been with my guitar and always will be. I won't put it down, even at home. It is a

total passion. Every day I find a new thing to love about it.

### **What is something most people don't know about you?**

I had a most unusual childhood. My dad died when I was 8, and we lived with my grandmother who had no electricity. I learned to play piano in the dark, which I recommend to anyone -- it's so tactile. For music, I had a transistor radio and a battery-operated record player. I was 16 before we moved to a house with electricity.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.